Washington State Psychological Association
2018 Legislative Agenda

The Washington State Psychological Association’s mission includes the goal to advocate for public policies that promote psychological services, the field of psychology, and a psychologically healthy Washington. WSPA has historically considered its highest legislative & regulatory priorities to be: retaining the integrity and strength of our licensing statute or affective our disciplinary process; responding to any bills that affect how we practice; opposition to any infringement of our state mental health parity mandate; responding to social justice bills that directly affect treatment and/or access to care

Integrity and strength of licensing statute and disciplinary process: This priority includes retaining our right to independent practice without oversight by others, and an independent examining board. Prioritizing the licensing statute allows psychologists to practice freely without the bounds of their competence and our professional ethics, while also allowing the public to have confidence in the integrity of what being a licensed psychologist in Washington State means. Paying close attention to any bills affecting our discipline process ensures that Washington psychologists meet the highest ethical standards, and also that we receive due process in handling of complaints.

Responding to bills affecting the practice of psychology: Two goals in service of our mission are to support the professional lives of psychologists throughout their lifespan, and to assist members with information to address a dynamic and changing healthcare environment. Any bills that affect the day-to-day practice and obligations of psychologists is thus of interest to us. An upcoming example of this legislative priority will likely include proposed changes to mandatory reporting statutes. Psychologists benefit directly from statutory clarity around such issues.

Opposing infringement of mental health parity: Mental health parity affects psychologists, but more importantly impacts the patients we serve. We see access to mental health care as a human right and will always work to ensure citizens of our state benefit from having that right protected.

Social justice bills: Just as mental health parity is a matter of social justice, WSPA also champions bills that directly affect treatment and/or access to care. This often includes supporting expansion of services to underserved communities (e.g., agricultural workers), and protecting vulnerable populations in treatment (e.g., banning sexual orientation change efforts). This priority reflects WSPA’s commitment to a psychologically health Washington.
WSPA’s Top Priorities for this Legislative Session

1. Health Care, Wellness, Long Term Care
   • **SB 6399 Public Hearing**
     Requires the office of financial management to establish a telemedicine payment parity pilot program to provide parity in reimbursement for certain health care services. Requires the state auditor's office to conduct an actuarial review of the pilot program. Requires certain health care professionals to complete telemedicine training created by the University of Washington telehealth services. Primary Sponsors: Becker

2. Labor, Commerce, & Workplace Standards – Concerns/Needs Amendment
   • **SB 6448 & HB 2865 Public Hearing**
     Modifies the state industrial insurance act to include the availability of mental health therapy and evaluation to injured workers. Authorizes the following to provide these services: Psychiatrists, clinical Ph.D. or Psy.D. psychologists, psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioners, mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, and social workers. Primary Sponsors: Keiser

Other Legislation of Interest

WSPA supports the following legislation:

• **SB 5722 Restricting the practice of conversion therapy.**
  Regulates the professional conduct of licensed health care providers with regard to performing conversion therapy on patients under age eighteen. Primary Sponsors: Liias

• **SSB 5766 Preventing harassment, intimidation, bullying, and discrimination in public schools.**
  Requires each school district to: (1) Adopt or amend a transgender student policy and procedure that at a minimum incorporates the model transgender student policy and procedure created by the state school directors' association and share the policy with parents or guardians, students, volunteers, and school employees; and (2) Designate one person in the district as the primary contact regarding the transgender student policy. Requires the office of the superintendent of public instruction to develop a statewide training class for those people who act as the primary contact. Primary Sponsors: Liias

Other legislation we are watching and supporting:

Health Care, Wellness, Long Term Care

• **HB. 2489 Public Hearing - Concerning opioid use disorder treatment, prevention, and related services. Declares that opioid use disorder is a public health crisis.**
Requires state agencies to: (1) Increase access to evidence-based opioid use disorder treatment services; (2) Promote coordination of services within the substance use disorder treatment and recovery support system; (3) Strengthen partnerships between opioid use disorder treatment providers and their allied community partners; (4) Expand the use of the state prescription drug monitoring program; and (5) Support comprehensive school and community-based substance use prevention services. Requires that agencies administer state purchased health care programs to: (1) Coordinate activities to implement this act and the state interagency opioid working plan; (2) Explore opportunities to address the opioid epidemic; and (3) Provide status updates as directed by the joint legislative executive committee on health care oversight to promote legislative and executive coordination. Changes the name of the community mental health services act to the community behavioral health services act. Primary Sponsors: Cleveland

- **2SHB 2671 Public Hearing - Improving the behavioral health of people in the agricultural industry.**

Requires the department of health to: (1) Establish a pilot program for behavioral health and suicide prevention for members of the agricultural industry workforce; and (2) Contract with an entity that has behavioral health and suicide prevention expertise to develop a free resource for workers in the agricultural industry. Requires the state office of rural health to convene a task force on behavioral health and suicide prevention in the agricultural industry and requires the task force to review the following issues: (1) Data related to the behavioral health status of persons associated with the agricultural industry, including suicide rates, substance use rates, and availability and use of behavioral health services; (2) Factors unique to the agricultural industry that affect the behavioral health of persons working in those industries; (3) Components that should be addressed in the pilot program; and (4) Options to improve the behavioral health and reduce suicide risk among agricultural workers and their families, including individual focused and community focused strategies. Primary Sponsors: Wilcox

- **SHB 1452 (SB 5361) Concerning the opportunity scholarship program-**

Revises the opportunity scholarship act to increase the number of professional-technical certificates, professional technical degrees, and advanced degrees in high employer demand, health professional shortage areas. Primary Sponsor: Holy

- **SHB 1655 Providing industrial insurance coverage for stress-caused mental disorders and disabilities of members of the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system.**

States that claims made by a member of the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system, based on mental conditions or mental disabilities caused by stress, fall within the definition of "occupational disease." Primary Sponsor: Lovick

- **E2SHB 2143 Expanding opportunities for higher education students.**

Creates the medical student loan program to increase the physician workforce in rural underserved areas in the state. Primary Sponsor: Haler
• **SB 5457** Expanding patient access to health services through telemedicine and store and forward technology by requiring parity in payment for services
  Requires parity in payment for services to expand patient access to health services through telemedicine and store and forward technology. Primary Sponsor: Becker

• **ESB 5800 (HB 1810)** Concerning obligations of mental health professionals.
  Requires a mental health professional or an individual health care provider providing mental health services to a patient to warn of the patient's violent behavior only if the patient has communicated to the mental health professional or individual health care provider an actual threat of physical violence that poses a serious or imminent threat to the health or safety of a reasonably identifiable person. Primary Sponsors: Baumgartner

• **SB 5974** Concerning the supervision of licensed assistant behavior analysts and certified behavior technicians.
  Addresses the supervision of licensed assistant behavior analysts and certified behavior technicians. Primary Sponsors: Kuderer

• **SB 6047** Ensuring access to affordable health care coverage for children.
  Declares an intent to ensure that the children in this state have access to medical care and affordable health insurance coverage. Primary Sponsors: Miloscia

• **SB 6067 (SHB 2264)** Concerning hospital privileges for advanced registered nurse practitioners and physician assistants.
  Addresses the duty of a hospital or facility to request information from physician assistants and advanced registered nurse practitioners, who will provide clinical care under his or her license, before granting or renewing clinical privileges. Primary Sponsors: Cleveland

• **SSB 6491** Increasing the availability of assisted outpatient behavioral health treatment.
  Modifies involuntary treatment act provisions with regard to the following: (1) Changing the term "in need of assisted outpatient mental health treatment" to "in need of assisted outpatient behavioral health treatment" and includes a person with a substance use disorder; Primary Sponsors: O'Ban