



Committee Descriptions

The Arizona Psychiatric Society has had the benefit of its members working with passion to advance the highest principles of psychiatry. Each is essential to the continued work of the organization. Committee members are welcome, but not required, to attend the monthly meetings of the Executive Council. Each Committee meets on a schedule determined by its members and by the work to be completed by the Committee. Committee participation is an important and vital way to join the leadership of the Society, to familiarize yourself with the workings of governance and the Executive Council, and to choose to step into an executive leadership role or Committee Chair position. Associate Chair positions are open to Resident-Fellow Members interested in co-leading and mentorship by the Committee Chair.

Listed below are the current committee descriptions for the Arizona Psychiatric Society and their leadership:

Communications: Chair (Open) and Associate Chair (Open)

The Communications Committee oversees the public affairs outreach and media efforts of the Society, with a goal to improve the positive image of psychiatry. Members can designate a specific interest in public affairs/media response, social media, website development, Newsletter, or member communications. Currently, the Newsletter Editor position has rotated on a guest basis, but the position is open to a member volunteer wishing to serve in that role continuously. Members are also welcomed to sign on to targeted social media outreach around a topic or behavioral health awareness event.

Disaster Psychiatry Task Force: Chair (Open)

The Disaster Psychiatry Task Force works collaboratively within the community to advance awareness and response capabilities around the same, which may include public health disasters such as the pandemic, man-made events (such as climate response), or acts of violence impacting the community. This work has also included the impacts to physicians and the advocacy for destigmatization of mental health through the revision to the licensure questions at the Arizona Medical Board. This Committee is key to participation in the Interprofessional Behavioral Health Collaborative of Arizona.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Jasleen Chhatwal, MBBS, MD, Chair

The DEI Committee is formed to advance the considerations of diversity, health equity, and inclusion in all matters impacting the practice of psychiatry and the membership and leadership of APS. It is the goal of the Committee that awareness of the goals and principles of DEI be incorporated into all Committees and the work of the leadership of APS. The full charge of this newly formed Committee is being developed, and if you are passionate about this topic, your contributions can lay a strong foundation and pave a way to make a difference moving forward.

Early Career Psychiatrist (ECP): Srinivas Dannaram, MD, Co-Chair, Nathan Jones, MD, Co-Chair

Early Career psychiatrists are defined as General Members in Years one through eight following graduation from psychiatric residency. The ECP Committee is comprised of General Members in these practice years, working collaboratively together to represent the voice of the early career psychiatrist in decisions and leadership of the Society, and in the planning of educational, social, and professional networking events that reflect the interests of its members.

Education: Stephen (Larry) Mecham, DO, Chair

The Education Committee is responsible for the planning of professional educational events, with primary focus on the annual scientific session of the Arizona Psychiatric Society, and works collaboratively with other professional organizations, including the Arizona Society for Child & Adolescent Psychiatry in the development of educational activities which serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships that a psychiatric physician uses to provide services for patients, the public, or the profession.

Ethics: Jehangir (Jay) B. Bastani, MD, Chair

The Ethics Committee ensures APS and its members abide by the ethical code of the medical profession, specifically defined in American Psychiatric Association's Principles of Medical Ethics with Annotations Especially Applicable to Psychiatry ("Principles"). The Ethics Committee is responsible for responding to members' request for guidance on ethical issues they are facing in their practice, providing educational information on ethical issues to members, and responding to, reviewing, and issuing decision recommendations on ethics investigations relating to an APS member.

brought forward by an individual with appropriate standing, jurisdiction, and within the allowed time frame. The APA provides ethics training to Committee members on the Principles and appropriate procedures.

Forensic: Jack Potts, MD, Co-Chair, and Scott Kirkorsky, MD, Co-Chair

The Forensic Committee advocates for the professional interests of APS members and the interests of their patients with respect to psychiatry and the law (including but not limited to corrections, the Courts, and law enforcement). When appropriate, the Forensic Committee will bring issues to the attention of the Government Affairs Committee.

Government Affairs f/k/a Legislative: Don J. Fowls, MD, Chair

The Government Affairs Committee advocates for the professional interests of APS members and the interests of their patients with public officials, elected and appointed, serving the State of Arizona. It monitors local, state, and federal legislative and advocacy issues that are of concern to Arizona psychiatrists and their patients and works closely with the APS Lobbyist. The Government Affairs Committee reviews active legislation and determines or recommends to leadership the position of support or opposition on issues relating to mental health, and its members participate in the RTS system (posting comment on active legislation), meet with, and maintain relationships with their elected representatives, and may choose to testify or post comment on priority issues. The Committee has current work groups active with focus on mental health parity and patient safety.

Medical Student: (Newly formed) (Co-Chairs to be elected by the medical student members)

The Medical Student Committee (MSC) serves to connect medical students in the State of Arizona who have an interest in psychiatry with the Arizona Psychiatric Society through service, education, and mentoring opportunities. The Committee's goals and activities include but are not limited to community service and outreach projects; connecting students with their peers, attendings, and psychiatric residency programs in Arizona; and hosting workshops and guest speakers to promote professional and personal growth of medical students within the MSC.

Membership: Payam Sadr, MD, and Nicholas Ahrendt, MD, Co-Chairs

The Membership Committee promotes the recruitment, retention, and recognition of membership in APS. The work of the Committee includes membership drives, promoting activities and opportunities to retain members, increase engagement, and recruit new members. The Committee invites members of distinction to apply for Distinguished Fellow and is key to developing and supporting nominations that meet the criteria for distinction to the APA.

Nomination: Gurjot Marwah, MD, Chair

The Nomination Committee invites and reviews nominations to serve as executive officers of the Society and prepares a recommended slate for acceptance by the Executive Council in advance of the annual business meeting. The Nomination Committee also reviews nominations for the annual Society awards and recognition and makes recommendation regarding awards to the Executive Council.

Resident-Fellow Member (RFM): Reema Chopra, DO, Kailee Marin, DO, and Chase Crookham, DO, Co-Chairs

Resident-Fellow Members (RFM) are those members currently in psychiatric residency or fellowship programs. The RFM Committee members work collaboratively to represent the voice of psychiatric residents and fellows in decisions and leadership of the Society, and in the planning of educational, social, and professional networking events that reflect the interests of its RFMs. The RFM Committee Co-Chairs are also the RFM Co-Representatives, each chosen to represent a current Arizona psychiatric residency program.

Women's Group, Bahar Altaha, MD, Chair

The Women's Group works to promote the voice and professional goals and needs of women in psychiatry through the planning of educational, social, and professional events and other communication and outreach.