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Come Join Us!

Next OTPG
Meeting
OTPG Conference

4/28/2023

CCBH - St. Marys, Ga.

Board Members:

Ali McCorkle
President

Courtney Connell
Parliamentarian

George Coley
Vice-President

Erica Acebo-Johnston
Secretary

Kimberly Henderson
Treasurer

Joelyn Alfred
Conference Chair

WELCOME George and Kimberly!



real help = real hope

OTPG QUARTERLY APRIL 22, 2023

Message from the President

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



Welcome to Spring of 2023,

Happy Spring, Georgia providers! We hope the warmer weather finds you all in good spirits and we welcome you all in the spirit of collaboration. If you haven't yet joined OTPG, we welcome you to do so. This year brings big change within our

organization, as we continue to grow and try to bring the best of the best providers together to learn from each other and mutually serve our patients. Now more than ever, it's crucial that providers stay abreast of what is happening within our industry at a national and state level. There is no better way to do this than to actively participate with OTPG.

OTPG requires that all members serve on at least one committee, so that we can gain valuable help and insight from each program. I can't stress enough how much this is needed. We have much work to do, and we are all part of an important team that must work together to advocate for our patients and our programs.

We are making a conscious effort to move meetings around the state, so that providers in all corners of the state can attend in-person, as well as offering virtual options for those unable to travel. We also have several committees that we invite all of you to participate in year round.

We would like to welcome back Joelyn Alfred as an official Executive Board Member, whose Conference Chair position will now become part of our Executive Board.

And with many smiles, we would also like to congratulate Courtney Connell on the birth of her beautiful son, Knox Samuel. Congratulations, Courtney!

A Special Tribute "Don Baker's Passing"

By Joelyn Alfred | Lakeland Centres



Donald W. Baker
2/2/1946 — 1/29/2023

Our Love For YOU

Our Don, Sweet Don,
We truly miss You
This feels like a Dream
That hasn't come True
But when we hear your laughter in the Wind
We think of that Smirky Witty Grin
And when we share memories,
with Michael, your Dear Friend
We remember the many stories you told
at our Conferences
Then we take a moment and Realize
That although this is the Reality
The peace IS that our LOVE for YOU
Will forever Be.

We Love You Don.
By Joelyn Alfred

Conference Recap "It Was A New 2022"

By Joelyn Alfred | Lakeland Centres



Bravo! A Standing Ovation for the Successful 2022 OTPG Conference!

The illustrious stage was set using the Beautiful Omni Hotel- at the Battery Atlanta, as our backdrop. On point

were our spectacular presenters who helped us to broaden our horizon with excellent facts, invigorating ideas, and tips on "How Can We Access You?"

Kudos to our Keynote Speaker- Cassandra "Yo' Sis" Bingaman. She expertly satiated our palates with

inspirational, pertinent, and refreshing words of encouragement!

Wow! We were also treated to a spectacular and delicious plate of targeted knowledge served by our Surprise Guest Speaker- Representative Teri Anulewicz.

Thank You!

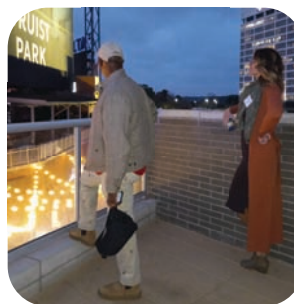
A Round of Applause and HUGE THANK YOU

to All of the sponsors, presenters and volunteers! Also, a very special THANK YOU to the CARES team of the Georgia Council of Substance Abuse!

Collectively, we are a strong electrifying force that continues to trailblaze and reinvigorate our industry in offering, "Real Help, Real Hope!" We look forward to seeing you all again soon at our 2023 conference on November 10, 2023- Friday. We can hardly Wait!

I already know that it too will be Great!

Hugs and more hugs,
Joelyn Alfred-OTPG Conference Chair



Hello! I hope this AATOD update finds everyone well and enjoying the beautiful Spring weather we've been having across Georgia. As many of you know, this will be my final AATOD update article for the OTPG newsletter. I delayed writing it to the point of irritating Joelyn, since she's in charge of getting this newsletter out on time. After all, this final article is another reminder that my position of representing Georgia on AATOD is ending soon. I've truly enjoyed representing the providers and have learned and grown so much through my over fifteen years of having a seat on the AATOD Board. I hope that the next person understands the responsibility of this position and represents our state well! I'm always available to help with the transition and field questions from anyone that reaches out. I am pleased to report that Mark Parrino has agreed to allow me to remain on the AATOD Legislative Committee as an ad hoc member. This means you guys have not escaped email updates from me quite yet! Due to his decision, I will still be attending the Hill Day portions of the AATOD meetings, which means I will continue to have appointments with our congressional representatives and may at some point in the future reach out to you to have an appointment with me or contact your congressperson to address an issue impacting our field.

On to the actual AATOD update! On March 29th, Nicole Habbe and I headed to Washington, D.C. to complete two in person meetings with legislative staff. We also completed three virtual meetings on various days surrounding the March 29th date. Many of you may remember that Section 4 of the OTAA legislation last year did not make it into the final bill that was passed by the House and Senate. Unfortunately, Senator Markey and Representative Norcross have created an entire bill that addresses this section and reintroduced it as **H.R. 1359 and S. 644, the Modernizing Opioid Treatment Access Act (MOTAA)**. This new bill would allow addiction certified and OTP physicians to write prescriptions for methadone to be filled in community pharmacies. As with the bill last year, proponents of this strategy assert that this will increase access to care that is badly needed. AATOD's position is that there may be unintended consequences to public health and the overdose rate for methadone if MOTAA is passed. AATOD also states that the results of removing the X waiver as a means to increasing access have also not been seen yet. These messages were conveyed by Nicole and myself during our meetings. We also shared the significant differences between buprenorphine and methadone, as well as the differences between treatment in an OTP versus a doctor's office setting. We both feel that our message was heard during many of these meetings, with staff members asking pertinent questions. Meetings were held with Senators Warnock and Ossoff's offices, as well as Representatives Buddy Carter, Lucy McBath, and Andrew Clyde.

As usual during the board meeting, many topics were discussed. There seems to be great expansion of the mobile van option for treatment. This is a real way that more rural communities will gain access to safe and effective treatment. One of the mobile van manufacturing companies report they have thirty vans in the works that will be deployed in various locations throughout the US. While it seems like Georgia may be covered up with clinics, there are still some very real gaps in access in the most rural parts of our state. I hope that members of OTPG advocate to the State to allow mobile vans. An update on the New York legislation passed last year was provided. As many of you may know, NY passed a law that requires all jails and prisons to offer MAT with all three medications to those incarcerated. New York has begun this roll-out by targeting those that are already in care receiving medications and ensuring they continue on those medications if incarcerated. They have identified at least five jails or prisons within the state that have partnerships with OTPs to provide medication. The next stage for them is to begin inducting persons with OUD that become incarcerated and are not currently in treatment. While Georgia may not have this law, we do have a new and very valuable ally in the State now. Our very own Erica Acebo-Johnston is now the Statewide Medication Assisted Treatment Coordinator for Accountability courts in Georgia. She has begun working to make connections between the court system and OTPs in areas where those courts are receiving State funds. She is also working to provide education and connections within systems that don't receive funds. I hope that many of you will be able to participate in meetings with her and make real progress towards our field's integration into the Criminal Justice world!

And finally! AATOD will be having an in-person conference in Las Vegas, Nevada May 18th through 22nd, 2024 at the Planet Hollywood hotel. The room rate is a reasonable \$209/night and this includes the \$45.95 resort fee. I'm so excited that by obtaining a new position within our field, albeit a different area, I'll be able to have the opportunity to learn at the conference and see everyone at this fabulous event! The website link and registration information will be disseminated at a later date by my predecessor.



**And with that, as I get teary eyed,
I conclude my final AATOD Update.
It's been quite a pleasure to represent
all of you over the years and I hope we
can continue to work together towards**

the betterment of our field! Stacey Pearce

Fentanyl Awareness

By Your Friends at OTPG and the DEA



National Fentanyl Awareness Day (May 10, 2022)
It was aimed to amplify nationwide efforts to increase awareness and decrease demand for fentanyl, which is a highly addictive synthetic opioid that continues to drive the overdose epidemic.

According to the CDC, 107,375 people in the United States died of drug overdoses and drug poisonings in the 12-month period ending in January 2022. A staggering 67 percent of those deaths involved synthetic opioids like fentanyl. Some of these deaths were attributed to fentanyl mixed with other illicit drugs like cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin, with many users unaware they were actually taking fentanyl. Only two milligrams of fentanyl is considered a potentially lethal dose; it's particularly dangerous for someone who does not have a tolerance to opioids.

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 website
for more information on
membership.

www.otpggeorgia.org



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

The benefits available to members of OTPG:

- Annual CEC training
- 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"