Lessons Learned from the Pandemic

December 13, 2021
Lessons Learned

Sought Input:

State Boards for the Professions

Associations of Health Professions and related groups (50+ responses)

Significant agreement on what worked well and continuing challenges
Health Care Associations That Provided Input

- American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN)
- American Counseling Association (ACA)
- American Nurses Association (ANA)
- American Psychological Association (APA)
- Associated Medical Schools of New York (AMSNY)
- Community Pharmacy Association of New York State (CPANYS)
- Greater New York Hospital Association (GNYHA)
- Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS)
- Medical Society of the State of New York (MSSNY)
- Mid-Atlantic Region of American Music Therapy Association (MAR-AMTA)
- National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS)
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
- New York American College of Emergency Physicians (NYACEP)
- New York Dental Hygienists’ Association (NYDHA)
- New York Mental Health Counselors Association (NYMHCA)
- NYS Academy of Family Physicians (NYSAFP)
- NYS Association of Nurse Anesthetists (NYSANA)
Health Care Associations That Provided Input

- NYS Chiropractic Association (NYSCA)
- NYS Clinical Laboratory Association (NYSCLA)
- NYS Council of Health-System Pharmacists (NYSCHP)
- NYS Dental Association (NYSDA)
- NYS Optometric Association (NYSOA)
- NYS Podiatric Medical Association (NYSPMA)
- NYS Psychiatric Association (NYSPA)
- NYS Psychological Association (NYSPA)
- NYS Radiological Society (NYSRS)
- NYS School Counselor Association (NYSSCA)
- NYS Society for Clinical Social Work (NYSSCSW)
- NYS Society of Anesthesiologists (NYSSA)
- NYS Society of Opticians (NYSSO)
- NYS Society of Physician Assistants (NYSSPA)
- NYS Veterinary Medical Society (NYSVMS)
- The Nurse Practitioner Association (NPA)
- Pharmacists Society of the State of New York (PSSNY)
Q: Did you utilize OP’s website to find information related to the COVID-19 state of emergency?

“We regularly utilized the Department’s COVID-19 guidance and FAQ web resources and found them well organized and updated regularly.” - CPANYS

“Yes, having a webpage devoted to COVID-19 on the SED website is helpful. In particular, having an updated FAQ document and a webpage devoted to executive order provisions impacting the various healthcare professions.” - HANYS

“Yes, we did. We have been monitoring it very closely and working with colleagues at SED to make sure we understand the policy changes.” - GNYHA
How did professional practice change for the better/worse? Discoveries? Negative Impacts?

Telepractice

- Critical means for providing safe services—but not a simple replacement for in-person assessment and treatment.
- Potential to expand access to services—but not for patients without access to the technology and the ability to use it.
- Increases demand for interstate license portability by interstate compacts.
Q: How did professional education change for the better/worse? Discoveries? Negative Impacts?

Distance Education

Continuing Professional Education
- Benefit: allowed to complete continuing professional education virtually
- Negative: sense of isolation and the loss of personal interactions

Professional Education Programs
- Benefit: colleges appreciated the ability to keep students on track to graduation
- Negative: lost clinical opportunities and access to personal supports
Executive Orders authorized the temporary expansion of scopes of practice in many health care professions.

Many respondents intend to pursue legislative advocacy for some degree of expansion of their scopes of practice, consistent with the emergency provisions.

State Boards stand ready to advise and assist the Board of Regents to ensure quality practice and public protection.
Certain Professions wished their skills were more widely recognized by the Executive Orders and indicated they could have done more to contribute.

Reduced access to care

- Worsened health care staffing shortages
- Demand for mental health services skyrocketed
- Inadequate personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Delays in preventative screenings and elective procedures

Professionals and students experienced stress, burnout, and isolation.
Mental Health Needs of Students

• ER visits for suicide attempts by adolescents jumped 31% in 2020
• 21 school shootings since August 2021

1 in 3 HS students and ½ of female students reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, an overall increase of 40% from 2009.

• 7.1% of children aged 3-17 years are diagnosed with anxiety
• 3.2% of children aged 3-17 years are diagnosed with depression
Supporting Students’ Mental Health

Enhance School Connectiveness

Create Positive, Safe, and Affirming School Environment

Learn to recognize signs of changes in mental and physical health in students

Provide a continuum of supports to meet mental health needs

Protect and prioritize students with higher needs or higher risk of mental health

Expand SEL approaches
Supporting Students’ Mental Health

These professionals can:
- conduct timely mental health screenings,
- identify students who are in crisis and who need intervention, and
- have established partnerships with youth-friendly mental health services for students needing intensive intervention.
Suicide Companion Guide for Schools

A Companion Guide for School Personnel to the New York State Office of Mental Health’s A Guide for Suicide Prevention in New York Schools provides school personnel with the knowledge to prevent, identify and act when a student is at risk for suicide.
Questions?