



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 14, 2023

Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Medical Director Elected President of American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law

(HARTFORD, CT) – The Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) is pleased to announce that Charles Dike, M.D., who serves as DMHAS’ Chief Medical Officer, has been elected President of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law (AAPL) Executive Council. The AAPL is an organization of psychiatrists dedicated to excellence in practice, teaching, and research in forensic psychiatry. Founded in 1969, AAPL currently has over 2,000 members in North America and around the world.

The American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law promotes scientific and educational activities in forensic psychiatry by facilitating the exchange of ideas and practical clinical experience through publications and regularly scheduled national and regional meetings. Forensic psychiatry is a medical subspecialty that includes research and clinical practice in the many areas in which psychiatry is applied to legal issues. Some forensic psychiatrists may specialize exclusively in legal issues, while other such psychiatrists work within one of the many areas in which the mental health and legal system overlap.

The theme of Dr. Dike’s presidency year is *Forensic Treatment, Ethics, and Administration: Infusing Hope in a Dark World*. His goal is to highlight the hard work of providing care to justice involved patients in forensic hospitals and prisons and to spotlight and identify the staff as agents of light bringing hope to these individuals. "Forensic psychiatry is the bridge between justice and treatment, where the pursuit of fact intertwines with the understanding and management of mental health and substance use disorders," said Dr. Dike. "In this critical field we seek to educate the court about mental illness and its ramifications, while at the same time providing care and mending the broken paths toward recovery and citizenship."

In his role, Dr. Dike, who is also Professor of Psychiatry at Yale School of Medicine, acts as the Department’s most senior clinical leader, providing advice and counsel to the Commissioner regarding a broad range of clinical, policy, programmatic, medical and strategic issues. He also provides leadership and mentoring to the Department’s medical and clinical staff, and as a key member of the Department’s executive leadership team, contributes to setting its strategic direction.

"Charles is an acknowledged leader in the field of forensic psychiatry, and he has been a trusted advisor throughout my term as Commissioner," said DMHAS Commissioner Nancy Navarretta. "His unwavering commitment to understanding the intricate relationship between mental health and substance use disorders in those who are justice-involved will serve him well in this role."

For more information about the AAPL, please visit <https://www.aapl.org>.

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