ASAHP ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Association’s 2019 Annual Conference will be on October 16-18 in Charleston, SC. The theme is “Keeping Ahead of the Curve-Allied Health Education in the Evolving World of Health Care Delivery.”

A Plenary Session Address on the morning of Day 3 of the conference is known as the Mary E. Switzer Memorial Lecture. It will be delivered by Mitchell M. Scheiman, Dean of Research, Director of Graduate Studies, and a Professor at Salus University. In the last 25 years, he has spent the majority of his professional time as a researcher involved in randomized clinical trials. His specialty areas are pediatric optometry, binocular vision, and vision therapy. He has published over 200 journal articles and has written four textbooks that include “Understanding and Managing Vision Deficits: A Guide for Occupational Therapists.”

Mary E. Switzer had a distinguished career with the federal government from 1921 to 1970. Not only was she the highest ranking female bureaucrat in the federal government, she was the first administrator of the Social and Rehabilitation Service in 1967 and the first women to have a federal building in Washington, DC named after her. Upon her retirement, she served as an unpaid consultant to ASAHP.

Attendees are reminded to take advantage of discounted registration fees by September 13, 2019. Hotel bookings at the Charleston Marriott at the room block special rate run through September 23 or until the group block is sold-out. More information about the conference is available at www.asahp.org.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Wendy Rheault, Interim President and Chief Executive of Rosalind Franklin University, has been named to the post permanently. She is the university’s first female President.

Celia R. Hooper will serve for one-year as Interim Dean at the School of Health Sciences at Winston-Salem State University. She fills a vacancy created when former dean Peggy Valentine was appointed Interim Chancellor of Fayetteville State University.

IPCP AWARD

The term allied health denotes an extensive range of disciplines. The Association serves as a collaborative resource and advocate for interprofessional education to students, faculty, professional accrediting bodies, and practitioners through instruction, research, and service. Since its founding in 1967, ASAHP has engaged in many interprofessional activities, with the most recent being the creation in 2018 of an award for Institutional Excellence and Innovation in Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Health Care.

Again in 2019, the award makes it possible to recognize a member institution or an industry member for outstanding achievement in interprofessional education (IPE) and interprofessional collaborative practice (IPCP). Along with the award, other institutions also are being recognized as “Programs of Merit.”

Candidates must be ASAHP institutional members and should demonstrate outstanding achievement in two or more of six criteria areas that have been identified. Award nominations must be submitted by the designated representative from each ASAHP member institution.

The Award Winner for 2019 is: Indiana University-Purdue University-Indianapolis

The Programs of Merit are:

University of Texas (UT) Southwestern Medical Center

University of Kansas (KU) Medical Center

University of Buffalo

The Award winner and the Programs of Merit will be recognized at the ASAHP Annual Conference in October 2019 in Charleston, SC. The winning institution is being invited to present a poster at the Conference. An abstract of that presentation also will appear in the Winter 2019 issue of the Journal of Allied Health.
EDUCATION-PRACTICE CONNECTIONS

Strengthening the Connection Between Health Professions Education and Practice: Proceedings of a Joint Workshop (2019) is a new publication from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. It has comments by Anthony Breitbach (Saint Louis University), the Association’s IPE Chairperson, and in several places mentions that he represented ASAHIP. The Proceedings can be obtained at https://www.nap.edu/catalog/25407/strengthening-the-connection-between-health-professions-education-and-practice-proceedings.

DENTAL THERAPY SCOPE OF PRACTICE

A particularly vexing issue in health care is that scope of practice laws in the states can prevent certain kinds of health professionals from providing health care services, which they are qualified to furnish. According to information provided by the Pew Charitable Trusts earlier this month, six states have passed laws in the past 12 months authorizing dental therapists to practice in a role similar to physician assistants in medicine. The addition of Connecticut, Idaho, Nevada, and New Mexico in 2019, along with Arizona and Michigan in 2018, brings to 12 the number of states that allow dental therapy in some capacity. They join Alaska, Maine, Minnesota, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington in authorizing the practice of dental therapy.

Nearly as many other states are considering dental therapy laws or regulations intended to increase access to oral health care, particularly in underserved communities. Five years ago, only three states had any similar measures in place. Allowing dental therapists to practice represents a proven path to broadening access to care. Research from Alaska demonstrates that oral health outcomes improve in places where these providers work. Native communities served by dental therapists had lower rates of tooth extractions and more preventive care than those in similar communities that did not have these services. In Minnesota, case studies show that patients and other dental team members report high satisfaction with dental therapists, and good collaboration and positive relationships with them.


SHORTEST-TERM EDUCATION

Discussions on higher education tend to focus on long programs of formal, initial education, provided by traditional colleges and universities. Less attention is given to the wealth of learning taking place through shorter-term educational experiences (e.g., mini-, micro-, nano-credentials) offered inside and outside formal education. A new paper from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) focuses on quality aspects of shorter-term educational experiences by addressing questions, such as what features determine quality? What type of quality reviews would be most suitable? Are accreditation and quality assurance still relevant? The paper can be obtained at https://www.chea.org/sites/default/files/pdf/The-Quality-of-Shorter-Term-Educational-Experiences.pdf.

GRADUATE STUDENT WELLNESS

A growing body of evidence indicates that mental health challenges are common among graduate students. Unfortunately, many barriers exist to effective support and care. The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is making an effort to address this situation by embarking on a two-year project, Supporting Mental Health and Wellness of Graduate Students, in collaboration with the Jed Foundation (JED), a non-profit that exists to protect emotional health and prevent suicide for teens and young adults.

This initiative will create a foundation for evidence-based policies and resources to support graduate student mental health and well-being, prevent psychological distress, and address barriers to effective support and care. CGS and JED will devote particular attention to the experiences of underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities pursuing graduate education. A grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation will support the council’s focus on issues specific to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, while a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation will support the Council’s work.

EMPLOYER HEALTH CARE

The National Business Group on Health conducted the 2020 Large Employers’ Health Care Strategy and Plan Design Survey between May and June 2019, with 147 large employers participating that offer insurance coverage to more than 15.6 million employees and their dependents. Virtual care for musculoskeletal management shows the greatest potential for growth. While 23% will offer musculoskeletal management virtual services next year, another 38% are considering it by 2022.