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Next Conference
LPCA 34th Annual Convention & Regional Conference.
LaGrange, GA
May 3-6, 2022

Board Members:

Ali McCorkle President	Erica Acebo-Johnston Secretary
Nicole Habbe Vice President	Stacey Pearce AATOD Delegate
John Haigler Treasurer	Courtney Connell Parliamentarian



2022 Welcomes a new President

real help = real hope

Message from the President

By Ali McCorkle | DM & ADR, Inc. | President, OTPG



Welcome to Spring of 2022, OTP friends!

We loved seeing everyone in-person at our Fall Conference this past year and we long to see everyone again this November at our new conference location. Let's all do our part to make sure we can be together again, because this year will be bigger and better! Thank you all for such a warm welcome as your new President. I write this article on the heels of our past President, Brook Etherington, who will continue the good fight and the Etherington family legacy to bring the best of the best to our field. Brook recognized the changing and expanding needs of our field and helped to create a non-profit in our Athens area that specializes in Harm Reduction Services. Due to the success of this organization, harm reduction and syringe services are now being offered in some of our MAT programs. Because of progressive, effective, and evidenced based programs such as these, our clients have access to more services than ever before. I challenge you all to think outside the box and see how you can expand services in your communities.

Let's continue to ensure that we provide much more for the persons we serve than medication alone. How can we reach more individuals in need of treatment? How can we creatively maintain persons in treatment who would otherwise need to leave? How can those we serve receive residential services with another treatment provider or even remain incarcerated and still access our care? OTPG sees such potential to expand what we do beyond the realm of our clinic walls and to shed the stigma that surrounds the "methadone clinics" of the past. Stay tuned for what OTPG plans to offer you in 2022!

For those of you unfamiliar with OTPG, we welcome you to join us this year. We have so many new programs in our state and we would love to have you to learn from and collaborate with this year. Since our inception, OTPG has helped clinics implement free Hepatitis A & B vaccinations, HIV testing, HBV testing, HCV testing and linkage to care, training and development for in-house HCV treatment, annual conferences and lunch and learn opportunities, countless networking opportunities, technical support with Medicaid and Medicare, AATOD membership, and many, many more positive and collaborative efforts.

Please don't miss out and join us today.

The Never Alone Clubhouse A Recovery Community Organization

By Jocelyn Croft | Never Alone Clubhouse executive director



The Never Alone Clubhouse is a safe space where members of the recovery community can form positive connections and establish healing. With our many partnerships Individuals and Families will be able to take part in learning and growing together. We host a number of recreational activities and events and provide social activities for those individuals, families and allies of recovery.

We are open daily with:

Mutual Support Groups, Peer Coaching & Peer Support, Jail Reentry Program through Douglas County Sheriffs' Department providing SOARS (Science of Addiction and Recovery) WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plans) to individuals facing incarceration, Expressional Art Groups, All Recovery Meetings, Educational Services, Job Readiness, Community Outreach, Sober Living Housing Program, Financial Literacy, Strengthening Families Program and Ally Support Together we can break the stigma of substance use disorder.

What is an RCO?

A Recovery Community Organization is a grassroots non-profit peer governed community. An RCO is a recovery focused program that provides community connection between people in recovery and allies of recovery. The RCO provides activities, community education, outreach programs, and peer-based recovery support services and peer coaching.

What we offer?

We are a place for people from all recovery backgrounds to socialize, find services, volunteer, attend workshops, read books, create art, or connect online. The RCO offers peer coaching, art classes, recovery support groups, community workshops, and so much more. The RCO is a safe place for people in recovery and allies of recovery to find comfort, resources, and support for their journey.

Who does this benefit?

The whole community! Providing a safe space for those seeking recovery services, individual support, or simply a place to connect to people who understand their journey, we can end the cycle of substance use disorder.

Please feel free to reach out at any time. www.NeverAloneCh.org sign up to become a site member and receive updates on recovery focused events at the clubhouse.
www.facebook.com/Neveralone.clubhouse
8380-C Grady Street Douglasville Georgia 30134 ph: 770-485-1294



OTPG Conference Recap WELCOME BACK 2021

By Joelyn Alfred-Lakeland Centres

The 2021 OTPG conference was an enlightened event that sparked our industry. In the midst of the pandemic we were able to “Unite and Take Action”. The Stone Mountain resort provided a safe and friendly atmosphere that enabled us to once again join together to navigate the challenges that we have yet to face and the ones that we have successfully overcome. “Welcome Back” was the common theme throughout the conference, and thanks to Scott Scheerhorn Creative Services, our OTPG 2021 intro video was very reflective and shed light on the joys of the past and the hopes of the future.

Our dedicated sponsors, presenters and volunteers were phenomenal accents that united to lay the fabric of excellence. As an industry we are strong, fearless, and each of you that attended the event were visible warriors. We missed all of you and are so thankful for your support. All I can say is look forward to 2022! We are charged and ready to go. Look forward to a new location, a new adventure and a new everything that is good.

Stay Tuned for more information.
You won't want to miss it!

Sending Hugs and more hugs,

Joeyn Alfred, OTPG Conference Chair



Kim Coley SOTA AWARD RECIPIENT



Good day everyone! It's been a minute since we incorporated an AATOD update in our newsletter and this one is a doozy. There is a lot going on in our industry at the federal level. From the NASEM two-day meeting organized to look at the SAMHSA federal regulations, to multiple bills introduced into the United States House of Representatives and Senate. We also have an upcoming national conference that will be in person, so let's dive in.

First, the NASEM workshop titled "Methadone Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder: Examining Federal Regulations and Laws" included many individuals who shared either their lived experience or academic experience in our field. Interestingly, it seemed to lack testimonies from persons who have worked in the field with some notable exceptions including Dr. Kenneth Stoller and Mark Parrino. The information resulting from the two-day workshop is too extensive to share here, so I encourage you to read this article in ATForum by Alison Knopf: <https://www.atforum.com/2022/03/nasem-methadone-expand-access-primary-care/> You can also go to this website to watch the recordings of all the workshops: <https://www.nationalacademies.org/event/03-03-2022/methadone-treatment-for-opioid-use-disorder-examining-federal-regulations-and-laws-a-workshop>

On May 15th, I headed to Washington DC (virtually) and completed four meetings with legislative staff. I met with Legislative Assistants in Senators Warnock and Ossoff's offices, as well as Representatives Austin Scott and Buddy Carter. John Haigler, the OTPG Treasurer, joined me for the meeting with Representative Carter's staff since he is a constituent in that district. This meeting was important because Mr. Carter is a sitting member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, the committee with jurisdiction over one of the bills. So, let's take a look at the proposed federal legislation that may impact our field. The first is **HR 6279 & S. 3629 Opioid Treatment Access Act** (Cong. Norcross, D-NJ; Sen. Markey, D-MA). There are components of this bill that AATOD supports, such as sections two and three that direct SAMHSA to study the impact of the COVID-19 methadone take-home exemptions, allows for OTPs to operate mobile components without a separate DEA registration, and also directs SAMHSA to study and revise the timeline for patients to receive take-home doses of methadone. These sections could improve access to treatment for patients and provide valuable information to the field and others. While those sections are good, section four of the bill needs to be rewritten because the current version would allow addiction board certified practitioners to prescribe one-month of take-home methadone doses to be dispensed from a community pharmacy without regulations or oversight. The current version would allow for indication of new patients to occur at home, and as we all know, the most crucial time during induction is days three through ten, and methadone diversion and inadvertent overdose deaths could increase exponentially if unstable patients were given monthly supplies of methadone

through community pharmacies. AATOD's position is that this type of medical maintenance model could be valuable to stable patients, so the current language should be revised to say that prescribing should only be permitted for OTP physicians treating patients enrolled in the OTP who meet the SAMHSA definition of stable. The second bill is **HR 1384 & S 445 Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment (MAT) Act** (Cong. Tonko, D-NY; Sen. Hassan, D-NH). This bill proposes to eliminate the DEA X-Waiver program across the board, which results in removing all prescriber education requirements, the limits on number of patients treated by prescribers, patient drug screening and counseling referral requirements, and the data collection currently conducted by SAMHSA. Proponents of the bill argue that any physician can prescribe opioids without oversight, but as we all know, this is a large contributing factor to the current opioid epidemic. Proponents also say this will increase access to treatment, but the real numbers show this is not necessary. **Currently, 6,141,185 Americans can be served by Certified Buprenorphine Providers**, and in the *2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, **1,600,000 Americans had an opioid use disorder in the past year**. Capacity exists to treat these patients, were all Certified Providers operating at their allotted capacities. AATOD supports increasing access to treatment for patients by: removing infrastructure and technology barriers to telehealth in rural areas; considering increase in take home allowances from highly structured, highly regulated Opiate Treatment Programs (OTP's) for eligible, stable patients to reduce transportation time and costs; supporting initiatives to use medication units and mobile vans operated by highly regulated OTP's and for which DEA has current guidelines; and supporting removal of Prior Authorization requirements for treatment entry, for all insurance types, expanding on CARA 3.0's proposal on this matter. The final bill in consideration has only been introduced into the House and is **HR 2067 Medication Access and Training Expansion (MATE) Act** (Cong. Trahan, D-MA). AATOD fully supports this legislation as it proposes to increase access to education and funding grant programs for education of buprenorphine prescribers. Education requirements and opportunities for prescribers is key since only 8% of American Medical Schools offer education on Addiction.

Finally, the good news! AATOD will be having an in-person conference in Baltimore, October 30th through November 3rd of 2022. I'm so excited that we will all have the opportunity to learn and see each other in person again at this fabulous event. Visit <https://www.eventscribe.net/2022/AATOD/> to register for the conference and book your hotel.

1 <https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment/practitioner-resources/DATA-program-data>, updated daily, March 19, 2021.

2 Hoffman, Jane. "Most Doctors are Ill-Equipped to Deal with the Opioid Epidemic: Few Medical Schools Teach Addiction." *New York Times* (New York) 10, September, 2018.

Upcoming Training EVENTS

Harm Reduction for Skeptics: Practical Applications for Alcohol Use Disorders Wednesday,
April 20, 2022 @ 3:00-5:00pm ET (2CT/1MT/12PT)

The Intersection of DEA, Opioids, and MAT Wednesday,
April 27, 2022 @ 3:00-4:00pm ET (2CT/1MT/12PT)

Do's, Don'ts, and How-To's: Best Practices in Group Facilitation Wednesday,
May 4, 2022 @ 3:00-4:00pm ET (2CT/1MT/12PT)

Effective Treatment for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence Wednesday,
May 11, 2022 @ 3:00-4:30pm ET (2CT/1MT/12PT)

Deconstructing Substance Use and Wellness from a Sociocultural Perspective Wednesday,
May 25, 2022 @ 3:00-4:00pm ET (2CT/1MT/12PT)

Using Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) to Engage the Most Challenging Clients Wednesday,
June 1, 2022 @ 3:00pm-4:30pm ET (2CT/1MT/12PT)

Trauma Informed Relapse Prevention Wednesday,
June 29, 2022 @ 3:00pm-5:00pm ET (2CT/1MT/12PT)

Here is the link to the trainings through NAADAC.
<https://www.naadac.org/2022-april-june-webinars>

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.

AATOD 2022 Conference
In Baltimore, Maryland at the Baltimore Hilton Inner Harbor
October 30 – November 3, 2022
More information here:
<https://www.eventscribe.net/2022/AATOD/>



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

The benefits available to members of OTPG:

- Four free one CEC trainings during 2021
- 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"