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**OTPG 10th Annual
Conference**
Lake Lanier Islands,
Georgia
November 17, 2017

Board Members:

Jonathan Connell President	Diana Harris Secretary
Brook Etherington Vice President	Stacey Pearce AATOD Delegate
Chip Fuller Treasurer	Zac Talbott Parliamentarian



real help = real hope

An OTPG Conference Note

By Joelyn Alfred | Lakeland Centres Treatment Center



OTPG's 10th Annual Fall Conference: Making Strides in Medication Assisted Treatment & Marching Towards Recovery.

Come Join The Opioid Treatment Providers of Georgia for our 10th Annual Fall Conference as we celebrate this year's theme of: Making Strides in Medication Assisted Treatment & Marching Towards Recovery.

An oasis of educational exploration awaits you. The arena of conference activities will include unlimited windows of opportunity. We ask that you take advantage of the wisdom of your colleagues and peers and saturate yourself in the wealth of knowledge that the conference has to offer.

In anticipation of your arrival, we proudly welcome back our keynote speaker, the President of The American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence (AATOD), Mark Parrino. Furthermore, we are delighted that some of our other seasoned presenters will be participating. Collectively, each presenter has dedicated their time and efforts in preparing pertinent information relative to identifying the needs of the patients we serve. Inclusively, all presentations will certainly impact our industry and communities and bring awareness to what truly matters.

November 17, 2017 will be here before you know it, and registration brochures will be disseminated and available on the OTPG website soon. So share the good news. Tweet it, Facebook your friends and affiliates or just pick up the phone! It doesn't matter how you do it, just do it.

Come join OTPG and help make a difference!

See you there!

Joelyn Alfred MS, NCC, CMOTC
OTPG, Conference Chair

Clinic Spotlight:

Counseling Solutions Treatment Centers

By By Charity Jones | Counseling Solutions Treatment Centers

Counseling Solutions Treatment Centers (CSTC) is driven by passion to help those who are bound by the disease of opioid addiction. We help our patients restore and enhance social functioning through patient-centered comprehensive care. CSTC strives to meet the patient where they are. We believe the whole person must be examined to promote true recovery. Not only is the addiction treated with medications such as Methadone or Buprenorphine, but all areas of the patient's life are taken into view. This creates an individualized treatment plan tailored to meet patient needs. This type of individualized care empowers people and, in turn, generates a new perspective of life. CSTC counselors dive into patient trauma, teach coping skills, life skills, parenting, provide resources, and coordinate care with outside agencies all to break away the barriers that follow opioid addiction. Medical staff provide gold standard care, ensuring patients are receiving the health care that so many are lacking. CSTC Administration is on the forefront guiding quality care for the patients and staff. Our belief in quality of care prompted CSTC to seek out Behavioral Health Opioid Treatment Accreditation from The Joint Commission (TJC). This prestigious accreditation by TJC is renowned nationwide and exhibits an organization's pledge to promote the highest performance standards. Our patients are not just a number, they are human beings who deserve a chance at life, to break free from the chains of opioid addiction and be who they are intended to be. CSTC proudly stands behind medication-assisted treatment and the continued success methadone and buprenorphine provide to those who have lost hope to opioid addiction.



Where There is Life There is Hope

By Robin Elliott and Laurie Fugitt | Co-founders Georgia Overdose Prevention.

In 2012, a group of everyday people came together to pass a law in the state of GA. We, Georgia Overdose Prevention, are a grassroots group that was born out of our own losses of loved ones to overdose. After a lot of hard work and heartfelt emotion, we stood with Governor Deal on 4/24/14 as he signed the Georgia 911 Medical Amnesty Law and Expanded Naloxone Bill into law. The law states two things:

- **Don't Run Call 911.** First, the medical amnesty portion of our law states that anyone at the scene of a drug or alcohol overdose can call 911 for help, and as long as the caller stays with the victim until help arrives, neither the caller nor the victim can be arrested, charged or prosecuted for small amounts of drugs, drug paraphernalia, or a variety of charges related to underage consumption of alcohol.
- The second part of the law is the expanded naloxone access portion. The law states that: Any physician may, acting in good faith, prescribe naloxone to a pain management clinic, first responder, harm reduction organization, family member, friend, or other person in a position to assist a person at risk of opioid overdose, and pharmacists are permitted to dispense naloxone under that prescription. The physician, pharmacist, and person administering naloxone are immune from civil, criminal, and professional liability as long as they act in good faith and in compliance with the applicable standard of care. Our law also allows law enforcement to carry and administer naloxone in Georgia, so people should be taught to call 911 at the scene of an overdose – the responding officer may have naloxone on hand and be able to save the victim on the spot. And lastly, our law allows harm reduction organizations like Georgia Overdose Prevention to dispense naloxone under a physician's order to anyone who knows a person at risk of overdose and to train recipients in its use.

After the law passed, we thought our mission was complete however we quickly learned that it was just beginning. The opiate epidemic grows and the need for advocacy, education and implementation continues. In 2016, our group attended over 100 events spreading the message of the law and distributing and

training high risk people and their families on the use of naloxone. In addition, we had hundreds of one on one meetings with individuals all over the state of GA dispensing naloxone. Since the law passed, we are aware of 471 community reversals and 109 law enforcement reversals as a result. On December 14, 2016, Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald, Commissioner of The Georgia Department of



Public Health, issued a standing order which allows people to obtain four versions of naloxone (auto-injector, two nasal versions, vials) at Georgia pharmacies without having to present a prescription.

Our goal is to make sure that everyone in the state knows that they can call 911 and save a life without risk of arrest and that all people who need naloxone have access to it. We can be contacted at info@georgiaoverdoseprevention.org or message us on our Facebook page (Georgia 911 Good Samaritan Law) or through our website www.georgiaoverdoseprevention.org. We are counting on you to help us spread the word. Where there is life there is hope.

Message: from the President

By Jonathan Connell
President of The Opioid Treatment Providers of Georgia



On May 4th, I watched Governor Deal sign Senate Bill 88 into law. This signified the conclusion of many months of hard work for the board members of OTPG. And to say the least, it was one heck of a learning experience. After many meetings, presentations, negotiations, and

compromises, I believe we ultimately have a piece of legislation that will benefit the state of Georgia. But don't get me wrong, it's not perfect. Some parts of the bill remain contentious and others lack the scope we had hoped for. However, I believe that we were able to navigate an unfamiliar process and get a favorable result from a generally unfavorable situation. BUT, I must stress to you that our work is not done. We must remain engaged with the legislature and the regulatory departments. Our voices must continue to be heard. It is my hope that our members continue to support our efforts in this regard, because I personally see it as necessary for the positive growth of our field in Georgia.

I hope everyone is enjoying the warm Spring weather, and I look forward to seeing you all at Lake Lanier for our Annual Conference in November, if not sooner!

Sincerely,
Jonathan Connell

Default or Destiny

By Sunseehray Gorman, CADCI | Robert Dail Memorial, Commerce ,GA

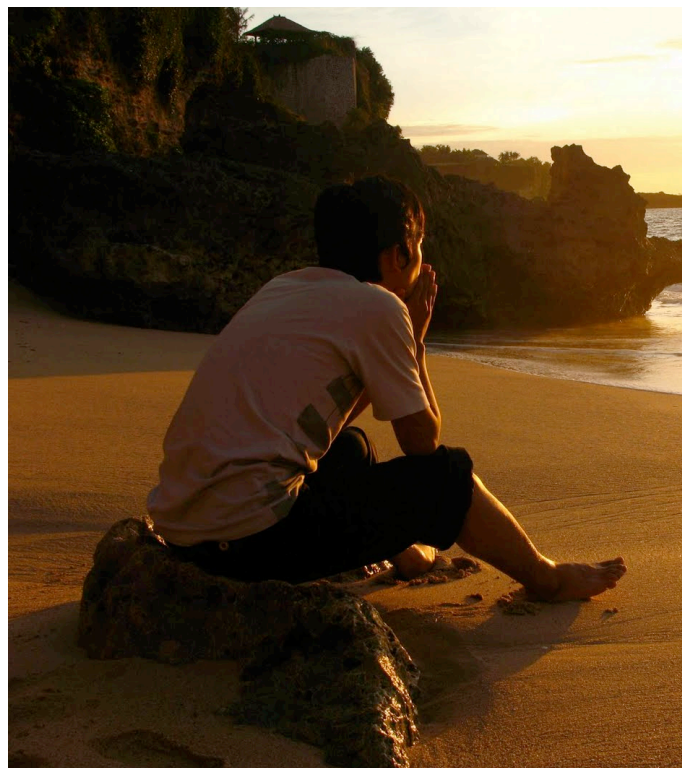


Before I can explain why I became a counselor, I have to go back to the beginning. I started in this field by default, or so I thought. I worked as Production Assistant/intern for the Travel Channel and I wanted to pursue a career in television. I was there but I was not getting paid. I needed money!!! So I decided to apply for work through a temporary agency in New York. One of the jobs I was assigned was working as a billing clerk at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx. I can remember walking past that building when I was a little girl and seeing people lined up in front of it. Before my first day working at Montefiore Medical Center I had heard about methadone, but did not have a clue what methadone treatment entailed. I learned a lot. I had a very different view about methadone treatment before I worked there, compared to my view today.

Growing up in New York City you are exposed to a lot of things just because so many people live there. I remember being around 9 or 10 years old and my father showing me someone on 125th street who was nodding. He told me “That is what drugs can do to you.” That was my first conscious lesson and it left an impression on me. Since then I have been privileged to work with other professionals, both in New York and Georgia, who were able to deal with the reality of addiction and understand that we are dealing with real people, not just nameless individuals nodding off in the streets. These professionals are passionate about helping patients identify the obstacles/barriers within themselves.

One of the lessons I’ve learned in this life is that there’s always a back story. I once read a quote” Every sinner has a future and every saint has a past.” I began to see that they were not just what society called addicts but they were people who struggled, and that is very human. The face of addiction was no longer just so and so that I knew from around the way, or a nameless person written about in the newspaper. It was about real people who have real issues.

Now fast forward to 2017. I have been a counselor in the field of addiction for 20 +years. It turned out it wasn’t really for the money, but I believe I was destined, in perhaps in some way, to make a difference in the lives of people with great potential, who just happen to be bound by substance abuse. As clinicians, Counselors and Administrators, sometimes it’s easy to forget, if we are not mindful, that we help shape and transform lives, and that is powerful. I enjoy working with this population, because if you can work in MAT and survive, you can work anywhere. I desire to use my talents to encourage the downtrodden, to uplift while uprooting, to build self-esteem in broken lives and to be a lighthouse for weary souls to reach their full potential. I hope to challenge my patients to be truly committed not just to treatment, not just their own individual recovery, but to themselves.



**“The time is always right to do what is right”
Martin Luther King Jr.**



On SALE NOW!

The OTPG video "Exploring the World of Opioid Addiction" is for sale. \$40.00 for non-members of OTPG and \$10.00 for member clinics. Call Brook Etherington (404) 377-7669 or email betherington1@gmail.com

Upcoming Training EVENTS

INTRODUCING

On Site-Training and Education



OTPG is proud to introduce on-site training and education
So what are you waiting for?
Schedule a free consultation TODAY.
Call Joelyn Alfred at (770) 840-9912

Come Join Us! become an OTPG member

The annual membership dues are listed below and are based on the current patient census of your facility.

- 0-149 patients: \$250
- 150-299 patients: \$500
- 300-499 patients: \$1,000
- 500+ patients: \$1,500

Please visit our web site for more information on membership.

OTPG 10th Annual Conference.
Lake Lanier Islands, GA
November 17, 2017
9:00A.M.—5:00 P.M.
Conference CEC's are approved by NAADAC, GACA and ADACBGA



Get to know the OTPG board members visit www.otpggeorgia.org

The benefits available to members of OTPG:

- Four free one CEC trainings during 2016
- Access to free hotline maintained by Jackson-Lewis PC, labor and employment law specialists
- Membership with the American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence (AATOD)
- Discounted education opportunities
- Affiliation with community organizations
- Updated state and federal information to include statistics, changes to regulations, available funds, etc.
- Chance to network within our industry
- Ability to purchase discounted copies of "Exploring the World of Opioid Addiction"