



Coalition Briefs

FLASH

BREAKING NEWS ABOUT COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH IN NEW YORK

City passes budget; mental health cuts restored

Yesterday afternoon, agreement was reached between the New York City Council and Mayor Giuliani on budget changes affecting the remainder of the fiscal year. In mental health alone, Giuliani had proposed cuts of nearly \$1.9 million. Particularly galling to Council members, these cuts were only in Council-funded programs, or adds, since 1998.

At a time when the mental health system is facing greater stresses as a result of September 11, these cuts would have been especially harmful. Fortunately, the City Council fought the Mayor on all the cuts. They negotiated a buy-back of mental health programs to the tune of slightly more than \$1 million. The lion's share of the remaining cuts were in alcoholism services.

Last minute advocacy by The Coalition contributed to the Council's decision to pursue an additional buy-back of \$150K specifically in alcoholism services. In total, services were cut by less than most other departments. ▣

Reinvestment-funded Supported Housing to get NYC fix

The Coalition recently learned that Reinvestment-funded Supported Housing beds in New York City will receive the additional \$1080 proposed for existing State-funded Supported Housing beds. Governor Pataki proposed the rate hike last January and which was passed as part of the bare-bones budget. However, this was only for existing State-funded beds. Prior to September 11, information indicated that a City-State compromise was in the works to remedy the situation for the Reinvestment-funded beds.

Given the post-September 11 budgetary constraints, however, there was some concern that the deal would go bust. Nonetheless, the City and the State came through, and Reinvestment-funded Supported Housing beds will be funded at the same rate as their counterparts. Kudos! ▣