



Coalition Briefs

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

City budget moving

On Wednesday, May 17th Coalition Executive Director Phillip A. Saperia testified before the New York City Council Finance Committee about the needs of the nonprofit mental health community. Foremost on the agenda is a restoration of \$3.05 million in behavioral health care cuts proposed by Mayor Giuliani. The rest of The Coalition's agenda, approved without dissent at a meeting of The Coalition's Government Relations Committee on May 12th includes:

- \$1.5 million 'network of support' for SED kids in the child welfare system and their families. Money would be used to link abused and neglected children to services, build necessary program capacity and provide case management.
- \$1.5 million for MICA services

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Work and Wellness Act needs your help

On May 9th the Assembly Social Services Committee passed the Work and Wellness Act of 2000 (A.10159/S.7392). Passage of the Work and Wellness Act, sponsored by Assembly Mental Health Committee Chair James Brennan and Staten Island Senator John J. Marchi, is necessary for New York to fully implement the Federal Work Incentives Improvement Act. The bill will enable people with disabilities to purchase, at a reasonable cost, Medicaid insurance if and when their income exceeds the limits for Medicaid as an entitlement. This legislation is crucial to the efforts to help people with mental illness take their rightful place in the competitive labor force.

The Coalition and the New York Work Exchange have been working with a broad group of disability rights advocates for passage of the Work and Wellness Act. Six states have already begun implementation of the law after receiving approval from HCFA; nine others have passed the bill but not yet obtained HCFA authorization. Assembly passage is expected within the next two weeks. Passage in the Senate is not at all certain.

Briefs readers are encouraged to contact their State Senator to urge co-sponsorship of this landmark legislation and to encourage them to express their support to Senate Majority Leader Joseph L. Bruno, Senate Social Services Committee Chair Raymond Meier and Senate Health Committee Chair Kemp Hannon.

If you do not know who your State Senator is, use the Representative Finder feature on The Coalition's website at www.cvmha.org or contact Joshua Rubin at (212) 586-4555x17. ©

State budget process completed

Mental Hygiene Budget Subcommittee recommendations accepted

Lingering fears of potential line-item vetoes of the legislature's budget adds were put to rest as the deadline for vetoes came and went without drama. Final details of the adopted budget are as follows:

Governor's proposal adopted

- \$17.8 million Kendra's law implementation – for case management and ACT teams
- \$15 million Kendra's law medication grants to provide medication and medication management to individuals released from jails, hospitals and inpatient psychiatric facilities and for periodic blood tests to ensure compliance with medication and substance abuse treatment
- \$14.8 million Additional adult case management (estimated to be up to 10,000 new slots)
- \$14.65 million 2,000 new Supported Housing units
- \$7.1 million 310 new Home and Community Based Waiver slots for SED children

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Who represents us?

Visitors to www.cvmha.org will find a *Representative Finder* feature added to the site. When prompted, users can enter any New York City address and find a complete list of representatives: Community Board, City Council member, Mayor, Assemblyperson, State Senator, Governor, Congressperson, U.S. Senator and President. Contact information and email links are provided for all representatives.

In addition, the site has buttons that enable users, with a single click, to email the City Council Health Committee, Assembly Mental Health Committee, Senate Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Committee and the Legislative Leadership (Assembly Speaker and Senate Majority Leader). ©

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Employment conference

On June 20th the New York Work Exchange, The Coalition and the New York State Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare will present a conference entitled: *The Mission for the 21st Century: Employment Services for people with Mental Illness*. It will be a day of presentations, discussions and discovery to encourage and support the active inclusion of employment services in both clinical and psychosocial rehabilitation programs.

Topics will include: "One Size DOES NOT Fit All" a discussion of the problems inherent in the system wide adoption of a single service model and focus on the usefulness of the development of eclectic approaches that incorporate the best features of each model, by IAPRS CEO Ruth Hughes; "How to use the ADA, WIA and TWWIA to Get People to Work" presented by Pope Simmons from NCCBH and Edwin Lopez-Soto, JD, Staff Attorney for Greater Upstate Law Project and a Luncheon Presentation, "Employment of

People Living with Mental Illness: A New York Vision" by Neal Cohen, MD New York City Commissioner of Health and Mental Health, James Stone New York State Commissioner of Mental Health and Beatrice Disman, Regional Director, SSA (invited).

Other topics include a discussion of the success through innovation that some providers have had in getting jobs for people and getting them to work; "Symptom Management in the Workplace" and "What Do We Want: A Consumer View of Employment Services." Registration materials for the conference will be mailed shortly.©

Welcome aboard

We're Working! **The New York Work Exchange** welcomes three new staff members to its Technical Assistance Team. Richard Chimelis, serving as Team Leader, will be the initial contact for programs seeking on-site support. Debbi Talbott & Shaleigh Tice will be providing general TA on employment services as well as specific training on models of employment & peer support systems. We welcome them to the Exchange & look forward to introducing them to our community at the June 20th Conference.©

Assembly addresses forensic mental health

Assembly Mental Health Committee Chair James Brennan has convened a working group on forensic mental health issues. The group, formed in response to a March 2nd joint hearing of the Assembly Committee on Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Assembly Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Assembly Committee on Correction and Assembly Committee on Codes entitled *Mental Hygiene Services in Local Correctional Institutions*. The working group, at which Joshua Rubin represented The Coalition, met for the first time on Wednesday May 16th to investigate ways to solve the problem of transinstitutionalization.©

Better treatment for depression

The May 18th issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine* contains "A Comparison of Nefazodone, the Cognitive Behavioral Analysis System of Psychotherapy, and Their Treatment of Chronic Depression." The study compares the effectiveness of drug therapy to psychotherapy for people with chronic forms of depression.

519 research participants completed the study. One group received only psychotherapy, another received only nefazodone and a third group received both therapy and medication. 55% of the subjects who received only drugs showed at least a 50% decline in their Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression score. 52% of the clients

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GAO report on mental health parity focuses on failings of Federal legislation... and need for State action

On May 18, 2000, The United States General Accounting Office (GAO) delivered a report to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions entitled *Mental Health Parity Act: Despite New Federal Standards, Mental Health Benefits Remain Limited*. GAO surveyed 1,656 employers with more than 50 employees in the 26 States and the District of Columbia (including New York) that have no State parity requirement.

Although much of the news in the report is discouraging, it is not all bad. Among the key findings highlighted by the GAO are:

- 14 percent of plans are non-compliant with federal regulations, placing different dollar limits on mental health services.
- Among compliant plans, 87 percent have at least one restrictive design feature, i.e. 65 percent of plans still limit outpatient visits and inpatient days.
- About two-thirds of compliant plans made a mental health design feature more restrictive to offset the costs of parity in dollar limits.
- Only three percent of employers reported that compliance with

the law increased their costs. Nearly no employers reported that they had dropped mental health benefits altogether to avoid needing to comply with the law.

- Estimates of the cost of complying with the parity bill are less than one percent.

The limitations of the Federal legislation demonstrate the vital need for New York State to finally adopt comprehensive mental health parity legislation. *Briefs* readers are encouraged to contact their representatives to express support for A.6325 (Brennan) and S.2089 (Libous).©

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City Budget

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- on the Cumberland Family Health and Support Center model, integrating mental health, substance abuse, case management, physical health and childcare services. Funding enables the program to treat the whole family including after-school programs for kids, job training and benefits counseling. This enriched, integrated model should be replicated in the other four boroughs without strict eligibility requirements.
- \$200,000/year for three years to

provide training and technical assistance in the areas of managed care, continuous quality improvement and outcomes measurement and to provide management tools to nonprofit community mental health care providers for the purposes of improving the quality of care.

- \$14 million capital dollars to fully match the State's commitment to provide housing for people with mental illness who are not NY/NY eligible. The legislature allocated \$40 million for New York City, but required a local match. So far \$26 million has been secured.©

Coalition honors Gail Nayowith

At the 16th Annual Mental Health Awards The Coalition will honor Citizens' Committee for Children of New York Executive Director Gail Nayowith. Before coming to CCC Gail worked for New York City in the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services, Department of Health, Human Resources Administration and the Health and Hospitals Corporation. Gail is also an Adjunct Professor at Columbia University School of Social Work and the Hunter College Public Service Scholar Program. She is a fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine, a member of the New York State Mental Health Services Council and a Board member of the Human Services Council of New York City.

Please join us in honoring Gail Nayowith on June 15th. Call Judeth Podell at extension 18 for more information.©

State Budget

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- \$3.7 million Children's case management services
- \$2 million New family support services
- \$5 million 490 new Family Based Treatment slots
- \$11.4 million Re-estimate of the available funding for Reinvestment Year VI.
- \$880,000 400 additional supported employment slots
- \$7.1 million 2% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for residential providers and family care operators
- \$10 million For OMH to increase oversight and outcomes measurement

Legislative additions

Office of Mental Health

- \$6.8 million 1.5% adjustment on all personal and non-personal services at non-residential contract agencies – retroactive to April 1, 2000
- \$7.6 million Full restoration of the 149 missing shared staff positions
- \$2.85 million Kids treatment funding that can be used for clinical, day treatment, crisis or school-based services at the discretion of OMH and the counties
- \$2.5 million Adjustment for all non-COPs providers and COPs providers whose combined rate is less than \$67 to bring the reimbursement rate up to \$67 per visit – retroactive to April 1, 2000
- \$1.3 million Rehabilitation and peer services for adults
- \$850,000 Restoration of research positions
- \$970,000 Diagnostic treatment

Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services

- \$3.4 million 1.5% adjustment on all personal and non-personal services – retroactive to April 1, 2000
- \$4 million Prevention and treatment services
- \$500,000 Community transition funding
- \$625,000 Continuity of care services

Legislative mental health 'member item' grants

- \$2,470,150 45 grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$500,000©

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— Help Wanted —

Member Notes

After more than 15 years at **New York Psychotherapy and Counseling Center**, Director of Operations Vincent Valentino has retired. Eric Bettleheim, Director of Corporate Administration said, "In his 15+ years of service to New York Psychotherapy, Vince was an indispensable part of our operations. It is impossible for one person to fill his shoes." Vince will also be missed on The Coalition's Board of Directors. "We will miss Vince's counsel, his congeniality and his passionate advocacy for mental health agencies and the people they serve," said Coalition Executive Director Phillip A. Saperia.©

Staten Island Mental Health Society has named Nathalie J. Weeks, CSW, MBA as Senior Vice President for Behavioral Health Services and Director of the Children's Community Mental Health Center. Nathalie succeeds Almeda Sabido who retired after 42 years of service to **SIMHS**. Congratulations to both Nathalie and Almeda.©

The Staten Island Mental Health Society, Inc. has received a donation of 1,000 new, adult-size sweaters. Any not-for-profit organization in NYC is welcome to them until the supply is exhausted. Retail value is approx. \$30 each. Interested organizations should contact Mrs. Patricia Verardi @ (718) 442-2225 to arrange for pick-up.©

Depression study

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who received only psychotherapy demonstrated similar reductions in symptomatology. However, fully 85% of people who received both forms of treatment responded. "The combination of the two is significantly more efficacious than either treatment alone," according to the authors of the study.

In a related editorial in the same issue Jan Scott, M.D. declares, "Patients who received cognitive therapy plus medication had significantly fewer unscheduled visits with their psychiatrists. Such findings are clearly important in a consideration of the overall benefits and costs of treatment." We agree.©

Upcoming Events

May 22	MICA Committee at The Bridge
May 26	NYC Picnic for Parity in Bryant Park
May 29	Coalition closed in honor of Memorial Day
June 2	Coalition moves to 90 Broad Street New Phone: (212) 742-1600 New Fax: (212) 742-2080
June 7	PLC: How to Develop a Case Rate: Part II with Open Minds at FPWA – only open to Part I attendees
June 8	Executive Committee at CVMHA Board of Directors at CVMHA
June 15	Mental Health Awards at Pfizer
June 20	New York Work Exchange conference: <i>The Mission for the 21st Century: Employment Services for People with Mental Illness</i> at the Brooklyn Marriott
June 26	MICA Committee at The Bridge
July 4	Coalition closed in honor of Independence Day

*PLC = Professional Learning Center

New York City Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services seeks Assistant Commissioner, Mental Health Services, \$48-95K for Bureau of child & Adolescent Services. Looking for a dynamic leader to assume responsibility for child and adolescent mental health services in a culturally competent and sensitive manner in New York City. Determine comprehensive system, develop plans, programs, policies, and oversee administration of the provision of mental health services to children and adolescents. Serve as Advisor to the Deputy Commissioner and direct professional staff. Review contracts; CON applications and make recommendations; Represent the Bureau on the Committees, Sub-Committees and Commissions or Task Forces. Coordinate with local providers and the borough-wide planning activities; work with all regulatory bodies and other child serving systems. Maintain liaison with high-level officials of local, state and national organizations. Must have a graduate degree in Social Work, Child/Adolescent Psychology, or related field with five (5) years of demonstrated experience in a managerial or executive capacity in the field of mental hygiene services for children and adolescents. Excellent communication & interpersonal skills are essential. Computer skills are preferred. NYC residency required. To apply send resume with a cover letter & salary history to: Office of Human Resources, NYC Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation & Alcoholism Services, 93 Worth St., Ste. 1114, NY, NY 10013. Fax (212) 219-5267. Email: Nmohamme@DMHlan.cn.ci.nyc.ny.us. EEO M/F/V©

Weston United seeks F/T Teacher to provide instruction to adult Hispanic pop. in East Harlem. resp. include setting up curriculums for program members to earn a GED and/or increase their proficiency in Eng. Should have BA in Education or related field & exp. in ESL programs. Must be fluent in Spanish. Clubhouse & MICA exp. a plus. Computer literate. Competitive salary & benefits. Fax resume to: Joseph Wong, HR Manager at (212) 316-0789.©