



Coalition Briefs

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

PROS and New York City

Just over a month ago the NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH) put a hold on PROS (Personalized Recovery Oriented Services), the new Medicaid rehabilitation license. Since that time, providers in NYC and across the State wait patiently for the outcome of deliberations between the OMH and the NYS Department of Health (DOH). DOH is providing expert advice related to eligibility and documentation requirements necessary for Medicaid reimbursement for certain rehabilitation services, especially those related to employment and social activities. At the same time, substantial revisions are being made to OMH's PROS Provider Handbook, needed to clarify the meaning of and expectations surrounding particular services, outcomes, documentation requirements and financing.

While these issues are being resolved, members of the NYC DOHMH (Department of Health and Mental Hygiene) PROS Stakeholder Implementation Workgroup continue to meet and collaborate on NYC's plan. Formally submitted to OMH in February, the PROS Implementation Plan for NYC currently includes 131 programs projected to convert to create 43 licensed PROS programs. Serious consideration was given to the 'fit' and fiscal viability of particular NYC programs. As a result, a significant number of mandated programs, including employment initiatives, are being waived from the requirement to convert at this time.

Through involvement with the Stakeholder Implementation Workgroup, the Coalition continues to participate in discussions and decisions that impact upon NYC's mental health community. For more information on PROS (including the New York City PROS Rollout Plan) visit our website at: cvmha.org/policy/pros.html

City Proposes New Eligibility Requirements for NY/NY Housing

The City is proposing that housing providers backfill vacancies in NY/NY I & II units with the chronically homeless, defined as those individuals who have spent at least one continuous year in a shelter or on the streets. An Axis 1 diagnosis will remain an eligibility requirement for these units.

Previously, the required length of homelessness for NY/NY units was four consecutive months, or 14 of the previous 60 days, in a shelter. For those individuals living on the streets, the documented length of homelessness could be even shorter.

The proposal is geared towards helping the City meet the Mayor's pledge to reduce chronic homelessness in New York by 2/3 over the next four years.

The Coalition has a number of concerns about this policy. The City's proposal offers no additional service dollars to help providers absorb a population with a higher propensity for active substance use, non-compliance with medication regimens and an inability to access or maintain public benefits.

For more information on this proposal, please contact Michael Polenberg at (212) 742-1600 ext. 102.

The Coalition's Annual Mental Health Awards

Join us on Thursday, June 8th for The Coalition's Annual Mental Health Awards Dinner. Honorees include Sharon Carpinello BeBe Moore Campbell and Alan Siskind.

For more information, or to order tickets, call 212-742-1600 x 104.



On March 23rd, Fordham-Tremont's Continuing Day Treatment and Assisted Competitive Employment Programs honored the Coalition's Center for Rehabilitation and Recovery at a ceremony recognizing consumers working in various types of employment. Pictured from left to right: Dr. Jessica Wolf, of the Work and Recovery Project and Alysia Pascaris, Director of the Center. See page two for more information.

Comprehensive Training on Social Security Benefits

The Coalition's Center for Rehabilitation and Recovery will present a Comprehensive Training on Social Security benefits on April 17 - 19th. Benefits expert Ed Lopez will be returning to the Center to conduct this three-day workshop. The training is designed for entitlement specialists, rehabilitation professionals and other staff involved in the delivery of benefits counseling. Workshop participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of SSI and SSDI. Participants will also learn about various work incentives that can support consumers as they transition into work. Demand for this training is usually very high and space is limited, so it is best to register soon. To register, call the Center at 212-742-1600 ext. 235.

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www.cvmha.org

President Proposes Major Cuts To Medicaid

The President's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2007 calls for \$14.1 billion in cuts to Medicaid over the next five years. These cuts are over and above the \$4.8 billion in Medicaid cuts approved by Congress as part of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. The majority of the funding reductions proposed in the FY 2007 budget shift responsibility from the federal government to individual states.

Overall, the FY 2007 budget makes sharp cuts to a number of programs that provide services to people with mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders. Included in this proposal are: a reduction in the federal matching rate for targeted case management to 50%; tightening allowable services that can be claimed as Medicaid rehabilitation services; limiting Medicaid payments when a third-party may be liable; allowing states to use a more restrictive formulary for prescription drugs; and limiting pharmacy reimbursement for certain drugs.

The budget proposal also cuts the Section 811 housing program for people with severe disabilities, and would prohibit federal Medicaid reimbursement for school-based administration or transportation costs associated with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Pat Goldstein Honored by Latino Social Work Task Force

On March 16, Coalition Deputy Executive Director Patricia Gallo Goldstein was honored by the Latino Social Work Task Force at their second annual P'Alante luncheon. The task force is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Latino community by addressing the chronic shortage of Latino social workers. Coalition Executive Director Phillip Saperia is a member of the task force.

The Coalition's Center for Rehab and Recovery Honored Through Art

The Center participated in a ceremony on March 23rd at the Fordham-Tremont Continuing Day Treatment and Assisted Competitive Employment Programs to honor working recipients in transitional employment, competitive employment and volunteer positions. The Center was recognized for its efforts in integrating employment with mental health services through its Work and Recovery project. Fordham-Tremont applauded the Center's extensive and steadfast involvement from July 2002 to June 2004 that resulted in staff incorporating employment into service delivery. As a result, consumers now have a richer array of recovery oriented services. Derrick Williams, a consumer at Fordham-Tremont, designed a poster which reflects a guiding principle in the project -- that employment can facilitate recovery. Fordham-Tremont was one of five NYC Continuing Day Treatment Programs that participated in the project which emphasized improving employment opportunities for consumers, increasing collaboration among agency programs and training staff to enhance their skills.

TSI Receives \$1.5 Million Grant

The Coalition congratulates Transitional Services for New York for their award of a \$1.5 million HUD grant. The grant will be used to develop 10 new units of affordable housing for Seriously and Persistently Mentally Ill Adults in Queens. TSI is currently negotiating with the New York State Office of Mental Health to develop case management services for the tenants of the new housing units. The project is expected to take 18 to 24 months for development.

Coalition Calendar

IDDT Training Session VIII - Co-Occurring Substance Use and Psychiatric Disorder in Addiction Treatment Programs with Mark McGovern.

04/21/06 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

For more information on IDDT trainings, or to register, please see The Coalition's website.

Monthly Membership Meeting

04/27/06 3:30 PM - 5:30PM

IDDT Training Session IX - Family Treatment with Kim Mueser

05/18/06 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

For more information on IDDT trainings, or to register, please see The Coalition's website.

Educational Medicaid Billing Videos: Order Online Now!

The Coalition is pleased to announce you may now purchase our Medicaid Billing, Coding and Documenting training series on-line by using our *new* secure credit card order form. http://www.cvmha.org/prof_learn_ctr/medicaid_billing.html

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.