



Coalition Briefs

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

CVMHA and UJC team up

We are pleased to announce that The Coalition of Voluntary Mental Health Agencies and the Mental Health Project of the Urban Justice Center have begun collaboration on a Managed Care Consumer Assistance and Ombudsprogram for managed care consumers of mental health services in New York City. The program is in its beginning stages, and the scope of services is dependent on funding as it becomes available. Educational materials and seminars, legal advice, dispute resolution, and legal representation are just some of the services available to consumers and their advocates as part of this program.

The Urban Justice Center's Mental Health Legal Clinic is now open weekly for managed care assistance in addition to legal assistance to consumers on other issues, such as welfare benefits, housing and SSI/SSDI. All services are offered free of charge. The clinic will be open on Thursdays, 10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., at Holland House, 351 West 42nd Street, between 8th and 9th Avenues in Manhattan. For assistance on Mental Health managed care issues or for more information about the free legal clinic, please call Andrea Ryan, Managed Care Specialist at the Urban Justice Center at (212) 533-0540, ext. 347. □

DMH Mental Hygiene Awards

The New York City Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services will hold its 1999 Mental Hygiene Awards on Tuesday, November 30, 1999 at City Hall from 5:30-7:30 p.m. The ceremony will celebrate consumer empowerment and honor the 1999 award winners. Call (212) 219-5520 or fax (212) 219-5529 to RSVP. □

\$125 million is a great start

Governor Pataki's \$125 million proposal for mental health services (see Briefs Flash 11.9.99) is very welcome news to a mental health advocacy community that has grown accustomed to entering State budget negotiations trying to stem a tide of cuts. The recognition by the administration that the community-based mental health care system is underfunded has placed mental health in a better position entering a budget negotiating cycle than we have seen in a long time. Briefs readers are encouraged to contact the Governor and SOMH Commissioner Stone to show appreciation.

This does not mean, however, that we can relax and congratulate ourselves on a job well done. Much is left to do. Encouraging as the substantial increase in case management is, there is no concurrent increase in treatment and rehabilitation services to meet the expected increased demand that more case management services will engender. Moreover, the infrastructure needs of the community-based system must be addressed in order to fully support the new enhancements. Until a mechanism that will enable mental health rates to keep pace with rising costs is in place, the foundation on which this new funding builds will remain unstable.

The Coalition is anxious to share our vision of an appropriately funded mental health system with our elected and appointed officials on all levels. With the increase in popular media attention to our issues and the concomitant attention generated at the highest levels of government the time is ripe for us to make our case. □

AOT teams in place

We have received the following information from the New York City Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services regarding the contact numbers for the City's Assisted Outpatient Treatment teams. The general number for the public to call is (800) 527-7474. The different borough team contact people and their phone numbers are as follows:

- Manhattan: Howard Telson, M.D. at Bellevue Hospital, phone: (212) 562-4073 and fax: (212) 562-4556.
- The Bronx: Scott Rogge, M.D., John Dibbini or Sandra Alongi at North Central Bronx Hospital, phone: (718) 519-2475 and fax: (718) 519-3442.

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Chemical dependency license

The New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) is developing the regulations for alcoholism and substance abuse providers to convert to a single consolidated chemical dependency license. The proposed regulations will likely be sent out beginning in December to allow for a thirty-day comment period. After revisions, they will be sent to the Governor's Office of Regulatory Reform for approval. Once the regulations are accepted, conversion packets will be distributed to licensed agencies. At this time agencies will have 90 days to sign a certificate attesting to their ability to meet the new regulations and make the necessary changes. Then regional training sessions for

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Presidential privacy proposal

On November 4th President Clinton announced his proposal to protect the privacy of medical records. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 requires the Department of Health and Human Services to issue final regulations by February, 2000 if Congress has not yet passed privacy regulations.

The proposed regulations apply to all health plans and most providers, covering only computer-based or electronically transmitted data. The rules would require consumer consent before private health information could be released, mandate that consumers are informed about how their health information will be released, provide individuals with access to their own records, restrict information disclosure only to those who need it for "treatment, payment and health care operations" and call for privacy-conscious business practices.

Specific additional protections are included for psychotherapy notes, which cannot be shared without consumer authorization. Furthermore, health plans would be prohibited from conditioning treatment or reimbursement on access to such notes.

The 600 pages of proposed rules are online at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/admsimp>. Public comment is invited and can be submitted from that location. □

Big Apple Circus is a huge success

The sell-out crowd at this year's Big Apple Circus event was thrilled and enthralled by the magic of the one-ring circus. Among the guests at the event were DMH and DOH Commissioner Neal Cohen, HHC President Luis Marcos, State Senator Dan Hevesi and Councilman Archie Spigner. Thanks to all those who attended. □

Upcoming Events

December 3	Executive Committee Retreat at the University Club
December 6	Government Relations Committee at CVMHA
December 7	PLC: Utilization Review and Resource Management
December 9	Finance Committee at CVMHA
	Board of Directors at CVMHA
	Committee on Children and Families at CVMHA
December 16	Annual Meeting — Place TBD
June 15	Mental Health Awards at Pfizer

Chemical dependency license

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providers will be held and the regulations will be officially adopted, at which time the Medicaid rate for chemical dependency services will be set. OASAS is working with the Department of Health to develop the new rates, which will likely fall somewhere between the current rates for alcoholism services and those for substance abuse services. As a result of this some providers may find the new rate to be much lower than they currently receive. Additionally, many agencies will be forced to change their staffing patterns to meet the new regulations. Once the rate is set chemical dependence certificates will be issued. □

Facilitated enrollment grants

The State Department of Health has announced the lead agencies for Child Health Plus and Medicaid enrollment facilitation. Among the twelve lead agencies, a number are Coalition members. Congratulations to **Children's Aid Society, The Center for Children and Families, and Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center.** □

Kendra's training for consumers

The New York State Office of Mental Health's Bureau of Recipient Affairs is sponsoring a train-the-trainer seminar on the recently enacted Kendra's Law in order to help educate consumers/survivors/ex-patients on the law's impact. The New York City training (one of four Statewide) will be held on Monday, November 29th from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the SOMH NYC Field Office, 75 Morton Street in Manhattan. The trainers will be Jody Silver and Anne Krauss and lunch will be provided. To register, or for more information, contact June Manor (collect if need be) at (518) 473-6579, by November 23rd. Registration is limited to 100 people, so call soon. □

Save the date

On January 27th, 2000 The Coalition and the New York City field Office of the State Office of Mental Health will co-sponsor a one-day conference. *Housing & Employment for Persons with Co-Occurring Disorders: Are We Meeting the Challenge?* will run from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Dr. Kenneth Minkoff of Arbour Health Systems in Woburn, MA will give the keynote address. Jay Neugeboren, author of *Imagining Robert* will be the luncheon speaker. The conference will be held at the New York Marriott Brooklyn, 333 Adams Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201. A continental breakfast and luncheon will be provided. □

AOT teams

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- Brooklyn and Staten Island: Dominic Ferro at Woodhull Hospital, phone: (718) 963-8331 and fax: (718) 630-3159.
- Queens: Dr. Daniel Garza at Elmhurst Hospital, phone: (718) 334-3547 and fax: (718) 334-5378.

State team for current inpatients and outpatients of State facilities/clinics: Cheryl Gallagher, phone: (718) 667-2831 and fax: (718) 667-2435. In addition, for other general AOT questions, contact Dr. Michael Lesser, DMHMRAS Medical Director at (212) 219-5602. □

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— Help Wanted —

Member Notes

The Association for Rehabilitative Case Management and Housing has once again received encouraging results from its study of case management outcomes. According to the results of the study, 100% of case management clients are engaged in psychiatric treatment and receive medication monitoring services if they are prescribed psychotropic medication. 83% of clients are engaged in school, work, job training or psychosocial rehabilitation. Perhaps most impressive is the fact that 0% of clients return to homelessness after leaving **The Association's** programs, while 71% were homeless before the entered. □

Gay Men's Health Crisis has appointed former Deputy Director Ana Oliveira to be their new Executive Director. She is the first woman to head the organization. Congratulations Ana and good luck. □

The Training Center of **The Educational Alliance, Inc.** announces four presentations. "Identifying Transference and Countertransference" will be led by Caren Greenberg from 9-10:30 a.m. on November 19, 1999 (fee: \$10). "Vocational Education in Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment" will be an all-day workshop by Denine Woodson beginning at 9:00 a.m. on December 6, 1999 (fee: \$60). Ellen Friedman will present "Working with Sexually Abused Children" from 1-4 p.m. on December 8, 1999 (fee: \$15). On December 10, 1999 from 9-10:30 a.m. Caren Greenberg will lead "Using Your Countertransference Productively" (fee: \$10). For more information please call Maybelline at (212) 780-2300 ext. 451. □

Weston United has an opening for a social worker with CSW, psychiatric and MICA exp. Will supervise casework staff, coordinate intake referrals & interviews, interface w/ community agencies, & provide direct clinical services to a chronically MI & homeless pop. Knowledge of Dept. of Homeless Services compliance standards a +. Supervisory exp. Computer literate. Competitive salary & benefits. Fax resume to: Joseph Wong, HR Manager, (212) 316-0789. □

Victim Services' Solace Program, a community-based counseling & outreach program for survivors of torture and refugee trauma, is implementing a citywide program that focuses on orientation & education for refugees, resettlement workers and social service providers, mental health/health professionals. Refugees will be oriented to what is available in mental healthcare. In conjunction w/ REFUGE, a project of the International Trauma Studies Program at NYU and DOW/USA, *Solace* is developing curricula to train workers in the above skills, focusing on cultural competency. They hope to increase knowledge in the mental health/health fields for dealing with refugees. Each year over the next 3 years, 2 one-day conferences focusing on some aspect of psychosocial work with refugees will be offered and will be open to the public. For further information contact Ernest Duff at (718) 899-1233x101 or eduff@victimservices.org. □

Building Available

A 20,000 sq. foot brick building is available for use as a mental health program or related facility in the South Bronx on Southern Boulevard between 173rd and 174th Streets. Available November, 1999 the building (currently a daycare center) has a full kitchen, 7 classrooms, 5 offices, lounge, library, 2 conference rooms, 3 baths, common room and 5,000 sq. foot play roof. Air conditioned. Call Mark Marcario (718) 727-9107. □

Catholic Charities has an opening for a Job Readiness Coordinator to implement program for the Graduates of the Education Outreach Program & other clients. Will plan & arrange workshops. Assist in goal setting and outside referrals for participants as well as fundraising. BA, BS, or BSW. Knowledge of Spanish. Prior exp. Working w/ people in need. Good interpersonal & networking skills. Able to accept flexible hrs. Exc. Benefits. Send resume, salary requirements & job title to: **Catholic Charities**, 1011 1st Ave., Rm. 1113, NY, NY 10022 or Fax to: (212) 826-8795. □

JASA has an opening for a P/T Registered Nurse to work with geriatric pop. ½ day per week. Clinic & home visits req. Resp. include medication management & supervision, patent evaluations & patient education. Geriatric and/or psychiatric exp. helpful. Flexible hrs, exc. consultant rate. Send resume to Judi Gordon, **JASA**, 2488 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10458 or Fax to: (718) 733-7622. □

Catholic Charities has an opening for a Coordinator of Refugee Resettlement to directly supervise & train staff, implement & monitor budget, serve as a liaison btw. the Refugee Office, the health and social service systems. Will also develop new services to meet changing needs. BA, previous exp. in staff supervision, highly-motivated, good communication, willingness to travel throughout the Archdiocese. Knowledge of immigration & refugee laws helpful. Exp. w/ Microsoft Office. Exc. Benefits. Send resume, salary req. & job title in your response to: **Catholic Charities**, 1011 1st Ave., Rm. 1113, NY, NY 10022 or Fax to (212) 826-8795. □

**Saturday, November
20th is
National Suicide
Prevention Day**