September 2012



International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals

The Experts' Express

Upcoming Events

2012 IARP International Conference San Juan, Puerto Rico Oct. 25-27, 2012

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Additional Background on Proposed IARP Bylaws Change

President's Column

Several members have asked that I give additional background regarding the proposed IARP Bylaws amendment that will be voted on by the members at the annual meeting Saturday, October 27 in San Juan.

In the fall of 2010 we created a special task force of IARP board members to examine the direction of the association. During our meetings we deliberated and outlined a new vision and direction for IARP International. We soon recognized that we had governance issues related to our chapters and the lack of consistent policies in the operation of our five special area sections (case management, disability management, forensic, life care planners, and Social Security vocational experts).



Steven Shedlin IARP President

So governance and executing the strategic plan became paramount issues. We dealt first with the issue of chapter governance and have made great strides in strengthening the discourse among the chapters and with the IARP board and staff. The first chapter leadership meeting in New Orleans last spring, chaired by Dennis Funk, was a major step in the right direction.

Next we directed our new legal counsel, John Peterson, to examine the underpinning of the association's governance structure, including our bylaws, policies, and procedures. We found IARP inconsistent in many areas and lacking clarity in others. We are not nimble. We must move faster and react more quickly if we are to continue to earn our members' support and to compete in today's rehab marketplace. We have begun carrying out many of the recommendations that John made.

As Pat Decoteau, current IARP secretary/treasurer said recently, "This bylaws change is not being initiated by one individual's desire for the change. The change is part of the total thinking about governance. It's about implementing the plan that will bring our organization into the 21st century and become more efficient in serving our members"

See the text of Steven Shedlin's email notice of the recommended bylaws amendment and the official language of the amendment on page 2 and 3.

Proposed IARP Bylaws Change – Additional Background

(Continued from page 1)

Following is the email notification sent to all members from Steven Shedlin, IARP President, on September 21, 2012

Dear IARP Colleague:

Per our IARP Bylaws, I am providing the membership with 30 days notice that we will be voting on a bylaws change at the IARP Annual Meeting, which will be held on October 27, 2012, in San Juan, Puerto Rico, as a part of our IARP International Conference. The change, if enacted, will allow the IARP Board of Directors to make bylaws changes, while giving the membership veto power over the change. Currently, only the membership can make a bylaws change.

As this proposed change is significant, I wanted to tell you the thinking behind it and also the steps that the IARP board took before bringing it to the full membership. Bylaws changes must be voted on by a minimum of 100 members in good standing. Changes generally do not happen frequently and involve a good amount of thought and discussion. From IARP's (NARPPS's)* inception, up through 2008, the membership had the opportunity to meet annually at our annual conference. If the board believed that there was a change that needed to be made, the board members knew that in any given year they could propose the change and have it voted on at the annual meeting. However, IARP discontinued our annual conferences in 2008.

While we still conduct the required annual meeting of members telephonically, we never have anywhere near 100 people participating on the calls. Thus the IARP board does not have a regular manner by which to propose or make bylaws changes. This is problematic when the board looks to implement something that requires a bylaws amendment.

The IARP board discussed the notion, informally at first, of asking the membership to allow the board to make bylaws changes and was in favor of doing so. My next step was to discuss this idea with past NARPPS and IARP presidents and get their feedback. While not a required step, I have found these past leaders to be an invaluable asset when I want to discuss something important to IARP. A majority of the past presidents were for the change, but a few were not. Those in favor offered excellent feedback regarding how the change might look and I incorporated their ideas into the wording of the proposed change. Next at the June meeting of the board this year, we discussed the proposed change with the IARP attorney. He told us that many associations have bylaws that allow for their boards to make bylaws changes with a simple majority. He said that our proposed change calling for a super majority of the IARP board to vote in favor, and for membership feedback which could veto a change, was very fair. I subsequently gave the board 30 days notice of our proposed bylaws change. We discussed it at length and voted on it at our August board meeting. The vote was unanimous in favor of the change.

The penultimate step is to give the membership 30 days notice that a vote will be taken at our annual meeting. The exact wording of the proposed change is attached for your review. As you can see, it will take a three-quarters majority of the board to make an IARP Bylaws change. The membership will then have 60 days to review the change. If 200 members reject the change will not go into effect. If fewer than 200 members reject the change, the change will be enacted after 60 days.

(Continued on next page)...



IARP Bylaws Change - Additional Background

(Bylaws change notification email continued from page 2)

The ultimate step will be to discuss the proposed change and vote on it at our annual meeting. I am very hopeful that at least 100 members will attend the meeting and vote "Aye." Thank you for your consideration. Only professional members can vote, but I wanted all members to know of our proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.



Steve Shedlin President, IARP

*NARPPS – National Association of Rehabilitation Professionals in the Private Sector

ARTICLE XI

AMENDMENTS

11.1 Amendments. Upon the recommendationapproval of a three-quarters majority of the entire Board of Directors then in office, a proposed bylaw amendment(s) shall be submitted to the membership for review and comment for sixty (60) days. If during that sixty (60) day period 200 or more members in good standing express written disapproval of the proposed amendment(s), the proposed amendment(s) shall not be enacted. If during that sixty (60) day period fewer than 200 members in good standing express written disapproval of the proposed amendment(s), the proposed amendment(s) shall be enacted majority of the members of the Association present and entitled to vote at any meeting of the members may amend, alter, repeal or adopt new Bylaws, provided that notice of any proposed amendment or a summary thereof shall have been given to each Director or member not less than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the meeting.

ARTICLE XI AMENDMENTS

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Final Preparations for IARP 2012 International Conference

With the start of the 2012 International Conference only 26 days away, here the latest updates:

- Registrations are closing in on 350, with strong representation from every Section.
- A <u>Conference Community</u> has been launched on IARP Connect. This Community allows attendees to communicate with each other before, during and after the event.
- IARP is asking Attendees to fill out a 30-second Activities survey

Conference Exhibitors

Academy of Forensic Rehabilitation Research

American Board of Vocational Experts (ABVE)

Atlas Development Corporation Bright Sun Technologies Capital Law University

<u>Cigna</u>

EPI Rehabilitation

ERI PAQ Services

FIG Services

Greater Options, P.C.

National Association of Disability

Representatives (NADR)

Pate Rehabilitation

SkillTran, Inc.

Social Security and Veterans

Disability Services

Touchstone Neurorecovery Center

Unum

Conference Sponsors

IARP Arizona Chapter IARP Carolinas Chapter

IARP Nebraska Chapter

IARP New England Chapter

IARP Virginia Chapter

Past Presidents Sponsorship

Brian Preston Sponsorship

Annual Life Care Planners Symposium Earns High Praise

The annual International Symposium on Life Care Planning held in Denver last weekend drew critical acclaim. The event is sponsored by the Foundation for Life Care Planning Research and IARP through its IALCP Life Care Planners Section and other major organization in the field of life care planning.

The official roster for the symposium reflected 227 attendees. Of the total registered the majority (56%) are IARP members. Canadians strongly supported the event with 29 participants, 18 of whom are IARP members. IARP members had a major role in the program development and in the selection of the popular pre-conference presentations by a team of experts from Craig Hospital on "Advanced Topics in SCI/TBI". A sign for Standing Room Only could have hung outside the session by SEAK, Inc. on "How to be an Effective Witness". SEAK is the leading provider of a wide variety of training tools for expert witnesses.

Elizabeth Davis, immediate past chair of the IARP IALCP Life Care Planners Section, said, "The entire symposium program has very great clinical content". Next year's section chair Gerry Pennachio echoed Davis's comments. She pointed to the major investment that the IALCP Life Care Planners Section had made in the SEAK program and the substantial value that attendees had received.

The IARP IALCP Life Care Planners Section has grown to 516 members today, a two-thirds increase since the section became a part of IARP in late summer 2005. The 2013 Symposium will be held in Atlanta September 26-29. The preconference workshops are September 26-27 and the main program Saturday and Sunday September 28-29.

Heidi Fawber Receives Sheri Jasper Memorial Recognition Award

Heidi Fawber received the Sheri Jasper Memorial Recognition Award at the annual Symposium in Denver. She was honored for her commitment as a creative, committed leader for IARP and the IALCP Life Care Planners Section. She served as chair of the section in 2010 and has been active in program development and execution for the annual Symposium. She represents what is best about volunteerism and serving others. She has served as a consultant to the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center's Rehabilitation Hospital, providing her expertise in brain injury cases

Her work with those who have sustained acquired brain injury is well known. She has contributed far more in areas of those with strokes, spinal cord injuries, birth trauma, burns, and orthopedic injuries as well. Her early experience in managing vocational programs set the stage for developing life care plans. Heidi thinks about a person's disability, its impact on life, and projects needs in work, social, and psychological functioning as well. Heidi helped to organize brain safety fairs to educate families and children about keeping their brains safe.

Heidi exemplifies a willingness to seek out newcomers to the field. She is a mentor. She purchases Christmas gifts for families who have been adversely impacted by injuries. She is a strong advocate of

Sheri Jasper Memorial Recognition Award

To earn this award, the recipient must meet the following criteria:

- Evidences a consistent positive, supportive, friendly and encouraging attitude toward colleagues.
- Seeks out "newbies" at conferences and facilitate introductions to others.
- Exemplifies a willingness to go the extra mile with good humor and perseverance (such as helping staff at conferences by volunteering or assisting in resolving problems).
- Mentors others without expectation for personal gain.
- Is a model for others in promoting life care planning (advancing the specialty practice, speaking about life care planning i4 positive ways, offering new visions, developing new concepts or practices, etc.)
- Supporting Research in Life Care Planning and Disability through the Foundation for Life Care Planning Research, University based research projects or in any fashion that is useful to the Life Care Planning Community.

professionalism for life care planners. And her laugh is unique. She doesn't complain even when in positions of extreme stress. No doubt, Sheri Jasper would be proud that the first memorial award in her name would be given to Heidi Fawber.

IARP Awards Gale Gibson Scholarship

IARP and the family of Gale Gibson have instituted an educational scholarship in his memory. The goal of the scholarship is to provide IARP members with funding for professional growth opportunities and to provide scholarship recipients venues to share their new knowledge with other IARP members.

This year's recipient is Rachel Duchon. She will be awarded a \$1000.00 scholarship toward completion of an MBA. Rachel will continue to work as a vocation expert upon completion of her degree.

Rachel Duchon has worked for Coventry
Health Care for five years, as a Vocational
Counselor and was most recently recognized
as a Vocational Forensic Expert for Worker's
Compensation, Long Term Disability, FELA,
Maritime, and Auto No Fault claims. She has
been instrumental in creating a forensic
vocational product that has been approved
for national use within Coventry. She is
actively involved with various business
initiatives within Coventry, including



Rachel Duchon Gale Gibson Scholarship Award Winner

marketing, product development, and public speaking.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Hilbert College in 2005, Master of Science in Community Mental Health with a minor in Rehabilitation Counseling in 2007 from Canisius College, and is scheduled to graduate summer 2013 from Canisius College with a Master of Business Administration, majoring in Human Resource Management and a minor in Economic Studies. She currently possesses a CRC, FVE, and LMHC.

Outside of her professional responsibilities, she was most recently cofounder of the Western New York Delta Drive, which was responsible for adopting a battalion of troops serving in Afghanistan during the late summer/early fall of 2011, supplying over eight hundred pounds of supplies to the men and women bravely serving our country. She enjoys the local architecture, history, music and art that Buffalo, NY has to offer.

Please join IARP in wishing Rachel the best of luck in her continued studies.

LARPCONNECT

Community. Education. Professional Growth.

Questions recently discussed on IARP Connect

Forensic Discussions:

<u>Sammons Preston Jamar Evaluation</u> <u>Hand Function Test Kit</u>

Specific Nursing Salary Distinctions

<u>Limitations by PMR doc who did LCP or an FCE or both?</u>

Medium category

<u>Forensic Resources for Vocational</u> Rehab Student

SS-VE Discussions:

THOUGHTS REGARDING THE FUTURE

TSA

Rocket Docket Question

Government Affairs Update

New solicitations for VEs and MEs

IARP 2012 International Conference Discussions:

<u>List of Activities in Puerto Rico -</u> Please review...

Who is taking young adults to Puerto Rico?

Case and Disability Management Section Update

For nearly two years, the Case Management and Disability Management Section Representatives and Board Members have been engaged in identifying additional benefits for its members. The two Section Boards have jointly identified the multiple advantages of combining our two sections and becoming the largest professional section of IARP. We continue to plan for this exciting change and we are confident that combining our CM and DM sections will result in significant professional opportunities for all CM and DM members! The operative word here is **GROW**.

Our CM and DM sections consist of a wide range of highly unique, specialized, and expert professionals. At the same time, we have unique skill-sets that can be applied to a broad and expansive range of rehabilitation and disability services.

It is clear that by working collaboratively, better opportunities can be created to capitalize on the experience, knowledge, abilities and resources of our joint membership. Together, we can grow as individuals and as rehabilitation professionals. The most powerful outcome of working collaboratively as disability managers and case managers is the impact our joint efforts will have on business, industry, policy development, and service delivery among persons with disabilities...

Now is the time to dialogue with our members to discuss, explore, and plan how we, as rehabilitation professionals in a newly combined CM-DM section, can utilize our collective abilities. Please **join us in Puerto Rico** in October to discuss Section activities and to kick-off our *FIRST NIGHT* as a joint CM-DM section.

Two events are planned to discuss the potential of our new Section and how we might best serve our membership. First, a **Social Event** is being planned during one evening of the Conference. The purpose of this First Night event is to socialize and share ideas and expectations that will strengthen our new Section...and to have FUN. Second, a **Breakfast Roundtable** is being planned at the conference. This will be an opportunity to meet present CM and DM Section Board Members and to create a new vision for our Section that will stimulate growth, educational opportunities, professional career development, and begin planning that can help our new Section become a dynamic part of your professional life.

Norman Hursh and Kathy Trumm Disability Management and Case Management Chairs

Upcoming Chapter Events

TARPPS 30th Anniversary Dinner

October 4, 2012 Plano, Texas

Texas Fall 2012 All Day Seminar

October 5, 2012 Plano, Texas

VARP Education Seminar for Rehabilitation Professionals

October 5, 2012 Newport News, VA

IARP California SB 863 Informal Seminar

October 20, 2012 Walnut Creek, CA

2012 Virginia Workers' Compensation Seminar

October 24, 2012 Chesapeake, VA

IARP Member Benefit



An evidence-based best practice online resource for Return to Work Professionals.

- Research updates
- Case studies
- Practical articles
- Tools and templates to download
- Handbooks & guides
- · Weekly newsletter

Special discount for IARP members: Promo Code: IARP

www.rtwmatters.com



IARP Provides Public Comment to SSA Regarding Agency Strategic Plan

IARP Colleagues:

As part of our continuing efforts to work with SSA, monitor their projects which impact our profession and provide input, the following letter (below) was issued to SSA addressing relevant aspects of their 2013-2016 Agency Strategic Plan. While the OIDAP has been disbanded, a new OIS to replace the DOT still remains an active project for SSA, and we intend to continue to monitor their work, provide input and recommendations, and work with SSA to the extent that they are interested.

Lynne Tracy, President Elect

(The following was submitted to SSA on August 27th 2012 on IARP letterhead)

August 27, 2012

The Honorable Michael J. Astrue Commissioner Social Security Administration Suite 100 Altmeyer Building 6401 Security Boulevard Baltimore, MD 21235

RE: Docket No. SSA-2012-0048 Comments

Dear Commissioner Astrue:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Service Delivery Plan (SDP) for Social Security Administration's 2013-2016 Agency Strategic Plan (ASP) on behalf of the International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals (IARP). We wish to congratulate you and SSA Staff on the many positive strides made over the last several years under the 2008-2012 Agency Strategic Plan.

The majority of Vocational Experts (VEs) contracted with SSA's Office of Disability Adjudication and Review are members of IARP. In addition, our members are vocational counselors, return-to-work specialists, and other rehabilitation professionals. IARP has been an active participant and supporter of SSA's efforts to develop a new occupational information systems (OIS) over these many years, and hope to be able to continue in that regard.

At this time, IARP would like to comment on several areas in the current 2013-2016 Agency Strategic Plan (ASP).

Return-To-Work Incentive Programs:

Objective II of Strategic Goal 1 is to "increase opportunities for beneficiaries to return to work" and "create clear and consistent employment incentives." As rehabilitation professionals, we are strongly in favor and support of SSA's goal in this regard. However, we have seen firsthand the problems with the work programs SSA has tried in the past, such as Ticket-To-Work. The proposed Work Incentive Simplification Plan (WISP) is likely to be another program of limited success because SSA is targeting claimants after they are already on benefits and have already been out of the work force for a protracted period of time.

IARP Provides Public Comment to SSA

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As rehabilitation professionals working in the private sector, we know of the importance of starting the rehabilitation process early. We would recommend that SSA explore and develop a program(s) that identify possible participants when claimants first file a claim and while in the claims process. One option would be to contract with private sector rehabilitation professionals under a new BPA to do short screening evaluations of claimants' vocational potential at this early stage and make recommendations as to possible workplace accommodations, adaptive equipment, and if appropriate and able within the context of a short evaluation, job placement and retraining options that might help the person return to the labor force. At this early stage, such an evaluation would also provide a more accurate assessment of the claimant's work history and transferable skills which could be used in the adjudication process. A 2009 survey conducted by IARP on past relevant work histories of claimants was presented to SSA and the OIDAP. We had similar results to the study conducted at the same time by your staff that work histories in the files either do not provide enough information to properly classify the work history or are in error approximately 35% of the time. By gaining accurate work histories at the early stage of the claim, your employees could make more accurate initial disability decisions.

We are also aware that SSA is looking at the possibility of workplace accommodations and adaptive equipment being considered as part of the process. Early evaluations by rehabilitation professionals could assist in this approach to reducing awards as well.

Another consideration for SSA is to implement a program that allows a benefit recipient to work part-time and to receive a continuation of partial disability benefits. Many claimants want to work but are in need of their medical coverage through Medicare and cannot work except for the finite Trial Work Period under the current program.

Occupational Information:

Objective II of Strategic Goal 1 also states that "While we are working to update the medical and vocational information we use to make determinations of disability, we must continually balance our knowledge of emerging trends with our statutory obligations and guidelines." IARP supports this goal.

However, the strategy identified on page 9 of the ASP states "Replace the outdated Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) with a new occupational information system to aid in the medical and vocational analysis of disability claims" is of concern to IARP.

There seems to be a change in SSA's approach to updating/developing an occupational information system. In the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan, SSA had identified the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) as "...a cornerstone to our disability policy" and the development of an occupational information system as its strategic goal. The 2013-2016 Strategic Plan calls for replacing the DOT with a new occupational information system, but not the development of one. A modification of the O*NET has been recently identified as being a potential solution, which is viewed by IARP as a reversal of SSA's work and staff recommendations, and that of the OIDAP, over the last several years.

To modify the O*NET will be a time-consuming and costly undertaking for SSA. This also goes against everything the OIDAP members and SSA staff recommended after thorough research and evaluation of existing systems in 2009. The National Academy of Sciences' findings in 2010 have been cited by some in SSA as reasoning for going back to look at modifying the O*NET once again. However, we would point out that NAS's suggestion that the O*NET could be modified was made without the benefit of having any information on the work done and findings of the OIDAP.

(continued on next page)



IARP Provides Public Comment to SSA

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It remains of utmost priority that the development of any occupational information system have a taxonomic content model that is strong enough to withstand legal challenge. Without this degree of rigor, the value of the OIS is questionable. We encourage SSA to use scientific and legal standards as they go forward with the OIS project. We also caution SSA from using poor and incomplete data. Data used in an OIS for disability adjudication should be representative of the national economy, reflect human function, and be legally defensible. It should also be linkable to other databases, e.g., SOC, and be updated with regularity.

The development of an OIS should not be done and tested in a vacuum. Data needs to be gathered by qualified and trained field job analysts, and that data needs to be tested with real users of the data such as at the local DDSs and by Vocational Experts (VEs) as well as other rehabilitation professionals in the field before it is formally rolled out. We are not in favor of using incumbent surveys, but rather encourage data collected in the field. Whatever data is collected also needs to be relevant to the needs of SSA.

It remains of critical importance to have transparency and public engagement in the process. The OIS data is of significant importance to people with disabilities seeking benefits through SSA and all disability benefit and counseling systems, nationally and internationally. We request that SSA continue to be proactive in seeking input from and informing stakeholder organizations such as IARP on a regular basis through public forum webinars, informational sessions, and advertising in the Federal Registry and agency sources.

Employing scientific and legal standards in an open and transparent process will be important to SSA sustaining legal challenges that will inevitably come forth.

Use of Technology:

Objective II of Strategic Goal 1 states the goal of enhancing and expanding electronic tools. IARP supports the work of SSA technology staff's efforts in this regard. One enhancement we would suggest is that Vocational Experts can also access the online claimant data rather than SSA staff having to create CDs. Although we understand that we can only have limited access to the information in the file to comply with privacy rules, your technology staff should be able to find a way for Vocational Experts to only be able to open certain sections of the file, such as are now copied onto CDs. This would cut costs to SSA for staff time in making CDs, postage to mail, tracking their return and disposal.

IARP would again encourage the creation of a central repository of job analyses using the SSA Disability Evaluation Constructs (DEC). There are private rehabilitation professionals, insurance companies, and employers who could contribute current and ongoing data.

Thank you for the opportunity to share public comment. The Social Security Administration has a very important role in our society in addressing the financial and medical needs of those with disabilities. Much good work has been done by SSA in the last several years and we hope that the Agency moves forward despite financial pressures at this critical time in our history.

International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals (IARP)

Steven D. Shedlin, M.Ed., CRC, President

Lynne L. Tracy, M.A., CRC, President Elect



Welcome the Newest IARP Members

Please help us welcome the newest members of the IARP family. In September, we welcomed 22 new members into the association. To see more about a member, click on their name. This will take you to the new member's profile in the Member Directory on IARP Connect. Then use the Send Message link on their profile to send a welcome message.

Individual Professionals

Maren Alitagtag

Members at Large Forensic Section

Santo Steven Bifulco

Florida Chapter

Life Care Planners Section

Jewel Euto

Alabama Chapter SS-VE Section

Christine Franklin

Chesapeake Chapter Forensics Section

Rhonda Friant

Tennessee Chapter

Case Management Section

Pat Green

Mississippi Chapter Forensic Section

Brenda Hager

Louisiana Chapter

Forensic Section

Erin Hunt

Oregon Chapter Forensic Section

Richard Katz

Members at Large

Life Care Planners Section

Individual Professionals

Jessica Lehman

Washington Chapter Case Management Section

Vanita Malhotra

Canada Chapter

Life Care Planners Section

James Minutilli

Ohio Chapter

Case Management Section

Kim Morrison

Tennessee Chapter

Disability Management Section

Monique Murray

New England Chapter Case Management Section

Jennifer Seav

Georgia Chapter

Case Management Section

William Shaw

New England Chapter

Disability Management Section

Amanda Turney

Tennessee Chapter

Disability Management Section

Jaclyn Yared

Michigan Chapter

Case Management Section

Student

Elizabeth Israel

New York Chapter Forensic Section

Shipra Singh **Disability Management Section**

Vanessa VanGilder

West Virginia Chapter

Disability Management Section

Associate

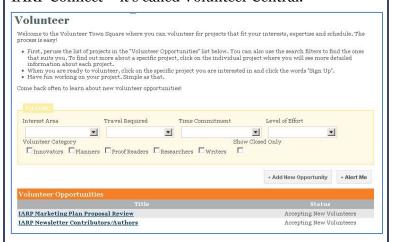
Samantha Ziblut

Florida Chapter

Case Management Section

Calling All Volunteers

IARP realizes the strength and vitality of the association is powered by the volunteer spirit that resides within IARP members. To help organize and harness this volunteer spirit, IARP is introducing a new feature to IARP Connect – it's called Volunteer Central.



Introduced in July, this new area on IARP Connect lets you see all the opportunities that are available across IARP for you to volunteer your time and expertise. Both short term projects and long term initiatives will be available. Look for the Forensic Mentoring program soon!!!

IARP Staff Is Here to Serve You

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IARP is professionally managed by The Center for Association Growth (TCAG)



Free Ethics Webinar Available Now

In late November, IARP produced a free Ethics webinar entitled **Technology Ethics: Basics, Clinical Application, and Decision-Making**.

Mary Barros-Bailey and Vilia Tarvydas led this 2-hour webinar, which received rave reviews.

The On-Demand Replay of this webinar is now available for all members to view. Just <u>click on this link</u>, register, and you will immediately receive a link to watch the replay. CEUs are also available.