

# **Therapist as Advocate in the Era of Mental Health Parity**

## **3 CE Credits**



**Meiram Bendat JD, MFT**

*West Hollywood-based psychotherapist, ethics consultant, and a member of the State Bar of California. As a former child advocate in the Los Angeles dependency system, he developed an expertise in mental health law and patient advocacy. Among other courses, he teaches law and ethics in the Clinical Psychology program at Antioch University and is a member of the Ethics Committee at the New Center for Psychoanalysis, where he is also a senior Clinical Associate.*

With the advent of the federal Wellstone and Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008, many more patients can now turn to insurance benefits for coverage of ongoing mental health treatment, including high frequency psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. Psychotherapists, vested with legal and ethical advocacy duties, can learn to promote patients' treatment needs by turning to this novel legislation. This advanced course is geared toward practitioners required to deal with insurance plans on behalf of their patients. Particular emphasis is on understanding the duty to advocate for treatment coverage on behalf of patients, traversing the federal and state mental health parity terrain, and recognizing the analytic implications for assuming the role of advocate in

promoting patient access to mental health care. This program is derived from California case law as well as the relevant ethics code for psychotherapists licensed by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences, California Board of Psychology, and the California Medical Board.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Enhance patient care by gaining a deeper understanding of the legal and ethical bases for insurance advocacy of mental health treatment by psychotherapists;
- Develop a working knowledge of assessing patient eligibility for mental health parity insurance coverage under federal and state schema;
- Refine tools for effective patient advocacy in the insurance milieu by understanding the concept of medical necessity;
- Develop an appreciation of the clinical issues that arise when therapists advocate on behalf of patients.

**3 CE Credits, APA/BBS**  
**Sun, June 5, 2011, 2 PM – 5 PM**  
**Hors d'oeuvres Reception to Follow**  
**\$25 for members; \$30 for non-members**

**Twin Town Treatment Center**  
**8739 Santa Monica Boulevard**  
**West Hollywood, CA 90069**  
**(Paid parking available under building)**

RSVP – Chuck Stewart, Ph.D., at [lagpa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lagpa@sbcglobal.net)

#### **Continuing Education Credit Disclosure**

*Important Disclosure for All Learners: None of the planners and presenters*

*of this CME/CE program have any relevant financial relationships to disclose.*

LAGPA is approved to provide Continuing Education Credits for Psychologists, Marriage and Family Therapists, Social Workers, and Nurses. The exact number of credits awarded is equal to the number of contact hours for each event and is specified on the Syllabus and the Registration Form. BBS CE Credits — Course approved for continuing education credit for LCSWs and MFTs as required by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) provider # PCE 3992. APA CE Credits — LAGPA is approved by the American Psychological Association (APA) to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. LAGPA maintains responsibility for this program and its content.