

Scott Benson, MD Candidate for Area 5 Trustee

The upheaval in the political landscape in November came with assurance that healthcare reform will change direction. This new political landscape will impact our efforts to deliver quality psychiatric care, fund our research efforts, and spread the advances in psychiatric care to the clinic. To take advantage of these challenges psychiatrists must band together as a community and speak with one voice on the important issues. In the upheaval it is critical for the APA, the IAPA, and other organizations of psychiatrists to align our mission and our goals. Working shoulder to shoulder we are more effective. Our efforts contributed to the passage of federal legislation demanding parity for mental illness treatment. And in December we saw passage of the "21st Century Cures Act" which included important legislation for our patients and their families.

We won--at least in Congress. Now we face more pressures at the state level where insurance companies are asking tough questions about the treatments which our patients need. **The APA needs to work with organizations like IAPA which have a strategy for advocacy, can communicate effectively with members, and have education programs enhancing the quality and value of mental health services.**

During my service on the Board of APA I was a strong advocate for a reinvigorated Council on Global Psychiatry and this Council has opened new links with IAPA and through the IAPA to other organizations serving International Medical Graduates.

And the Board adopted a revised strategic plan that has a strong statement for supporting and increasing diversity within the APA. The IAPA has been an important source for APA leaders through your effective education and mentoring programs. These programs will serve as a model as the APA pushes for an end to disparities in mental health care.

I have earned a reputation as an effective communicator. This will continue to be a focus if I am re-elected Area Trustee. And, of course, I am available to you, eager to learn more about your organization; and connecting you to resources in your DB and the APA that can help find a solution.

To reach me - R.Scott.BensonMD@gmail.com. To learn more - www.RScottBensonMD.com

Thank you for this opportunity. And I would appreciate your vote.