

Expect Recovery (Make It Happen)

Published Quarterly

For consumers and staff interested in Recovery

Northern Lakes CMH Recovery Definition

"Recovery is a personal journey of hope, purpose and growth. It is the process of setting our own directions in life. We accept the responsibilities of meeting challenges, using our own abilities, strengths and determination."



Change Can Be Wonderful!

A lot of changes are going on within Northern Lakes CMH. The renovations in our Traverse City building are now complete with a new facial look upon entering the building and a separate new entrance for Traverse House, new roofs are being put on in the near future in the Grayling and Houghton Lake offices, and the Cadillac Office was the first to see its lawn cut after a long, cold winter by the lawn crew at Club. Although change can be a hard thing to accept at certain times in our lives, it can also be a wonderful thing!

The NLCMH Blueprint (a.k.a. NLCMH's Person-Centered Plan) has been updated with many new action steps and leads as WE defined them through the September 2009 celebration, the December 18 planning day, the Zoomerang survey taken by staff members, and the previous blueprint. Our voices were heard as both consumers and staff of NLCMH and we're ready to dig in for the next phase of changes!

I hope that everyone has a chance to see and/or volunteer their time in planning for these positive changes at NLCMH. I look forward to working with everyone as a team to making CHANGE a good thing at NLCMH!!

-Mary Beth Evans, CPSS & NLCMH Recovery Coordinator



YOU ARE INVITED!

June 16, 2010

Learn & Lead to Succeed

On Wednesday, June 16, 2010, the annual regional consumer conference will be held in the Traverse City office. The conference will include a program on the Art of Leadership, a presentation on Selective Sharing, and a Consumer Panel on Volunteerism and Employment. Registration and networking starts at 10:30 and the program ends at 3:00. To register contact Rosemary Rokita at 1-800-337-8598 or Cindy Petersen at 231-935-3099. Transportation will be arranged from Cadillac, Houghton Lake and Grayling.



"Life expectancy would grow by leaps and bounds if green vegetables smelled as good as bacon."

- Doug Larson



Colleen's Recovery Corner:

Recovery & Resiliency: Allow Yourself To Just Be You



The flow of recovery is all around in the mental health system in Michigan. Leading the movement are the peer specialists who have so eagerly stepped up in transforming the system. Watching people grow in their personal journey of recovery is fascinating, exciting, and motivating for all consumers.

Exploring the many aspects of mental health and wellness is just plain fun for many of us. And the journey just goes on and on. Many of us are focusing on physical wellness as the mind/body connection is being explored by researchers more and more.

One fascinating aspect in the psychology field is the developing positive psychology. A lot of the research on it is coming from our very own University of Michigan psychology department. (Note to readers: I am actually a Michigan State University fan.)

The research is showing that positive thinking offers us much more than a "feel good" feeling. Positivity offers us a wider perspective of choices, options, and viewpoints. Negative thinking actually narrows our focus and restricts our options. Positive thinking also generates more energy throughout the whole body.

Resiliency is not the elimination of negative thinking and behaviors but a correlation of having both negative and positive aspects together. Progressing into complete positivity brings us back into a even stronger perspective. This is important for many of us, because accepting that fact that some events in life are naturally negative, like the death of a loved one, we know that it is OK to feel down at these times.

However, the ability to let go and move back fully into positivity is what we term resiliency.

I think consumers have a lot of resiliency due to the natural course of their mental illness.

We all have ups and downs and our illness is not linear. Knowing that our mental illness is non-linear offers us the opportunity to grow in resiliency and actually buffers the future episodes because of the experiential knowledge we have gained in our early struggles with our disorders.

Thinking positively is all enhancing and is a good holistic approach to our illness and our lives. But don't beat yourself up if you catch your thoughts being negative. Know that your natural state is positive and allow yourself to just be. Positivity will flow back to you, adding to your strength, resiliency and hope. You have not fallen off the path of recovery, you just took a natural curve in the road, knowing that you will re-gain your journey with even more strength.

Happy Spring,
Colleen Jasper

Consumer & Director of the Office of Consumer Relations at MDCH in Lansing

NLCMH Film Goes National!

NLCMH's documentary, "*To See What I See: The Stigma Of Mental Illness*," was one of only four films in the nation to be chosen and shown at the 6th Annual New York City Mental Health Film Festival in April. What an accomplishment that one of our films we created as an effort to bust the stigma associated with mental illness received national attention!

TAKE A BREAK AND BREATHE by Barbara Lane, RN

Today's fast paced, chaotic world can leave us all feeling overwhelmed, more anxious, hopeless and helpless. Life happenings can leave us feeling a loss of control. So focusing on what we can control often makes us feel better by taking control to make positive changes in our lives. I began to think of where to start and think you may find this to be helpful in your lives.

Taking control of my own basic health has consequences that are far reaching. If I am healthy, I can be a more productive citizen. My utilization of health care resources decreases, lowering my personal cost to my insurance company, which impacts the overall health care cost.

There are some important, but basic things that I can do to improve my overall wellness. You can do the same.

1. I can keep up with my routine health checkups.
2. I can increase my physical activity.
3. I can pay closer attention to my portion sizes and make sure that my diet is well balanced.

4. I can use relaxation and breathing techniques to lower my stress and center my mind.
5. I can partake in socializing and leisure activities.
6. I can set daily obtainable goals and structure my time.
7. I can adhere to good sleep hygiene practice and limit my caffeine intake.
8. I can take medications as directed.
9. I can refrain from illicit drugs and alcohol.
10. If I smoked cigarettes, I could quit smoking.
11. I can use support groups and friends to help support me in my struggles.
12. I can volunteer and help others

I am sure that there are other ideas that you can come up with that would be beneficial in your lives. Add them to this list. Share them with others. Encourage one another in carrying out decisions you have made to become well. You will be the largest benefactor of your healthy choices.

Walk A Mile In My Shoes Rally at the State Capitol

More than 1,500 advocates flooded the state Capitol Tuesday, May 11 for the sixth annual "Walk A Mile In My Shoes" rally promoting mental health and developmental disability awareness. Among these were over 25 people representing the Northern Lakes CMH area, including people who use community mental health services, people who work in the CMH system and other advocates.

Many thanks go out to all who braved the weather and attended the event. Despite near-freezing temperatures and relentless rain, everyone's dedication and commitment to advocate on behalf of people with mental illness and developmental disabilities and ensure they have a voice is priceless.

Wexford County – I have a 7-year-old daughter who is not with me because the judge says I have a mental illness and supposedly not capable to raise her. I also lost my fiancé the first of this year which is still very traumatic for me. I look at life this way – God won't give you what you can't handle. If life gives you lemons, make lemonade.



Missaukee County – In Missaukee County, we feel that Advance Directives are very important. Where would we be without caring individuals, friends and family? Without my sister, where would I be today?



Roscommon County – In Roscommon County, I'm afraid to meet people or be around groups of people because of my mental illness. It's bad when someone like me is even afraid to see my regular doctor because they know I have a mental illness and automatically start to stigmatize me and the problems I have, saying it's because of my mental illness.

Grand Traverse County – I have a mental illness and my recovery was to take my medications and it changed my life. I started to go to clubhouse and they helped me a lot with my illness. I want to keep going to clubhouse and continue to see my doctor. I thank the CMH people for helping me with my illness.



Leelanau County - Last year we lost our day program for senior citizens. We are afraid we will lose more if the budget keeps getting cut. We are afraid that some of us may not be able to recover as a result. Mental Health matters!



Crawford County - In Crawford County, we are very afraid about more budget cuts. We are afraid that there will be longer waiting lists for mental health services in Michigan. We are afraid that people won't be able to recover and get their lives back. We are afraid that more people will end up in the ER or on the streets instead of getting treatment. We are valuable people – and treatment and support should be a **RIGHT**, not a privilege.

Thank you again, everyone!

Amy Long Trains Staff on How to Put Recovery Principles Into Practice

Using recovery grant funds, NLCMH teamed up with Manistee-Benzie CMH to bring Amy Long, who is affiliated with the National Empowerment Center and Pat Deegan's Common Ground program, to Traverse City for two days in May to provide training on specific ways staff can put recovery principles into their practice. She helped staff to learn skills needed to promote recovery: listening, support, information, and respect, in order to establish a common ground with the consumers they serve. She spoke about the dignity of risk and the right to failure and how staff and consumers can collaborate to find "Win/Win" solutions. She provided a decision aid to help eliminate what is "toxic help." She spoke about how words can stigmatize and helped staff to learn how to improve in writing case notes that are truly recovery-oriented and strengths based. One staff said, "I found it very valuable and have already started using some of the concepts in my work." Another said, "It was the best training I have ever attended!"

Art Walk & Postcard Art Display

In May (Mental Health Month), two Cadillac storefronts displayed art from NLCMH consumers and our "Postcard Art" was on display at the Cadillac Library. The display moves to the **Devereaux Memorial Library in Grayling** in June. We hope you can check it out and show your support to our artists!

SAMHSA Launches 10X10 Campaign (www.10x10.samhsa.gov)

What is the National 10X10 Campaign? SAMHSA launched this campaign to promote the importance of addressing all parts of a person's life in hopes of increasing life expectancy for persons with mental health problems by 10 years over the next 10 years. More than 2,000 organizations and individuals have expressed their commitment to promoting wellness and reducing the disproportionate impact of preventable morbidity and mortality on people with mental health problems by signing the **Pledge for Wellness**, and the Campaign is guided by multidisciplinary Steering Committee members representing consumers, providers, and researchers.

Pledge for Wellness Northern Lakes CMH was one of the first Community Mental Health Authorities to sign SAMHSA's Pledge for Wellness. The Campaign's **Vision** says: "We envision a future in which people with mental health problems pursue optimal health, happiness, recovery, and a full and satisfying life in the community via access to a range of effective services, supports, and resources." The **pledge** states: "We pledge to promote wellness for people with mental health problems by taking action to prevent and reduce early mortality by 10 years over the next 10 year time period." If you would like to support this vision and take the pledge, please go to the SAMHSA web-site listed above.

The Eight Dimensions of Wellness *Social* – developing a sense of connection and a well-developed support system; *Physical* – recognizing the need for physical activity, diet, sleep, and nutrition while discouraging the use of tobacco, drugs, and excessive alcohol consumption; *Emotional* – developing skills and strategies to cope effectively with stress, challenges, and conflict; *Spiritual* – searching for meaning and purpose in human existence; *Occupational* – deriving personal satisfaction and enrichment from one's work; *Intellectual* – recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills; *Environmental* – fostering good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being; *Financial* – feeling satisfied with current foreseeable future financial situation.

Create Positive Change by Speaking Out

*By Shannon Secord,
Certified Peer Support Specialist*

Fifty million Americans experience a mental disorder in any given year and only one-fourth of them actually receive mental health services, due to stigma. Stigma labels people with a mental illness and discourages individuals from seeking the help that they need. When mental illness is labeled, these labels hurt. Many times it leads to discrimination. Most people are aware of discrimination due to race, religion or culture. They are much less aware of how people with mental illnesses are discriminated against. Stigma is disrespect and negativity toward people with a mental illness. It leads to fear, mistrust and violence and can result in inadequate insurance coverage. We need to eradicate ignorance, encourage acceptance and erase the barriers. Education is the key to hope and possibilities, and communication can create positive change in people and their communities. We need to push for anti-stigma with our voices in the community and at the state and federal levels. Let's all start speaking a new language.

Recovery, Hope and Respect!!!



On Monday, September 27, NLCMH will sponsor a free movie night showing "The Soloist" at the State Theatre in Traverse City. Watch for more info coming soon!