



Coalition Briefs

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

Why no buy-in?

The Governor strongly supports it and has for years. The Senate is in favor of the idea. The Assembly has been leading the charge for passage. So why is the Medicaid Buy-In legislation stalled?

This critical piece of legislation is the vehicle for the State to implement the Federal Work Incentives Improvement Act, valiantly pushed through Congress by New York's delegation. The Buy-In would enable people to return to work without jeopardizing their Medicaid eligibility. It would allow people with disabilities to return to the workforce and contribute to the cost of their care by paying a sliding-scale fee based on their earnings.

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Recipients respond to SNP awards

On May 1st Office of Mental Health (OMH) Commissioner Stone informed two New York City and one Westchester County Special Needs Plan (SNP) applicants that they had been conditionally awarded licenses to operate adult mental health SNPs (See *Briefs Flash* May 1, 2000). Managed Care Innovations, Inc. (MCI) and the New York Behavioral Health Partnership were awarded New York City licenses and the Westchester Behavioral Health Network received the lone Westchester license.

Conditional award recipients reacted with pleasure and indicated a determination to move ahead with the process:

Citywide Behavioral Network President Dr. Kenneth Popler said, "We're grateful to have received conditional approval from OMH. Four years of hard work by many individuals within the New York Behavioral Health Partnership resulted in our proposal that we forwarded to OMH. We are proud of the partnership between CBN, HHC and consumers and other advocates that have been involved in our planning process. We look forward to SNP implementation as we work more closely with OMH and New York City DMH."

Outgoing MCI Board of Directors Chair Dr. Peter Campanelli stated, "Those of us who are members of MCI are delighted that the SNP awards

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State budget barrels toward completion

Upon their return from the holiday vacation week the legislature had only one major stumbling block between themselves and passage of a fiscal year 2001 state budget (and their first paychecks in over a month). Governor Pataki's desire to reform the State's borrowing practices had the potential to delay passage of the budget for months. On Tuesday afternoon May 2nd, however, the legislative leadership and Gov-

ernor announced that they had reached a compromise agreement.

The budget agreement is therefore all-but-complete. All that remains is the formality of a vote and the potential for a gubernatorial veto. Although Governor Pataki has agreed not to veto large portions of the budget as he did in 1997, he may choose to trim the budget a bit. At this

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City Council begins budget hearings

The New York City Council has begun their annual budget hearings. On Monday May 8th the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services will appear before the Health Committee to discuss the Mayor's proposal for fiscal year 2001. On May 17th a hearing will be held at which the public will be free to comment. Coalition Executive Director Phillip A. Saperia will testify at that hearing. Coalition members are encouraged to take the opportunity to raise mental health concerns before the City Council. Members that would like to provide input into The Coalition's testimony should attend the Government Relations Committee meeting on May 12th. ©

NYS sells inpatient facilities Profits should be Reinvested

New York State has sold two psychiatric centers and three developmental centers in its continuing effort to liquidate the assets of unused inpatient facilities. The sales, announced by Governor Pataki on April 19th, total over \$19 million dollars. The properties sold were:

- West Seneca Development Center in Erie County was sold to Fischione Construction Company for \$600,000.
- Rockland Psychiatric Center in Orangeburg was sold for \$7,250,000 to Heartland Acquisition Corporation.
- Alan and Julie Shope purchased Wassaic Developmental Center in Dutchess County for \$800,000.
- The 20-acre Bronx Develop-

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The New York Work Exchange is pleased to provide opportunities for providers and practitioners to develop strategies for integrating people with mental illness into the competitive labor force.

The first, "Negating the Myth: Work does not Equal De-compensation" is sponsored by the Work Exchange, but is developed and delivered by the NY Works Coalition. This daylong workshop is focused, as the name implies, on debunking the mythology around work as a stressor from which people with mental illness should be "protected." It will provide up-to-date information on what the realities are for people in the labor force who have psychiatric disabilities, as well as current strategies for supporting people with mental illness who are working.

"Negating the Myth" will be held on May 15th, 2000 at the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies building at 281 Park Ave. Contact – Rena Gillespie at the Corporation for Supportive Housing, (212) 986-2966 x233, for registration and other information.

The New York Work Exchange will also be sponsoring the Coalition's annual conference on June 20th, 2000. Watch this space for much more to come about this year's conference, but the conference, entitled "The Mission for the 21st Century: Employment Services for People with Mental Illness" will be geared toward moving forward toward implementation of the ideals of full integration of people with mental illness into the competitive labor force. Registration materials will be available for the conference soon.©

IOC comparison chart

The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law has published a chart comparing involuntary outpatient commitment laws in the 37 states (and the District of Columbia) that have them. The chart is available in both html and PDF format at <http://www.bazelon.org/iocchartintro.html>.©

State budget

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At this juncture it appears that the recommendations of the Budget Subcommittee on Mental Hygiene will be passed through and signed, but The Coalition and our allies in MHAN are keeping a careful eye on the process.

Once the budget is enacted, attention will turn to execution. The Coalition is working very hard to avoid the implementation problems that arose as a result of the recent 2.5% COLA.©

Facility sales

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mental Center sold for \$3,650,000 to Joseph Simone.

- Creedmore Psychiatric Center in Queens went to the Winchester Building Corporation for \$7,000,001.

Wouldn't it be nice if those \$19 million were Reinvested in the community-based mental health system that made the properties available for sale in the first place?©

Medicaid Buy-in

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Despite the recognition on all sides of the importance of the program, nobody has put any money on the table to fund it, even though the Federal government will pick up half of the tab and has made grants available for start-up costs.

The Coalition has been working with a broad coalition of advocates from many disability sectors for the passage of this bill. *Briefs* readers are encouraged to contact Senator Bruno, Assemblyman Silver and Governor Pataki to express their support for this bill.©

Honoring Dr. Bluestone

On June 15th The Coalition will hold its 16th Annual Mental Health Awards. Among the distinguished honorees is **Bronx-Lebanon Hospital's** Dr. Harvey Bluestone, M.D. Dr. Bluestone, who was instrumental 28 years ago to the founding of The Coalition will, appropriately enough, receive our Founder's Award. In 34 years at **Bronx-Lebanon**, Dr. Bluestone has turned a small consultation service into a substantial program with 139 adult inpatient beds, substance abuse services, a CPEP, a continuing day treatment program and outpatient services for adults, children, adolescents and seniors. Not content to rest on his laurels, Dr. Bluestone is currently opening up a 25-bed child and adolescent inpatient unit. We hope all *Briefs* readers will be able to join us on June 15th. Call Judeth Podell at Extension 18 for more details.©

SNP awards

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were made and that we were a recipient. We believe that this event moves the entire system much closer to creating a responsive rehabilitation and recovery environment."

Two agencies were informed that their SNP applications had not been accepted. Both Health-First, Inc. and Integrated Behavioral Health Services have indicated that they intend to exercise their option for a debriefing by OMH. Afterwards they will both have the opportunity to appeal the decision if they choose to do so. In the meantime, New York City and Westchester County will begin negotiating with the award recipients.©

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— Help Wanted —

Bar Association hosts kids mental health forum

The Association of the Bar of the City of New York has invited Coalition members to attend a forum entitled "Mental Health Services for Children: What Can We Do to Ensure that all Children's Needs are Met?" on May 9, 2000 at the House of the Association, 42 West 44th Street from 9:15am - 12:00pm. The forum will explore the current status of mental health services for children, and opportunities to improve the system of service delivery. Dr. David Satcher, Surgeon General of the United States will provide the keynote address.

An esteemed panel will then discuss issues including mental health services for children in foster care, the impact of the NYS Medicaid Cap, and ways in which the current system can better provide mental health services for children. The Bar Association's Council on Children is sponsoring the forum. No fee or reservation is required.©

May is Mental Health Month May 7th-13th is National Children's Mental Health Week

Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service seeks highly qualified & dedicated Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Job Developers and Supervisors w/CRC or MA in Voc. Rehab. For counseling & Job Developer positions, alt. degrees will be considered for candidates w/exp. in employment services for persons w/disabilities. Competitive salary & benefits. Please mail/fax resume w/cover letter to: Leslie Klein, Dir., Adult Rehab. Services, 285 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn, NY 11217. (718) 855-1517. No calls please.©

Victim Services seeks FT & PT Therapists & FT Clinical Supervisor w/exp. to work in trauma-centered, NYS licensed Mental Health Clinic in downtown Brooklyn. CSW req. & bi-lingual pref. Fax resume, cover letter & salary req. to N. Arnov @ (212) 577-3897.©

William F. Ryan Community Health Center seeks Assistant to Dir. of Mental Health to aid in the coordination & supervision of busy MH Dept. inc.: staff supervision, QI activities, coordinating intakes & performance outcomes, preparing statistical reports. Supervisory exp. BSW or BA in related field req.; MSW or MA pref. Exc. written/oral communication skills & computer literacy req. Bilingual Eng./Span. pref. Competitive salary & benefits. Send resume w/cover letter to: HR Dept., **William F. Ryan Community Health Center**, 110 W. 97th St., NY, NY 10025 or Fax to (212) 316-7945.©

Federal RFP expected

According to Open Minds, on or about May 12, 2000 the DHHS/HRSA Contract Operations Branch will be publishing an RFP to acquire Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Services, Work-Life Services and Optional Services for the Division of Federal Occupational Health (FOH) customer agencies. Through a single national toll-free telephone number, callers will be put in touch with professionals trained in a variety of areas including child development, gerontology, elder care, legal and financial services and retirement planning.©

Upcoming Events

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|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| May 11 | Finance Committee at CVMHA Executive Committee at CVMHA |
| May 12 | Government Relations Committee at FECS |
| May 15 | NYWE: <i>Negating the Myth: Work does not Equal Decompensation</i> at FPWA |
| May 16 | PLC*: Converting the Clinical and Corporate Culture at FPWA |
| May 22 | MICA Committee at The Bridge |
| May 25 | Membership meeting at CVMHA |
| May 29 | Coalition closed in honor of Memorial Day |
| May 31 | NYC Picnic for Parity in Bryant Park |
| June 2 | Coalition moves to 90 Broad Street |
| June 8 | Finance 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 |

*PLC = Professional Learning Center