

Everyone,

“Time Out – Charting a Path for Improving Performance Measure,” NEJM, 10 May, says” Although most physicians view the delivery of high-quality care as a professional imperative, performance-measurement activities face increasing resistance from physicians and some policymakers who believe that current measurements are not meaningful. . . . Yet U.S. physician practices are spending \$15.4 billion each year – about \$40,000 per physician – to report on performance. . . . For now, we need a time-out during which to assess and revise our approach to physician performance measurement.”

I assume this position could be taken with other mental health professions.

In 2016, synthetic opioids eclipsed prescription opioids as the most common medication involved in overdose deaths in the US. Widespread public health messaging is needed, and clinicians and lay person likely to respond to an overdose should be trained on opioid risks and equipped with multiple doses of naloxone [JAMA, 1 May 2018].

If looking for major resources that justify the importance of insurance companies to fully support psychotherapy, including long-term psychotherapy, see this month’s Journal of Psychiatric Practice, Vol 24, No 3, which offers some pointers to justify coverage. Lead is Susan Lazar, MD, whom many of you know.

April’s Psychiatric Annals focused on intravenous use of ketamine and listed many off-label uses: anesthetic, pain-control, hypotension, severe reactive airway disease, major depressive disorder, acute suicidal ideation, posttraumatic stress disorder, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

“Lorazepam remains the gold standard for treatment of catatonia regardless of etiology” [this month’s Annals of Clinical Psychiatry].

TIME, 21 May, “Can Bad Men Change?” Article describes men in court-mandated psychotherapy for sex offenders. Article says that punitive measures alone have not been found to meaningfully increase community safety. Meanwhile, therapy – when paired with tough parole restrictions – can significantly reduce the chance of re-offending according to the American Psychological Association.” That is consistent with my experience years ago at ST Es. I have no exact data, but those we discharged usually stayed out of trouble.

Relative to Screen Use Disorder, Wall Street Journal’s “The Teenage Social-Media Trap,” 6 May 2018, some reflections in This Week, 13 April:

- 1] If someone cannot stop cold turkey, try at least to avoid using any social media before lunch.
- 2] Mute or unfollow those who post nonstop.
- 3] Physically log out of the account.

In the May 18 The Economist, a summary of recent research on ADHD:

- 1] In Paediatrics, a study of Medicaid families, found that by the age of 8, nearly 20% of those studied, had received a psychiatric diagnosis.
- 2] Just over 10% of children in the study received medication to alter their mental status.
- 3] A GWU study reported 12% of American children and adolescence had a diagnosis of ADHD in 2016, an increase of 43% since 2003.
- 4] A University of Maryland study reported 60% of children in foster care had a psychiatric diagnosis.

5] Dr Zito of Univ of Maryland: These kids have “little hearts, little brains, and little livers. We really don’t know the physiology of young kids and what will be impacted of these potent drugs.”

Notes from the American Psychiatric Annual meeting earlier this month:

1] Maryland’s Anita Everett, MD, had a very successful year as American Psychiatric Association {APA} President. [APA “year” is May to May.]

2] “Biopsychosocial Psychiatry: 21st Century Psychiatry or Empty Slogan,” Sorel made case that it is far from empty -- around the globe.

3] “Dissociation in PTSD & in the Courts: A Literature Review, Alyssa Beda and Eindra Khin Khin concluded that of all the dissociative phenomena recorded in the DSM and applied to courts, PTSD with dissociation appears most likely to hold up as a criminal defense.

3] “The Life of a New York City Ballet Principal: A Sports Psychiatric View Through the Open Glass Description” was presented by Tony Baum.

4] Liza Gold addressed the principles of suicide risk assessment and adaptations needed for issues such as firearm suicide with different populations such as inpatients, outpatients, teens, and veterans, as well as physician risk management of suicidal patients.

5] The experience at rebuilding Saint Es was used by Phillip Candilis and others to discuss the complex ethical challenges in redesigning a psychiatric hospital to provide quality, ethically informed, and fully integrated psychiatric and medical care.

6] Despite wishes of some, the Goldwater Rule was NOT changed.

More from the APA Annual Meeting in a future Sentinel.

Roger