

Texas Psychiatrist



Legislative and Election Updates

Eric Woomer, Federation of Texas Psychiatry Public Policy Consultant



Eric Woomer

Results from last month's Texas primaries crystallized the political landscape heading into the 2026 general election, while also setting up several consequential runoffs that will shape the final contours of the November ballot. While there were few major surprises for either side, turnout was competitive for both parties.

In the marquee event, the hotly contested U.S. Senate race, State Representative James Talarico bested U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett and secured the Democratic nomination. The Republican ticket will move to a runoff between Attorney General Ken Paxton and U.S. Senator John Cornyn, setting up a high-profile intraparty contest that will likely draw national attention.

Interestingly, at last count, nearly 2.2 million Texans cast ballots for Democratic Senate candidates Talarico and Crockett, while a hair over two million voted in the Republican primary trio of Cornyn, Paxton, and Wesley Hunt, an unusually balanced showing that reflects significant engagement on both sides. More to the point, it puts the race squarely in the "competitive" category and should draw significant national Democratic money to the state – particularly if Paxton is ultimately the GOP nominee.

The Governor's race produced the predicted outcome, with Governor Greg Abbott coasting to renomination. Abbott will face State Rep. Gina Hinojosa in the general election this fall.

Similarly, in the Lieutenant Governor's race, incumbent Dan Patrick easily secured the Republican nomination, reinforcing his continued dominance within the GOP electorate. Patrick will face the winner of the Democratic runoff between State Rep. Vikki Goodwin and Marcos Velez in November.

The Attorney General race will also remain unsettled until May. U.S. Rep. Chip Roy and State Sen. Mayes Middleton advanced to the Republican runoff after emerging from a crowded field. On the Democratic side, former Galveston mayor Joe Jaworski appears to have eked into a runoff, with State Sen. Nathan Johnson narrowly missed the runoff threshold, finishing just short with approximately 48 percent of the vote.

One of the more decisive statewide outcomes occurred in the Comptroller's race, where former State Sen. Don Huffines captured the Republican nomination outright, winning roughly 61 percent of the vote and avoiding a runoff against Acting Comptroller Kelly Hancock and Railroad Commissioner Christi Craddick.

In a test of "who's endorsement matters most," the Agriculture Commissioner race produced one of the evening's notable upsets. Nate Sheets (endorsed by Abbott) defeated three-term incumbent Sid Miller (favored by President Donald Trump) in the Republican primary and will face Democrat Clayton Tucker in the general election.

In the race for Railroad Commissioner, the outcome remains unresolved. Incumbent Jim Wright and GOP firebrand challenger Bo French were in a dead heat and will advance to a runoff. The winner will face State Rep. Jon Rosenthal in the November general. French, an ex-Tarrant County GOP chairman, is prone to making headlines for his controversial public statements, and if he prevails in the May runoff, the fall could become interesting for this powerful energy regulatory seat.

In the Land Commissioner race, incumbent Dr. Dawn Buckingham ran unopposed in the Republican primary and will face Democrat Benjamin Flores in November.

Beyond the statewide contests, several congressional races produced notable developments. In Congressional District 2, State Rep. Steve Toth ousted incumbent Congressman Dan Crenshaw, one of the most significant upsets of the evening. In CD 9, State Rep. Briscoe Cain and Alex Mealer head to a runoff, in another race where the endorsements of Abbott (Cain) and Trump (Mealer) diverged. Former Major League Baseball star Mark Teixeira secured the Republican nomination in CD 21, placing him on a path toward joining the Texas congressional delegation. And in CD 35, State Rep. John Lujan advances to a runoff against Carlos De La Cruz in the GOP primary.

The Texas Senate also saw a handful of competitive primaries. State Rep. Trent Ashby soundly defeated Rhonda Ward in Senate District 3, formerly held by Sen. Robert Nichols, and now enters the general election

as the clear favorite given the district's partisan makeup. In other Senate contests, former Montgomery County District Attorney Brett Ligon and State Rep. David Cook secured their nominations and enter November as strong favorites to replace former Senators Brandon Creighton and Brian Birdwell, respectively.

In the Texas House, a few incumbent defeats drew particular attention. State Reps. Cecil Bell, Chris Turner and Stan Kitzman all lost their primaries, marking two of the most notable legislative upsets. Several closely watched House incumbents successfully defended their seats, including Reps. Ken King, Angelia Orr, Will Metcalf, Stan Gerdes, Terri Leo Wilson, Pat Curry, Keresa Richardson (who defeated former Rep. Frederick Frazier), Jeff Leach, Candy Noble, Marc LaHood, Mark Dorazio, and Lacey Hull. Rep. Hubert Vo was forced into runoff against Darlene Breaux to retain his seat.

A number of open seat races also produced new faces likely to join the Legislature next session. Among the most notable winners were Armin Mizani, Jay Hardaway, Pooja Sethi, Cheryl Bean, Jorge Borrego, Holly Jeffries, Rocky Thigpen, and Scott Bowen, each emerging from competitive primaries. In House District 1, Chris Spencer edged Josh Bray on the GOP ticket to replace departing Rep. Gary VanDeaver, while Democrats Julio Salinas and Seby Hadid and Republicans Sergio Sanchez and Gary Groves will head to runoffs in HD 14, all vying to replace retiring Rep. Bobby Guerra, a Democrat.

What does it all mean?

The most notable feature of this election was the surge in Democratic turnout. Democrats outpaced Republicans each day of early voting and again on Election Day, an uncommon dynamic in recent Texas primary cycles, which gives Democrats reason for optimism heading into the fall. At the same time, analysts have noted that many of the new participants in the Democratic primary appear to be voters who regularly participate in general elections but do not typically vote in primaries. As a result, it remains unclear whether this elevated participation reflects a durable shift in the electorate or simply a temporary expansion of the primary electorate driven by particularly high-

profile races.

Attention will now turn to whether that energy carries through to November. The high-profile runoff between John Cornyn and Ken Paxton in the Republican U.S. Senate primary will almost certainly attract significant national attention. As that contest develops, and as the general election approaches, Texas is likely to see a substantial influx of political spending from national party committees, advocacy organizations, and independent groups seeking to influence both the runoff and the November electorate, which could impact down-ballot contests.

From a legislative perspective, the results suggest that the Texas House continues to trend incrementally to the right, with several contests reinforcing the growing influence of populist and activist factions within the Republican primary electorate. While most incumbents prevailed, the broader pattern of primary outcomes indicates an electorate that remains increasingly responsive to ideological and grassroots challenges, a dynamic that will continue to shape legislative priorities and internal politics heading into the next session.

Nevertheless, "MAGA" gains in GOP primaries were not as profound as some have predicted, meaning many November House races in evenly divided Republican districts will feature chiefly traditional GOP incumbents against Democrats. On balance, this bolsters the outlook for House Speaker Dustin Burrows to continue to wield the gavel. Abbott and Patrick both look strong heading into November, unsurprisingly. Overall, just one Texas Senate seat appears to be in play (Senate District 9, recently filled in a special election by Democrat Sen. Taylor Rehmet in a massive upset of Leigh Wambgans, with both candidates back on the ballot for the general election) and perhaps three House seats could be in position to flip R to D. ■

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TSP Spring Conference and Scientific Program
Contemporary Issues and Innovations in Psychiatric Practice

April 24-26, 2026 • Austin, TX

REGISTER ONLINE:
www.txpsych.org/2026tsppspring



TSCAP Annual Convention and Scientific Program

July 17-19, 2026
 Moody Gardens Hotel
 Galveston, TX

Early Bird Registration Now Open:
www.txpsych.org/2026-tscap-convention



The Federation of Texas Psychiatry has furthered our mission to serve as a United Voice for Psychiatry on social media! Follow us on Twitter @FedTXPsych; Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn



TSPP Spring Committee Meetings and Continuing Medical Education Program

April 24-26, 2026 • The Westin Austin at The Domain



Register Online: www.txpsych.org/2026tsppspring

“Contemporary Issues and Innovations in Psychiatric Practice”

Join your colleagues for the 2026 committee meetings and Spring CME Program of the Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians on April 24-26, 2026 at The Westin at The Domain, 11301 Domain Drive, Austin, TX 78758. Register online: www.txpsych.org/2026tsppspring.

Meeting Highlights

- **Spring CME Program** – 5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™
- **TSPP Committee Meetings** – Open to all members, including Residents and Fellows in Training
- **Networking Opportunities** – Connect with peers from across Texas
- **Friday Member Mixer and Sponsored Teva Presentation**
- **Kendra Scott Trunk Show**, Saturday from 10am-1pm
- **Exhibit Hall** – Explore opportunities with industry partners
- **Government Affairs Committee & Luncheon Program**
- **Complimentary Refreshments** for registered attendees
- **Executive Council Meeting & Officer Installation** for the 2026–27 term

Meeting Location / Information

We’re returning to The Westin Austin at The Domain, situated in one of Austin’s most dynamic neighborhoods. Enjoy the hotel’s onsite restaurant, 24-hour Fitness Studio, and outdoor pool. The surrounding Domain area boasts upscale shopping, diverse dining, and exciting nightlife options such as Gloria’s Latin Cuisine, iPic Theaters, Topgolf, and Punch Bowl Social.

POSTER SESSION

Medical Students, Residents and Fellows in Training who are members of TSPP, TSCAP or TAP will have posters on display Saturday. Please take time to visit with them and learn about their research.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!

Visit with exhibitors Saturday to be eligible for door prizes during refreshment breaks!

PLATINUM

Teva Pharmaceuticals

GOLD

Qbtech Inc.

Teva Medical Affairs

EXHIBITORS

AbbVie

American Professional Agency

Geode Health

HealthTech USA

Professional Risk Management Services

Qbtech Inc.

Teva Medical Affairs

Teva Pharmaceuticals

Texas Foundation for Psychiatric Education and Research

The Menninger Clinic

UTMB – Correctional Managed Care

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Friday, April 24

4:00 pm – 8:30 pm
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Registration
Texas Academy of Psychiatry
Board of Trustees Meeting
Chapter Leadership Forum Meeting
TSCAP Executive Committee
Federation Delegate Assembly Meeting
Member Mixer and
Sponsored Teva Presentation

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
7:30 pm – 9:30 pm

Saturday, April 25

7:00 am – 7:00 pm
7:00 am – 8:15 am

Registration
Foundation Board of Directors
Breakfast Meeting
Exhibit Hall & Poster Presentation Set Up
Continental Breakfast
Exhibits & Posters

7:00 am – 8:00 am
7:30 am – 9:30 am
7:30 am – 6:00 pm
8:30 am – 10:00 am

COUNCIL ON LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

- Ethics Committee
- Distinguished Fellowship Committee
- Finance Committee
- Professional Practice Management Committee
- CME Committee
- Resident-Fellow Training Section

10:00 am – 10:20 am
10:20 am – 11:50 am

Refreshment Break with Exhibitors and Poster Session

COUNCILS ON SERVICE & EDUCATION MEETINGS

- Academic Psychiatry Committee
- Children & Adolescents Committee
- Forensic Psychiatry Committee
- Public Mental Health Services Committee

11:50 am – 12:10 pm
12:10 pm – 1:10 pm
1:10 pm – 7:10 pm
2:50 pm – 3:10 pm
7:15 pm – 9:00 pm

Refreshment Break and Door Prize Drawings with Exhibitors and Poster Session
Lunch Program (and Government Affairs Council on Advocacy Meeting)

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM: “Contemporary Issues and Innovations in Psychiatric Practice”

Refreshment Break and Door Prize Drawings with Exhibitors and Poster Session
Dinner Reception

Sunday, April 26

8:30 am – 9:30 am
9:00 am – 11:00 am

Registration
Executive Council Breakfast Meeting



The Westin Austin at The Domain



TSPP Spring Committee Meetings and Continuing Medical Education Program

April 24-26, 2026 • The Westin Austin at The Domain

Register Online: www.txpsych.org/2026tsppspring



“Contemporary Issues and Innovations in Psychiatric Practice”

5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™ with 1.5 of the Hours designated for Medical Ethics/Professional Responsibility

Maternal-Fetal Psychiatry: Managing Psychiatric High-Risk Pregnancies (maximum 1.5 credit hours)

D. Jeffrey Newport, MD, MS, MDiv

Objectives: The learning objectives for this activity have been designed to address clinician competence. Upon conclusion of the activity participants should be able to:

- Understand the prevalence of prenatal mental illness and maternal use of CNS active medications during pregnancy.
- Describe the potential adverse impact of maternal mental illness during gestation including its impact on maternal health behaviors, obstetrical and delivery complications, and fetal neurodevelopment.
- Identify the risks and benefits of psychotropic treatment during pregnancy and lactation.
- Use a model for a rational application of psychotropic reproductive safety data to prenatal decision making.

Thyroid Disorders – What every Psychiatrist Should Know (maximum 1 credit hour)

Sowmya Boddhula, MD

Objectives: The learning objectives for this activity have been designed to address clinician competence. Upon conclusion of the activity participants should be able to:

- Identify common endocrine disorders.
- Know when to refer to an endocrinologist.
- Be cognizant of how endocrine disorders may exacerbate/contribute to psychiatric symptoms.

Ethics: Artificial Intelligence in Psychiatry: Foundations for Ethical and Responsible Clinical Practice (maximum 1.5 credit hours)

Viv Babber, MD

Objectives: The learning objectives for this activity have been designed to address clinician competence. Upon conclusion of the activity participants should be able to:

- Build AI literacy and fluency to recognize appropriate versus high-risk AI applications in psychiatric practice, including clinical and operational tools, while identifying governance, bias, and patient-safety risks.
- Evaluate AI tools through an ethical and regulatory lens, applying state requirements and organizational guidelines to protect patient trust and uphold professional accountability.
- Develop the capability to lead proactive, responsible AI adoption and implementation within private practice and clinical settings, grounded in sound governance and clinical judgment.

Mindfulness in Practice: Everyday Tools for Healing, Presence, and Connection (maximum 1 credit hour)

Manizeh Mirza-Gruber, MD

Objectives: The learning objectives for this activity have been designed to address clinician competence. Upon conclusion of the activity participants should be able to:

- Identify and practice key elements of several mindfulness-based teachings and practices.
- Apply simple practices of formal and informal mindfulness into their daily life for themselves and others and experience its many mind-body healing benefits.
- Connect more mindfully in thought, word, and action both personally and professionally.

CME Program Goal / Target Audience

This live activity has been designed in a format consisting of case study presentations, lectures and direct discussion to provide its primary target audience of Psychiatrists, as well as other specialties of medicine, with the most up-to-date, evidence-based data that can be translated into clinical practice. Information and data will address new developments in treatments and new directions in research to address the professional practice gaps of the learners and advance the physicians' competence and effective use of targeted skills so that they may develop strategies to apply the knowledge, skills and judgement of the information presented in the educational

activity into their practice. The learning objectives for this activity have been designed to address clinician competence.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

TSPP has incorporated into this CME activity the relevant educational needs concerning competence that underline the professional practice gaps of our participants.

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT

The Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians is accredited by the Texas Medical Association to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

CREDIT STATEMENT

The Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians designates this Live Activity for a maximum of five (5) *AMA PRA Category I Credits*™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in this activity.

ETHICS DESIGNATION STATEMENT

The presentation entitled “Artificial Intelligence in Psychiatry: Foundations for Ethical and Responsible Clinical Practice” has been designated by the Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians for one and half (1.5) hours of education in medical ethics and/or professional responsibility.

FACULTY AND PLANNER DISCLOSURE POLICY

The Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians will disclose to participants the existence of any relevant financial relationships between faculty members, TSPP staff, and members who planned, authored, contributed to, and/or reviewed the content of this activity, and any commercial interest discussed in this educational activity. Disclosure will occur through written communication in the syllabus/handout material.

TSPP Spring Committee Meetings & Scientific Program Registration

April 24-26, 2026 • The Westin Austin at The Domain

Register Online: www.txpsych.org/2026tsppspring

Registration Item

Saturday Lunch	\$50
Saturday Dinner Reception	
TSPP/TSCAP/TAP Member	\$60
Non-Member Physician	\$100
TSPP/TSCAP/TAP Trainee/Student	\$50
Non-Member Trainee/Student	\$60
Guest/Allied Health Professional	\$85
CME Scientific Program	
<i>Includes online program syllabus, complimentary continental breakfast, and AM/PM refreshment breaks</i>	
TSPP/TSCAP/TAP Member	\$195
Non-Member Physician	\$245
TSPP/TSCAP/TAP Trainee/RFM/Medical Student*	\$45
<i>*If your training director or APD registers for the scientific program, your scientific program fee is waived.</i>	
Non-Member Trainee/RFM/Medical Student	\$55
Allied Health Professional	\$175
Spouse/Guest (No CME Credit)	\$175
Poster Presenter	\$0
<i>If you're approved to present a poster, your registration fee for the Scientific Program is waived.</i>	
CME Printed Syllabus Order	
Black/White	\$125
Color	\$155

TSPP Committee Meeting RSVP

If you are only able to attend committee meetings and not stay for the CME portion of the conference, please email TSPP@txpsych.org to RSVP.

CANCELLATION POLICY: In the event of cancellation, a full refund will be made if written notice is received in the TSPP office by March 31, 2026, less a 25% processing charge. NO REFUNDS will be given after March 31, 2026.



If you require any special assistance to fully participate in this conference, please contact TSPP at (512) 222-6865 by March 31st.



I Ran for Officer of APA

I Didn't Win, But Here Is What I Learned

Melissa Stennett Deuter, MD, President, Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians



Melissa Stennett Deuter, MD

Last fall, PGY4 Steffaney Alan, DO, nominated me for president of APA. I hadn't planned on running, but it was quite an honor that a resident thought I could lead at the national level. So, I decided to accept the nomination. Here is what happened:

My candidacy was met with support and input that Texas doesn't have many candidates who run for officer of APA. There weren't many folks who could offer guidance about the process, although all of the Texas leaders cheered me on. I submitted the required materials to the APA nominating committee, and then I waited.

Eventually I got a call from a member of the APA nominating committee. They said that the list of nominations for president was quite long. The committee had reviewed my CV and asked if I might be willing to throw my name in the ring for APA Treasurer instead. Not only had I been the treasurer of a nonprofit in San Antonio for several years, but they also thought that my business experience uniquely qualified me for the treasurer role. I agreed to change my candidacy and was added to the slate of candidates.

The APA then sent out a list of guidelines for candidates, including deadlines for a series of submissions including a headshot, a CV and a Bio of specified length, and answers to questions about my candidacy. The guidelines for candidates were long and confusing. They included limits on the dollar amount a candidate could spend on their campaign (\$500) and a requirement that any public appearances to talk about one's candidacy invite all candidates for the office. Additionally, there was a rule indicating that candidates were not permitted to announce or discuss their candidacy on any form of

social media. Nor was anyone to campaign on behalf of a candidate on social media. That seemed strangely restrictive.

There would be no town halls for APA members this election, no public events held by the APA to introduce candidates, and threats of action against violators of the rules. The committee members appeared guarded about the reasons for the strict rules. Each candidate would submit written materials for the APA website and for the APA's published election guide for members. Candidates could email, call, or text their contacts about their candidacy, and could add one line in their email signature noting that they were a candidate. We had a meeting of all candidates for office, and there were a lot of questions but few answers about the restrictiveness of the candidacy rules. The candidates were frustrated.

In the weeks that followed, many of the candidates for various offices called me to ask, "Who are you?" and say, "We haven't seen you involved at the APA before." I explained about the roles I had taken here in Texas and got to know the candidates, and it became clear that many of the candidates had run for APA offices before. Some held current offices and were running again.

I spoke with Rahn Bailey and Steve Koh, both candidates for president. Dr. Koh was serving as APA treasurer and offered insight about his efforts to improve fiscal responsibility at APA. I was galvanized by the direction he had taken the organization during his tenure. Almost everyone I met on these calls already knew each other. The restrictions on campaigning started to seem like a disadvantage to any outsider seeking to break into leadership.

In early December, candidates received an email from a group called the Committee to Protect Public Mental Health asking us to complete a questionnaire about our candidacy. The Committee to Protect Public Mental Health described itself as "a group of former APA leaders." Within a few hours, there was an email from the APA elections committee raising concerns about the questionnaire and telling candidates not to complete it. A meeting was called. Candidates were told that the email questionnaire hadn't gone through the proper channels and instructed not to complete it. The situation had an undercurrent of tension between factions of current and past leaders at APA.

In the remaining weeks of the campaign, nothing remarkable took place. There didn't seem to be any campaigning. Candidates were uncertain what was permitted, so most candidates didn't do anything. A few seasoned candidates sent out emails now and then, but that was all.

And then, the night before results were tallied, there was candidate Q&A about each of our experience with elections process. During this final meeting, other candidates expressed frustration with the cryptic nature of the APA election rules. We asked, "Why were there so many restrictions on the elections process?" and "Why were we prohibited from using social media to campaign?" One candidate said, "This process was not fun at all. It was stressful." I agreed. But finally, we got some answers from the elections committee.

It became clear that the APA officer elections have had controversies in the past, and the rules were an attempt to make the process fair. Because many leaders in APA

have been in a variety of leadership roles and have relationships in place, it has long been difficult for new members to break into the leadership roles. Candidates have engaged in problem behaviors and made negative statements about their opponents.

I learned that APA officers are often chairmen at academic institutions and that non-academic candidates often lack the support and the time to run for an office. Chairmanship is the norm for presidents of APA. I learned that there were indeed factions in conflict over the process (although I still cannot say who opposes APA's process or why).

The reasoning behind the restriction on social media came to light. Apparently, the past problem was unmoderated comments on social media, which had gotten grossly out of hand. Comments by the public, possibly even members of anti-psychiatry groups may have underpinned the problem.

In the end, I walked away from the final candidate meeting understanding the APA elections process a little bit better. I was encouraged by my new contacts at APA to run again in the future, as many candidates do.

Going forward, I would like to see Texas represented in the officership of APA and would gladly support any TSPP member interested in running for an office. ■



Axelrad Posthumously Receives 2026 Ronald A. Shellow Award

A. David Axelrad, MD, was selected to posthumously receive the 2026 Ronald A. Shellow Award for his enduring commitment and outstanding work throughout his valuable service in the Assembly.

The award started in 2004 to recognize departing members of the Assembly who have served our organization beyond even the high standards of service evidenced by most members of the Assembly.

This award will be announced at the upcoming May 15-17, 2026 Assembly meeting in San Francisco, California at the beginning of the fourth plenary session of the Assembly on Sunday, May 17th. ■

Governor Abbott Announces \$5 Million In Grants For Psychiatry Fellowships

Governor Greg Abbott today announced \$5 million in state grants for the Forensic Psychiatry Fellowship Program, expanding support for mental healthcare across Texas.

"Texas remains steadfast in increasing access to mental healthcare across our state," said Governor Abbott. "These grants will create opportunities for our renowned higher education institutions to develop the next generation of healthcare leaders. I thank the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for their continued work to expand and improve mental health services that will benefit Texans in every community."

"Higher education institutions will better serve Texans in regions across the state through this grant funding which state leaders and lawmakers provided in the

budget," said Higher Education Commissioner Wynn Rosser. "All nine recipients highlighted innovative programs and strong collaboration with other institutions in their grant applications, demonstrating a shared commitment to make Texas a national leader in forensic psychiatry."

Nine Texas medical training centers will receive grant funding for forensic psychiatry fellowships for licensed physicians pursuing mental health careers in Texas. Forensic psychiatry is a subspecialty that applies to psychiatric expertise in civil, criminal, and administrative legal proceedings and includes evaluations, treatment, and research related to safety and risk mitigation. The institutions will use these grants to develop, expand, or administer accredited one-year forensic psychiatry

fellowship programs.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) administers these grants in alignment with the governor's vision to boost access and funding for mental healthcare across the state. This funding strengthens Texas' physician workforce by supporting advanced training for licensed physicians pursuing specialization in forensic psychiatry, ultimately increasing access to critical mental health services for individuals involved in legal proceedings and those requiring forensic evaluation and treatment.

The list of grant recipients is below; each institution will receive \$555,555:

- Baylor College of Medicine (Houston)
- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (Lubbock)

- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso
- The University of Texas at Austin
- The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
- The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
- The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler
- The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston
- The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center (Dallas)

More information about this grant program can be found at <https://www.highered.texas.gov/grants/forensic-psychiatry-fellowship-program/>

Ketamine and Proposed Texas Medical Board

Constance George, MD, TSPP Ethics Committee Member

The Texas Medical Board has proposed new rules pertaining to ketamine clinics and the parenteral administration of racemic ketamine. These rules would require an on-site physician during the administration, monitoring of specific biometrics, defined education standards for providers, establishment of a formal physician-patient relationship, documentation of psychiatric diagnoses and enhanced informed consent.¹

The proposed rules respond to safety concerns and the assessed inadequate oversight of ketamine clinics. These concerns include limited outcome data, non-standardized treatment protocols, insufficient diagnostic evaluations by non-psychiatric providers, and potentially misleading direct-to-consumer advertising.^{2,3}

From an ethical perspective, the proposed rules raise several salient concerns. These include the unknown long-term effects from repeated dosing, the risk of adverse events during administration, the medication abuse liability, and persistent inequities in access to an effective intervention.

Ketamine has demonstrated efficacy in acute suicidal ideation and shows benefit in treatment-resistant depression and PTSD.⁴ However, access to parenteral Ketamine is largely restricted to those who can afford the price at for profit clinics, disproportion-

ally excluding economically disadvantaged patients with serious mental illness. While the new rules may enhance patient safety, they also risk exacerbating existing access barriers. Requirements for on-site physicians may further limit availability in rural or underserved regions and increase costs by mandating higher-paid providers.^{2,5}

On the other hand, these access barriers already exist within the parameters of a for profit healthcare system. This is an ethical conundrum made worse by a system reliance on the pharmaceutical industry to support clinical trials. There is little incentive to undergo the laborious process of acquiring an FDA indication for a psychiatric condition with a generic medication.⁶

The parenteral administration of ketamine raises questions regarding professional competence and scope of practice. Many ketamine clinics are managed by anesthesiologists or primary care providers or psychiatrists, and all bring a distinct but incomplete skill set to ketamine treatment.⁷ The proposed rules acknowledge this by emphasizing a comprehensive psychiatric evaluation, adequate physiological and psychological monitoring and structured follow-up care, underscoring the ethical necessity of a multidisciplinary approach.

Robust Informed consent is essential in respect to patient autonomy. It is essential given the potential physical (e.g., low blood

pressure, depressed breathing, genitourinary) and psychiatric (e.g., psychosis, anxiety, cognitive slowing) side effects as well as the uncertainty of long-term outcomes.⁸ Informed consent also requires that potential benefits must be presented realistically to patients who may be desperate for relief from severe or refractory symptoms.

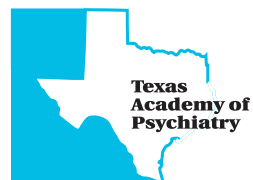
Patients should be informed of alternatives, including FDA-approved intranasal esketamine (Spravato) that is more likely covered by insurance. They should also be aware that parenteral Ketamine is available and covered by the VA for those who qualify. Last, psychiatric clinicians must remain vigilant to treatments our patients receive outside of our offices and remain engaged in coordinating care, referrals and appropriate follow-up for patients seeking or receiving parenteral ketamine. ■

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Constance George, MD



Looking Forward Together

Phillip Balfanz, MD, MBA, President of the Texas Academy of Psychiatry

As my term as President of the Texas Academy of Psychiatry (TAP) comes to a close, I reflect on the Academy's role and the importance of the colleagues who sustain it. TAP occupies a unique space within the Federation of Texas Psychiatry – small enough to remain flexible, yet connected to a broader network of organizations committed to supporting psychiatrists and advancing mental health care across our state. As leadership transitions, the Academy's work continues, shaped by the collective contributions of its members.

Over the past year, we have worked to ensure that TAP remains accessible and relevant to psychiatrists throughout Texas. Updates expanded membership pathways, including welcoming medical students who

may wish to gain early exposure to organized medicine and the professional community that supports it. Providing opportunities for physicians at different stages of their careers to engage with colleagues across the state remains an important part of TAP's purpose.

Education has also remained a central focus. TAP has hosted several CME webinars this year, including a February session featuring representatives from the Texas Medical Board, which offered helpful insights into regulatory perspectives that affect our daily practice. In March, we will host a webinar exploring the emerging role of artificial intelligence in medicine—an area that is rapidly evolving and raising important questions about how clinicians

access and interpret evidence. We also look forward to upcoming webinars led by colleagues from across the Texas Federation of Psychiatry, highlighting the expertise within our professional community.

These educational efforts reflect TAP's goal of providing timely, practical discussions that support psychiatrists in their work while fostering connections among colleagues throughout Texas.

Organizations like TAP ultimately depend on physicians' willingness to share their time, experience, and perspective. I am grateful to the members who have contributed their energy to the Academy and to the colleagues within the Federation who continue to strengthen organized psychiatry in Texas.



Phillip Balfanz, MD, MBA

It has been a privilege to serve as President of the Texas Academy of Psychiatry. I am pleased to pass the Academy's leadership to Mary Zuelzer-Arambula, MD, of San Antonio, whose dedication to our profession and thoughtful leadership will guide TAP in the year ahead. I look forward to supporting her and the Academy's continued work as we move forward together. ■



Registration Now Open for the TSCAP Annual Convention

Joseph Shotwell, MD, President, Texas Society of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

The Texas Society of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry invites you to the **2026 TSCAP Annual Convention**, taking place **July 17-19 at the Moody Gardens Hotel in Galveston, Texas**. This year's meeting brings together child and adolescent psychiatry professionals from across Texas for timely education, collaboration, and networking in a beautiful coastal setting.

Earn up to 8 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*[™] at the program, which will feature

expert-led CME sessions on key clinical topics including: **transdiagnostic psychopharmacology for managing multiple comorbidities, updates on ketamine and ECT, TMS therapy, autism psychopharmacology updates, local mental and behavioral health resources, and ethics in psychiatric practice**. Join colleagues to explore the latest developments in the field while connecting with peers dedicated to improving mental health care for children and adolescents.

Set on Galveston Island, the **Moody Gardens Hotel, Spa and Convention Center** offers a resort-style experience surrounded by 242 acres of attractions and tropical gardens. Attendees can enjoy amenities such as indoor and outdoor pools, a full-service spa, fitness facilities, golf, and multiple dining options, along with easy access to Moody Gardens' signature attractions including the Aquarium and Rainforest Pyramids, IMAX theater, and nearby beaches.



Joseph Shotwell, MD

Early Bird registration is now open, through May 31st. Register online at www.txpsych.org/2026-tscap-convention. ■



Texas Society of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Annual Convention and Scientific Program

***“Advances in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry:
Evidence-Based Treatment, Emerging Therapies, and Systems of Care”***

July 17-19, 2026 • Moody Gardens Hotel • Galveston, Texas

Early Bird Registration Now Open!
www.txpsych.org/2026-tscap-convention

MEETING LOCATION

Join us for the 2026 TSCAP Annual Convention! Set on Galveston Island at the **Moody Gardens Hotel, Spa and Convention Center**. Whether you plan to travel alone or with your family, there’s fun for everyone at Moody Gardens, located at 7 Hope Blvd, Galveston, TX 77554. **Register online at** www.txpsych.org/2026-tscap-convention.

OPENING WELCOME RECEPTION FRIDAY

Make plans to attend the complimentary festive Welcome Reception with Exhibitors on Friday evening, 6:30pm – 8:00pm. Visit throughout the evening with your friends, colleagues and exhibitors in a fun-

filled atmosphere and complete your entry for the special door prize drawings to be awarded Saturday!

SATURDAY – POSTER SESSION

Medical Students, Residents and Fellows in Training who are *members* of AACAP/TSCAP, APA/TSPP or TAP will present/display posters at the conference throughout the day on Saturday, July 18th. To submit an abstract for consideration, visit www.txpsych.org/2026-tscap-convention. Submission deadline: May 15th

CME SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

The CME Scientific Program will be held on Saturday and Sunday, for a total of 8.0 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*[™].

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

TSCAP has negotiated a discounted rate for conference attendees and sponsors, available until June 25th. Visit www.txpsych.org/2026-tscap-convention for the group booking link.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

You **MUST** be registered for the TSCAP conference to qualify for the discounted TSCAP hotel rate. Guests with reservations within the TSCAP group block who are not conference attendees will be notified of their reservation cancellation. TSCAP negotiates these discounted rates as a benefit to conference attendees, to ensure all attendees have accommodations. Please do not share the group link with family/friends who are not attending the CME Scientific Program.

EXHIBIT HALL

TSCAP’s Welcome Reception, Breaks, Meals and Door Prize Drawings will be held in the Exhibit Hall. Exhibits will be open during the Welcome Reception Friday, and throughout the day Saturday, and will provide you with information designed to enhance your practice and improve the optimal delivery of medical care to your patients.

To Sponsor, please visit: www.txpsych.org/tscap2026-sponsors-exhibitors.

ANNUAL MEETING BREAKFAST

The Annual TSCAP Business Meeting and Breakfast will be held Sunday, 8:00 am – 9:00 am. Register to attend for an annual review from TSCAP, and to help plan for the year ahead!

Daily Schedule

Friday, July 17

4:30 pm – 8:30 pm Registration
4:30 pm – 6:00 pm Exhibitor set-up
5:00 pm – 6:30 pm TSCAP Executive Committee Meeting
6:30 pm – 8:00 pm Welcome Reception with Exhibitors

Saturday, July 18

7:00 am – 3:00 pm Six (6) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*[™]
7:30 am – 8:15 am Registration
7:00 am – 5:00 pm Continental Breakfast in the Exhibit Hall
8:15 am – 4:30 pm Exhibits & Posters
9:15 am – 9:35 am SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM: **“Advances in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry”**
10:35 am – 10:55 am Break with Exhibitors and Poster Session
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm Refreshment Break with Door Prize Drawings, Exhibitors, and Poster Session
2:00 pm – 2:20 pm Legislative Luncheon Program
2:30 pm – 3:00 pm Refreshment Break with Door Prize Drawings, Exhibitors and Poster Session
Exhibits & Posters Teardown / Depart

Sunday, July 19

8:00 am – 1:00 pm Two (2) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*[™]
8:00 am – 9:00 am Registration
9:00 am – 11:30 am TSCAP Annual Business Meeting Breakfast
Open to All Registered Attendees. See Registration Form for Payment Information.
SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM: **“Advances in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry”**

“Advances in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Evidence-Based Treatment, Emerging Therapies, and Systems of Care”

8 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™

with 4 of the Hours designated for Medical Ethics/Professional Responsibility

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Saturday July 18, 2026

8:05 am – 8:15 am Opening Remarks

8:15 am – 9:15 am **Transdiagnostic Psychopharmacology: Managing Multiple Comorbidities**
Steven Pliszka, MD

- Objectives:** The learning objectives for this activity has been designed to address clinician competence. Upon conclusion of the activity participants should be able to:
- Identify common patterns of psychiatric comorbidity in children and adolescents that complicate medication selection and sequencing.
 - Prioritize treatment targets when managing co-occurring ADHD, mood, anxiety, and behavioral disorders.
 - Apply transdiagnostic principles to medication selection and sequencing in complex clinical presentations.
 - Evaluate the risks and benefits of polypharmacy when managing youth with multiple psychiatric diagnoses. Refreshment Break with Door Prize Drawings, Exhibitors, and Poster Session

9:15 am – 9:35 am **Refreshment Break with Door Prize Drawings, Exhibitors, and Poster Session**

9:35 am – 10:35 am **Clinical and Neurobiological Advances in Ketamine and ECT**
Joao Luciano de Quevedo, MD, PhD

- Objectives:** The learning objectives for this activity has been designed to address clinician competence. Upon conclusion of the activity participants should be able to:
- Apply current evidence and consensus guidelines for the use of ketamine and ECT in children and adolescents with severe, treatment-resistant psychiatric disorders.
 - Incorporate developmental and family-centered considerations into shared decision-making for somatic treatments in pediatric populations.
 - Compare ketamine and ECT in pediatric practice with respect to speed of response, durability, safety, and clinical appropriateness.
 - Discuss emerging research, regulatory considerations, and future directions in somatic treatments for pediatric psychiatry.

10:35 am – 10:55 am **Refreshment Break with Door Prize Drawings, Exhibitors, and Poster Session**

10:55 am – 11:55 am **Emerging Evidence and Clinical Translation in Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation**
Emine Rabia Ayvaci, MD

- Objectives:** The learning objectives for this activity has been designed to address clinician competence. Upon conclusion of the activity participants should be able to:
- Apply current evidence and clinical guidance to the appropriate use of transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) in children and adolescents with psychiatric disorders.
 - Implementing age-appropriate TMS protocols, dosing parameters, safety monitoring, and outcome evaluation in pediatric populations.
 - Evaluate safety and tolerability considerations, including consent/assent and family-centered care.
 - Recognize evolving research, regulatory considerations, and future directions impacting the use of TMS in child and adolescent psychiatry.

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm **Legislative Luncheon**

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm **Psychopharmacology Updates in Autism Spectrum Disorder**
Alice Mao, MD

- Objectives:** The learning objectives for this activity has been designed to address clinician competence. Upon conclusion of the activity participants should be able to:
- Identify first-line medications for managing behavioral symptoms in autism.
 - Discuss emerging or evidence-supported pharmacologic agents for autism-related symptoms.
 - Differentiate treatment strategies for ASD with co-morbid ADHD, anxiety, or mood disorders.
 - Assess risks and benefits of off-label prescribing and complementary agents.
 - Apply case-based medication decision-making to complex autism presentations.

2:00 pm – 2:20 pm **Refreshment Break with Door Prize Drawings, Exhibitors, and Poster Session**

2:20 pm – 4:20 pm **Ethics Panel: Advancing Child and Adolescent Mental Health Care Through Collaboration with Texas Local Mental Health Authorities**
Tiffany Douglas, LMSW; Carol Nati, MD, MS, DLFAPA; Amber Pastusek, MD

- Objectives:** The learning objectives for this activity has been designed to address clinician competence. Upon conclusion of the activity participants should be able to:
- Describe the role of Texas LMHAs/LBHAs in the public behavioral health system for children, adolescents, and transition-age youth, including state-mandated services and levels of care.
 - Identify LMHA-provided resources for youth and families, including outpatient services, crisis services, mobile crisis teams, intensive community-based programs, and wraparound supports.
 - Navigate access to LMHA services in Texas, including eligibility criteria, intake and referral pathways, and coordination with Medicaid, schools, child welfare, and juvenile justice systems.
 - Collaborate effectively as community providers with LMHAs/LBHAs to expedite referrals, ensure continuity of care, and address high-risk clinical situations.
 - Recognize ethical, legal, and systems-based challenges unique to publicly funded child and adolescent mental health care, including consent/assent, confidentiality, and care transitions.

4:20 pm - 4:30 pm **Closing Remarks**

Sunday July 19, 2026

9:00 am – 9:15 am **Opening Remarks**

9:15 am – 11:15 am **Ethics: Developmentally Informed Advocacy and Accommodations Across Childhood and Adolescence**
Seema Jacob; Myesha Morgan; Joseph Guillory, MD

- Objectives:** The learning objectives for this activity has been designed to address clinician competence. Upon conclusion of the activity participants should be able to:
- Describe the role of Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) and related early support systems in addressing developmental, behavioral, and mental health needs in preschool-age children.
 - Recognize ethical considerations unique to early childhood, including developmental vulnerability, parental decision-making, and best-interest standards.
 - Differentiate educational accommodation mechanisms, including Section 504 plans and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), as they relate to psychiatric diagnoses and functional impairment.
 - Discuss psychiatric considerations in homebound instruction, school reintegration planning, and manifestation determinations.
 - Address ethical and clinical considerations in shared decision-making, guardianship, and capacity assessment for transition-age youth.
 - Recognize population-specific considerations, including autism spectrum disorder and other neurodevelopmental conditions, during the transition to adulthood.

11:15 am – 11:30 am **Closing Remarks**

CME PROGRAM OBJECTIVES / TARGET AUDIENCE This live activity has been designed with didactic lectures supplemented with panel discussion, clinical vignettes, audiovisual presentations, case presentation and discussion in multiple educational sessions. The program is designed to provide its target audience of Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists, Adult Psychiatrists, Pediatricians and Primary Care Physicians with clinically relevant information to advance the physicians' competence so that they may develop strategies to apply the knowledge, skills and judgement from the educational activity into their practice. Physicians often encounter patients that have both psychiatric and neurologic symptoms related to a single etiology. These conditions are inherently complex and often require additional considerations and collaboration between specialties. The objectives of this program aim to equip the attendees with the ability to better assess and care for patients with a variety of diagnoses, treatment options, and special needs.

IDENTIFIED PRACTICE GAPS / NEEDS ASSESSMENT TSCAP has incorporated into this CME activity the relevant

educational needs concerning competence that underline the professional practice gaps of our participants.

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas accreditation requirements and policies of the Texas Medical Association (TMA) through the Joint Providership of the Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians and the Texas Society of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. TSPP is accredited by the TMA to provide continuing education for physicians.

CREDIT STATEMENT The Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians designates this Live Activity for a maximum of eight (8) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™*. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in this activity.

MEDICAL ETHICS and/or PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT The Ethics Presentation: “Advancing Child and Adolescent Mental Health Care Through Collaboration with Texas Local Mental Health Authorities” has been designated by the Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians for a total of

two (2) credits of education in medical ethics and/or professional responsibility. The Ethics Presentation: “Developmentally Informed Advocacy and Accommodations Across Childhood and Adolescence” has been designated by the Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians for a total of two (2) credits of education in medical ethics and/or professional responsibility.

FACULTY AND PLANNERS DISCLOSURE POLICY In compliance with the ACCME/TMA Standards for Commercial Support of CME, to assure balance, independence, objectivity and scientific rigor in all of its CME activities, prior to the education activity being delivered to the learners, the Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians implemented a mechanism to identify and resolve personal conflicts of interest from everyone who was in a position to control the content of the education activity. TSPP will disclose to learners the existence (or non-existence) of all relevant financial relationship(s) that the faculty and planners did (or did not) have with any ineligible companies concerned with the content of the educational presentation. Disclosure will occur prior to the presentation through written communication.



May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Support Psychiatric Education and Research

The Texas Foundation for Psychiatric Education and Research was founded in 1991 as a charitable 501(c)(3) organization committed to raising funds toward professional education for all physicians regarding psychiatric matters; toward the education of the public regarding psychiatric disorders and sources of help, and toward the support of research regarding psychiatric care.

The Foundation's ongoing and major contributions have included funding chapter activities teaching the public during Mental Health Awareness Month in May and Mental Illness Awareness Month in October, providing grants, and funding the educational activities of the Federation's constituent organizations: TSPP, TSCAP, and TAP.

Your contributions to the Foundation help to fund these important activities (and are of course directly deductible for your yearly income taxes). The Foundation's contributions to the yearly CME activities of TSPP and TSCAP help keep the fees very reasonable, allowing for high quality CME here in Texas.

We welcome your contributions in order to allow the Foundation to continue to fund these important activities. Also, if you have an idea for a project you would like the Foundation to fund, visit www.txpsych.org/foundation to submit a grant application form. Please email TXpsychiatry@txpsych.org with any questions.



To make a charitable contribution to the Texas Foundation for Psychiatric Education and Research, scan this QR code or visit www.txpsych.org/foundation

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Display advertising is available and publication is determined on a case by case basis by the Editorial Board. The Editorial Board reserves the sole right to accept or reject any submitted advertising copy.

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CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

Visit www.txpsych.org/conferences-and-events for up-to-date information on upcoming events and CME webinars for TSPP, TSCAP and TAP

APRIL

16-18 **TexMed**
Corpus Christi, TX
<https://www.texmed.org/TexMed/>

April 24-26 TSPP Spring Conference

The Westin at The Domain, Austin



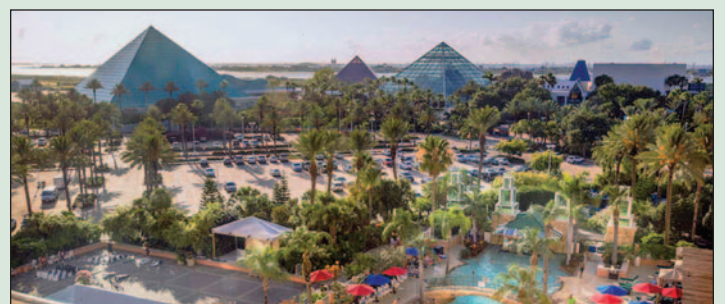
Register Online: www.txpsych.org/2026tsppspring

MAY – MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

16-20 **APA Annual Meeting**
San Francisco, CA

JULY

17-19 **TSCAP Annual Convention**
Moody Gardens Hotel, Galveston
Early Bird Registration Now Open:
www.txpsych.org/2026-tscap-convention



JOB BANK

Whether you are looking for career opportunities or you are recruiting to fill a position in your organization, you will want to check out the Federation's **JOB BANK** on its website at txpsych.org/careers. The Federation's **JOB BANK** could be just what you have been looking for.