



# Coalition Briefs

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

## HUD \$\$ to help NYC, but only a little

Last week, the House of Representatives approved in committee a spending bill which provides a \$193 million carve-out for HUD's existing Shelter Plus Care (S+C) programs. Similar to a measure which has already been approved by the Senate, this proposal is expected to pass as part of the final appropriations bill sometime after the November elections.

Although New York will receive \$8 million of the \$193 million mentioned here, it falls far short of the \$28 million gap which will impact services for homeless people with disabilities including mental illness.

HUD annually provides funding to localities through the McKinney-Vento Act which created programs such as the Supported Housing Program (SHP) and S+C.

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## Calendar of events

Government Relations Committee  
October 22 3:00 PM  
WorkExchange Benefits Training  
October 23 8:00 AM  
Membership Meeting  
October 24 3:30 PM  
WorkExchange Benefits Training  
October 25 8:00 AM  
Committee on Co-Occurring  
Psychiatric and Addictive Disorders  
October 28 2:00 PM  
Housing Committee  
October 31 3:30 PM  
WorkExchange "Cultural Brokering"  
November 5-6 9:00 AM

### **BIG APPLE CIRCUS—NOVEMBER 13**

All meetings are at The Coalition unless otherwise noted. Please call for more information or to RSVP.

## Dr. Sederer visits Coalition

On Thursday, September 26, The Coalition was pleased to host Dr. Lloyd Sederer, the new Executive Deputy Commissioner of Mental Health for New York City's Department of Health and Mental Health (DOHMH). Although Coalition staff and board members met with Dr. Sederer shortly after he began his post in July, this was the first time many of the membership had the chance to meet him.

Dr. Sederer, spoke about his developing vision for the mental health sector. Of note is a greater emphasis on the use of data to monitor existing services and forecast future needs. In order to do this, DOHMH will be more attentive to the collection of usage data as well as the publication of reports.

This new emphasis will be in addition to the more traditional role played by the former Department of Mental Health in the maintenance of quality care. Other areas the department will focus on include the needs of special populations like youth and the elderly, residential services, Medicaid parity, disaster preparedness, and prevention, to name just a few.

The Coalition looks forward to working closely with Dr. Sederer on these and other important issues! □

## Nursing home residents: locked out of OMH

*The New York Times* reported in an October 6 article that people with mental illnesses were being held in locked wards of nursing homes. Unlike community-based mental health services, nursing homes are *not* under the auspices of the State Office of Mental Health. Instead, like the adult homes which were featured in the *NYT* in April, they are regulated by the State Department of Health.

Sadly, many of the obstacles which impede the provision of services are related to housing and funding. The Coalition wrote to *The Times* imploring OMH to, "make a substantial investment in community-based residential services."

The Coalition concluded that OMH must "take responsibility for *all* people with mental illnesses," and allow people with mental illness, "to access the full range of regulated treatment and recovery-oriented services in the community." □

## HIPAA Toolkit Now Available!

The Coalition in conjunction with the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare is distributing the *HIPAA Policies & Procedures Toolkit* to member agencies for a discounted price of \$225!

This helpful set of templates has been reviewed by Coalition lawyers and member agencies, and will help bring your organization into compliance with the HIPAA Privacy regulations. The Toolkit contains required forms such as Privacy Notices, Authorizations, and Business Associate contracts.

To order, call (212) 742-1600 x210 or email [grosner@cvmha.org](mailto:grosner@cvmha.org). □

## BIG APPLE CIRCUS

NOVEMBER 13!

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## HUD Funding

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Whereas SHP funds operating costs in permanent and transitional housing in addition to other homeless services, S+C is essentially a rent-subsidy. Thousands of people with mental illness in New York receive services that are wholly or partially funded through these programs.

A structural quirk of this funding stream forces existing and new programs to compete for the same small pot of funding. By funding S+C renewals separately—as proposed by the Senate and the House of Representatives—old S+C programs will no longer compete against new programs for limited funds.

This year, New York is facing a renewal burden of approximately \$88 million while New York's share of funds will be in the neighborhood of \$60 million. The recently approved \$193 million—of which NYC will get only \$8 million—is a step in the right direction, but it will still leave New York's existing programs with a gap of \$20 million.

Most McKinney-funded permanent housing in New York City utilizes the SHP program and are therefore not included in the \$193 million carve-out. Sadly, a proposal to carve-out the permanent SHP housing was not approved.

Because the House and the Senate have not yet hammered out minor differences in joint conference, there is still time to get the SHP permanent housing programs funded through the carve out. Unless an alternative is found, the budget shortfall could result in the substantial downsizing of services and/or cause formerly-homeless New Yorkers to return to the streets. ▣



### Disability Career Expo and Employer Workshop

The New York Work Exchange is participating in the "Disability Career Expo and Employer Workshop" on November 5<sup>th</sup> at the New Yorker Hotel in Manhattan.

As part of the 57th annual Disability Awareness Month, a consortium of employers is hosting this event to bring together job seekers and employers. The goals of this expo are to educate employers about issues relevant to employing people with disabilities, as well as to offer consumers a chance to meet with employers, gain job leads, explore internships and get jobs.

"Nothing about us without us" marks the theme for the first annual "Disability Career Expo." The Expo is underway in response to this critical issue faced by people with disabilities - roughly 75 percent are unemployed. For mental health consumers specifically, the number is even larger.

The WorkExchange is participating by hosting an information booth and sponsoring a workshop. Presented by Sheila H. Akabas, PhD and Fred A. Levine, the workshop is called, "Inclusion: Employer Strategies and Employer Liability Issues."

This event will bring together major employers - such as IBM, JC Penny, HSBC, Pitney Bowes and government agencies - who will attend workshops on the advantages of recruiting, hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities. In addition, the event is designed to mar-

ket job opportunities in a range of professional careers including computer science, engineering, banking, sales, health care, hospitality, retail etc. Positions requiring a range of skill-levels and experience will be available.

Consumers/Job seekers are asked to register online at <http://www.hiredisability.com/employee/EmployeeRegForm.html> or by phone (212) 608-3300.

### Cultural competence workshop for providers

On November 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> The New York Work Exchange is offering a workshop entitled, "Cultural Brokering: Building Cross-Cultural Skills for Rehabilitation Providers." This workshop will provide an understanding of how culture shapes the perception of mental health disabilities and rehabilitation services, as well as insights and strategies to strengthen the cross-cultural skills of employment program staff.

It will also introduce the Culture Brokering model, a practical tool that can be used to identify cultural characteristics and help participants apply the model to understand how culture influences access to and use of rehabilitation services. In addition, participants will learn how to mediate between the cultures of the mental health rehabilitation system, the culture of the U.S., and the culture of the consumer.

This workshop may be used to meet contractual standards required by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Please register by October 25, 2002. Contact Deborah Short [dshort@workexchange.org](mailto:dshort@workexchange.org) or (x235) ▣



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## BIG APPLE CIRCUS NOVEMBER 13

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