



Coalition Briefs

A SEMI-MONTHLY UPDATE ON COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH IN NEW YORK

DMH Outlines 2006 Goals

The New York City Division of Mental Hygiene (DMH) recently released a summary of their goals for 2006. The goals are organized into four areas:

- Improving DMH administrative performance;
- Improving quality of service by providers;
- Improving public mental health through population-based initiatives; and
- Improving the system of mental hygiene care.

DMH has identified a number of key objectives which must be completed in order to meet these goals. Among the most notable objectives is the improvement of the mental hygiene contracting process, the expansion of the Quality IMPACT initiative, increased housing services, and a reduction of administrative burden for providers via the establishment of common databases and audit practices.



On February 23, 2006, The Coalition held a reception to honor new City Council Mental Health Chair Oliver Koppell. Pictured from left to right are Coalition President Peter Campenelli, Treasurer Jonas Waizer, Councilman Oliver Koppell, Board Member Pat DePetris, and Executive Director Phillip Saperia.

Anita Appel Named Acting Director of SOMH NYC Field Office

Anita Appell has been appointed Acting Director of the New York City Field Office of the New York State Office of Mental Health. As Deputy Director of that office for many years, Anita has been a leading expert in children and families and in the mental health services they require. She is responsible for developing and implementing many child caring initiatives, including school-based programs. The Coalition fondly welcomes a good colleague to her new role and wishes her the best of luck.

Coalition to Honor Carpinello, Campbell

On Thursday, June 8th, The Coalition will honor New York State Office of Mental Health Commissioner Sharon Carpinello and author BeBe Moore Campbell at our annual Mental Health Awards Dinner.

Carpinello, the first female Commissioner of OMH was appointed in February of 2004 after serving the agency for over 15 years. Under her stewardship, OMH has been widely recognized for effectively using public resources to better the lives of those suffering from mental illness.

Campbell is a best-selling author whose latest novel, "A 72 Hour Hold" is about a mother struggling to help her daughter face bipolar disorder. It is both enjoyable and educational, and is a must read for anyone interested in behavioral health.

Look to future editions of *Briefs* for more information about the Mental Health Awards, including how to order tickets.

Medicare Part D: NYS Assembly and Senate Override Governor's veto; Provider Action Still Needed

On February 7, 2006, the New York State Senate voted to join the Assembly in overriding Governor George Pataki's veto of S.6410/A.9462, a bill intended to help dual eligibles make the transition to Medicare Part D. The bill will require Medicaid to pay for prescription drugs for those duals unable to get their medications because of Part D transition problems. Medicaid will continue to pay for drugs in such situations until the State Commissioner of Health declares all Part D transition issues to be resolved.

While this law is a great help to dual eligibles encountering problems with Part D, mental health providers must remain proactive. This law is a stop gap measure, NOT a permanent solution, and will remain in effect only as long as the Commissioner of Health believes there are still problems. If a dual eligible consumer is currently getting prescriptions paid for by Medicaid it likely means that there is still a problem which needs to be resolved before the emergency Medicaid coverage ends. It is crucial that providers identify any problems now and begin working toward a resolution. Providers with questions about Medicare Part D may call The Coalition's Part D Helpline at 212-742-1873 between the hours of 10 AM and 5 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

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The Coalition Web Site: Your one-stop shop for mental health news, advocacy and information. Visit today!
www.cvmha.org

Coalition Project Paves the Way for New Study on Cognitive Training

In January 2003 The Coalition's Center for Rehabilitation and Recovery conducted a research study involving four community based programs that examined the effectiveness of combining cognitive training with supported employment services. The four programs were Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service, Goodwill Industries, the Institute of Community Living and the Mental Health Association of NYC. Employment outcomes over one year showed that clients who received cognitive training with supported employment would more likely work (69.9%) than their counterparts who only received supported employment services (4.8%).

Dr. Susan McGurk of Dartmouth University, the principal investigator for the project, recently received a three year research grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) to conduct a new study at Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service. The study, entitled "Cognitive Training and Supported Employment in Severe Mental Illness", will incorporate the Thinking Skills for Work program, a standardized intervention that was developed and tested in the Center's project.

The Thinking Skills program is based on the positive interaction between symptoms, vocational services, cognitive abilities and work performance. It is designed to help people with serious mental illness enhance their cognitive functioning in order to improve employment outcomes. Fewer vocational supports are needed with the program, which has the added benefit of streamlining supported employment services.

To read more about the Center's past involvement with Cognitive Remediation visit our website at: www.cvmha.org/ccrr/projects/cognitiveremediation.html

"Opening the Door to Recovery"

On March 7th and 8th The Coalition's Center for Rehabilitation and Recovery will introduce the first in a series of trainings for front-line staff and supervisors aimed at building core competencies. The multi-module trainings will present the best practices in rehabilitation and recovery.

Jessica Wolf, PhD and Leslie Reed Shields, LCSW will be facilitating the first module, "Introduction to Mental Health, Rehabilitation and Recovery". Both facilitators have had extensive experience on this topic and have been involved in the Center's Work and Recovery Project initiated in 2002 (<http://www.cvmha.org/ccrr/projects/>). The first module will present an overview of mental health and mental illness, a history of treatment approaches in the U.S., and information about resiliency and the potential for recovery. The principles of psychiatric rehabilitation will also be discussed in terms of their practical application for consumers, providers and the mental health system as a whole. For more information and future training dates for the Core Competency Training initiative visit our website at: www.cvmha.org/ccrr/seminars/

Bush and Fossella Approve Cuts to Medicaid and Medicare

On February 8, 2006 President Bush signed into law a budget reconciliation bill passed by Congress that will reduce Medicare spending by \$6.4 billion and Medicaid spending by \$4.7 billion over the next five years. Despite the loss, all of your calls and letters made a difference. All Democrats and 14 Republicans (including five whose votes we succeed in changing) voted against the

bill. The entire New York City congressional delegation voted AGAINST this measure, except Vito Fossella (R-13 district). Six upstate Republicans also supported the bill. You may find out how your House members voted on S 1932 by clicking here: <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2006/roll004.xml>

There is still work that needs to be done. Many of the provisions in the reconciliation bill are at the discretion of the states. Our efforts now shift to the state level as governors, state legislators and state Medicaid directors will be making their own decisions about how to implement the new legislation.

The Coalition will continue to update you on the analysis and implementation of this bill as it develops.

Coalition Calendar

Introduction to Mental Health, Rehabilitation and Recovery

03/07/06 9:00 AM-4:00PM

03/08/06 9:00 AM-4:00PM

This two day training is designed for front-line staff working in community support programs. For more information, call Deborah Short at 212-646-1700 x235.

IDDT Training Session VII - Special Populations with Win Turner

03/10/06 1:00 PM-5:00PM

For information on the location of this training, or to register, please visit www.cvmha.org.

Monthly Membership Meeting

03/23/06 3:30 PM - 5:30PM

Job Board

Coalition Members advertise for free on The Coalition's Job Board! Non-members may advertise for only \$50. Go to www.cvmha.org and click on 'Job Board' and then 'Add a Job.' Please note the addition of a dedicated Job Board for posting psychiatrist positions. View available positions anytime at www.cvmha.org.