



# Coalition Briefs

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

## Child Health Plus and Medicaid Expansion

Governor Pataki and the State Legislature reached agreement in June 1998 on an important expansion of health insurance coverage for New York's children, in both Child Health Plus and Medicaid.

Expanded Child Health Plus (CHP) benefits include, among other increased benefits, *inpatient* as well as outpatient mental health, alcohol and substance abuse services. Child Health Plus will now allow *up to 30 inpatient days and up to 60 outpatient visits per year of mental health, alcoholism and substance abuse services*; the former cap of 20 annual outpatient mental health visits has been removed.

*Eligibility and Premiums:* retroactive to October 1, 1997, children in families with gross incomes below 151% of the federal poverty level (FPL) will pay no CHP monthly premium; this level has been 120% FPL. Effective January 1, 1999, CHP will be free for families with gross incomes up to 160% FPL. Also on 1/1/99, subsidized CHP eligibility will be extended to cover families up to 230% FPL; this will be extended further on 7/1/00 to 250% FPL. Currently, subsidized Child Health Plus is available only to families with gross incomes below 222% FPL.

*Monthly premiums* have also been reduced and will range from \$9 per child and a \$27 per family maximum charge, per month, to \$15 per child and a \$52 per family maximum. *Copayments:* there will be no copayments per visit under the expanded program.

*Expanded Medicaid eligibility:* Until now, Medicaid eligibility has depended on both the child's age and the family's income. Eligibility has been expanded and

## In memoriam: Barry Roff 1947-1998

The Coalition mourns the sudden tragic loss of Dr. Barry Roff on July 29, our Treasurer and Executive Committee member. The Deputy Director of Project Renewal for the last ten years, he was a long time leader in the New York City mental health community. All of us at The Coalition extend profound sympathies to his wife, Xenia, two children-- Jessica and Matthew--as well as to his hundreds of colleagues, admirers and friends.

"Barry had a very special way of touching the hearts of many diverse people," said Mary D. Redd, Coalition President, "and he will be sorely missed. We are bereft of his steady hand and unique brand of humor."

A leader in the movement to help people who live with mental disabilities, Barry served as deputy Director of Altro, Inc. before coming to Project Renewal. Prior to that, he was a senior administrator in New York City's Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services.

In a brief eulogy for Barry, Executive Director Phillip A. Saperia said that Barry's friends and loved ones would remember him "as our hero. Not a larger than life hero. But a hero who transformed the warp and woof of the tapestry of everyday life into art; a hero who turned the day-by-day product of good intention and determination into good works."

The Coalition will hold a celebration of Barry Roff's prodigious life in September or early October. Details will be announced. ▣

simplified to eliminate most age-based criteria. This expansion will occur upon receipt of federal permission, but no earlier than 1/1/99. Two other Medicaid expansion provisions will help recipients: (1) under *Year-Long Certification*, once a family is found Medicaid-eligible, it will retain eligibility for a full year, with recertification still occurring once a year, and (2) there is a new *presumptive eligibility* for Medicaid, as has been the case for CHP. Until the Medicaid expansion is implemented, children who appear eligible for Medicaid may receive presumptive CHP eligibility until a Medicaid determination is made.

Thanks to the Children's Defense Fund of New York for some of the data in this report. ▣

## Measure your outcomes with us

TOP, an outcomes measurement instrument, will be the topic at hand when The Coalition, in conjunction with the New York State Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, holds a meeting with David Krause, Ph.D. of Access Measurement Systems on August 11, 1998 at 2:00 p.m. TOP will be used in an outcomes measurement demonstration project open to members of both organizations. Coalition members are urged to attend. Contact Joshua Rubin at (212) 586-4555. ▣

# Coalition Briefs

## Residential RFP published

The New York City Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services (DMH) in conjunction with the New York State Office of Mental Health (SOMH) released an RFP for residential and support services on July 24, 1998. The RFP is divided into three parts: adult residential, children's residential and homeless/MICA Reinvestment funds. It should be noted though that proposals integrating housing services with the Homeless/MICA money

will be accepted as well.

Proposals are due by August 26, 1998 despite efforts by The Coalition to have that date pushed back. We did, however, gain an assurance from SOMH that they will judge applications in the context of a very brief preparation time span.

Questions about the RFP and requests for copies should be directed to Joseph Reilly at the SOMH New York City field office at (212) 675-3803x356. □

## NYC Hospitals see more psychiatric patients

Between 1993 and 1997 psychiatric and rehabilitation discharges from New York City hospitals jumped nearly 47%. During that same period hospital discharges for all other medical conditions fell by 1.1% according to data published by United Hospital Fund (UHF). During 1997 psychiatric and rehabilitation discharges accounted for nearly 17% of total patient days, up from just 13.1% in 1993. UHF points to the downsizing of the State psychiatric hospitals and the shorter stays mandated by many HMOs (which result in more readmissions) as possible causes of the trend. □

## NYCOMP wants you!

Time is fleeting for expressions of agency interest in The Coalition's Outcomes Measurement Demonstration Project. Call Pat Goldstein or Phil Saperia to reserve your place. Best prices will match best practices in this first-of-a-kind New York State project. □

## Oops!

In the last issue of coalition Briefs (July 17, 1998) we made an error of scale. We indicated that the RFP for Homeless/MICA services would provide funding for "200 supported housing beds at \$95,510 per bed." The appropriate figure is \$9,551 per bed. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. □

## Best Practices getting better

The schedule for the October 13 conference **Discovering and Implementing Best Practices for Behavioral Healthcare** is reaching a final stage. The conference will be hosted by The Coalition, The New York State Council and the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare. Dr. John Lyons, Ph.D. is confirmed for the morning plenary session entitled Using Outcomes to Identify Best Practices. Afternoon workgroups will include a session on Integrating Peer Support into Clinical Practice hosted by Ellen M. Healion, M.S.Ed. as well as a session on Program Development for Dual/Multiple Disorders: Mental Illness, Drug Addiction, and Alcoholism (MIDAA) hosted by Kathleen Sciacca, M.A. The closing plenary session will be about Ethics in Community Behavioral Healthcare. For more information contact Patricia Goldstein at (212) 586-4555. □

## — Help Wanted —

**Community Access** is seeking a new program coordinator for its certified housing program. Duties include the management of two residential facilities (12 and 15 beds) for adults with psychiatric disabilities; oversee building upkeep and maintenance, maintain records, hire and supervise housing counselors, perform crisis intervention. Good candidates must: be willing to be available via 24 hour pager, have an understanding and appreciation of and commitment to the philosophy of **Community Access**, be a skilled conflict mediator, show initiative, follow through, have strong organizational skills, have good computer and interpersonal skills, have a college degree and experience working with adults with a psychiatric disability as well as experience supervising staff. Resumes with cover letters should be sent to Alix Thompson at **Community Access**, 666 Broadway, NYC 10012 or by fax to (212) 780-1412. □

## Upcoming Dates

- August 11 Outcomes Measurement meeting with NYSCCBH and Access Measurement Systems at CVMHA, 2:00 p.m.
- September 21 Rosh Ha'Shanah, Coalition building closed
- September 22 Rosh Ha'Shanah, Coalition building closed
- September 30 Yom Kippur, Coalition building closed
- October 13 Discovering and Implementing Best Practices for Behavioral Healthcare**
- November 12 Big Apple Circus at Lincoln Center**



and the



*want you to attend*

**THE SECOND PRESENTATION ON  
THE MASSACHUSETTS  
OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT PROJECT**

**Tuesday, August 11, 1998  
2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
The Coalition Headquarters  
120 West 57<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 4A  
NYC**

**Featuring:**  
**David R. Kraus, Ph.D. President of**  
*Access Measurement Systems*

**Learn about a system which has:**

- *received clinician and administrator buy-in,*
- *provides immediate scoring and feedback,*
- *has been adapted to different area sites,*
- *has enabled the state to get access across regional systems and geographic areas!*

***SEE WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN OUR NEW YORK STATE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT (NYCOMP)***

**Event is Free for Members!**

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*Please fax your RSVP to (212) 541-6183*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_