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**Pennsylvania Psychiatric Society Supports Governor Wolf's *Reach Out PA: Your Mental Health Matters* initiative**

**HARRISBURG, PA., Jan. 3, 2020** — The Pennsylvania Psychiatric Society (PaPS) applauds Governor Tom Wolf's announcement of a statewide mental health initiative and his continued support for expansion of evidence-based, integrated treatment and services for those citizens with mental illness or substance use disorders. During Governor Wolf's press conference yesterday, he unveiled his anti-stigma, comprehensive approach to address mental health priorities across the commonwealth. His campaign, "Reach Out PA: Your Mental Health Matters", is well-aligned with the Society's objectives which include, "promoting the best interests of patients and others who are currently receiving psychiatric care or who will need psychiatric care in the near future."

This initiative is focused on strengthening mental health care access across the commonwealth, specifically pursuing Mental Health Parity regulations, so that mental health is covered the same as physical ailments, incentives for integrating physical and behavioral healthcare, and a dedicated effort to reduce mental health stigma for those seeking treatment.

PaPS has been fortunate to collaborate with the Wolf Administration on a variety of initiatives over his past two terms, including expansion of crucial, life-saving substance use treatment. PaPS physician members and our executive director have served on various task forces to provide invaluable input on proposed legislation and policies that strike a proper balance between patient autonomy, public safety, self-determination and evidence-based, integrated appropriate treatment. When hearing of this new initiative, Keith R. Stowell, MD, DFAFA, PaPS President stated, "The Society is encouraged by Governor Wolf's tireless dedication to serving all citizens of the commonwealth, including our most vulnerable individuals who often are not able or willing to speak for themselves. We look forward to continuing to work closely with the administration to provide our unique perspective on evidence-based, integrated,

comprehensive mental health and substance use treatment and services without barriers or stigma. This announcement is the perfect start to 2020 for all citizens of the state of Pennsylvania.”

***Pennsylvania Psychiatric Society***

The Pennsylvania Psychiatric Society (PaPS), a District Branch of the American Psychiatric Association, represents and serves the profession of psychiatry in Pennsylvania. A non-profit professional association, its 1,800 members are physicians practicing the medical specialty of psychiatry. The Society addresses a wide spectrum of issues affecting psychiatrists and persons receiving psychiatric services. It also addresses general medical and mental health issues.

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