



NEW DIRECTIONS

“By, for, and about consumers of behavioral health services”

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Peer Support Specialist Training



In May, 45 Peer Specialist/Case Management Assistants met in Higgins Lake for a week of training with the Georgia Peer Specialists. The week was a great success. Our own Mary Beth Evans assisted Pam Werner in putting this together. Six Northern Lakes Peer Support Specialists were able to attend this function. Many of the attendees have been asked to present at upcoming conferences, i.e., Consumer Conference, Person Centered Planning Conference. These NLCMH employees will attend future trainings for continued education and have formed a network for communication with their peers for questions or ideas on how to handle new situations. The state will offer this training again in October 2005 for 45 more Peer Support Specialists. Hats off to Mary Beth for a great job.

Walk A Mile in My Shoe Rally

“I want to thank everyone for their involvement in the Walk a Mile in My Shoes Rally that took place this morning at the Capitol. We had consumer representatives from almost all of Michigan's 83 counties and over 500 in attendance to the event -- it was a great success!” said Scott Dzurka, Associate Director of the Michigan Assoc. of CMH Boards.

Over 30 consumers and a few staff attended the Rally in Lansing May 26, 2005. This was the 1st Annual Statewide Walk a Mile in My Shoes Rally. The event was designed to increase awareness of Mental Health and Developmental Disability issues and to decrease stigma.

Consumers carried their county Flag (on loan from a museum in Lansing) from the corners of the Capitol to the front steps. Each consumer made a statement concerning his or her county. Rep. Walker presented a flag to two consumers that had been flown over the capitol. Consumers also had the opportunity to meet with 7 out of 8 of our state legislatures while visiting the capitol. This was truly a wonderful learning experience for all.

Frank was the final presenter of the program; his statement was powerful to all. It also left everyone realizing that CMH serves not only Mental Health concerns but also those with Developmental Disabilities as well.



"In Roscommon County, I say take the cuts from the top. Developmentally Disabled People can't live with any more cuts. Roll a Mile In My Chair." Frank T.

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Contributions!

If you would like to contribute to *New Directions* please contact The Editor, Leslie Sladek, at 231 933-4907, or email Leslie.Sladek@nlcmh.org. Contributors to this newsletter: Kandu Island, Chat Room, Nancy, Karen and Club Cadillac

Welcome to my World of Wellness

For several decades I hid the dragon of bulimia. If anyone has had this illness you will realize that it is almost impossible to conquer if only to live with.

The best way I found to live with it was a concoction of medication to stop the purging and a job to keep me exercising, to take care of the times, more often than I liked, of bingeing. I had a pretty good care here. I knew I could share the feeling of wellness if only it would catch on... So thanks to the YMCA of Northern Michigan, Northern Lakes Community Mental Health has a corporate membership for its clients. For years I have wanted to take Pilates, play racquetball and do some aerobics classes. I, like most of you, could not afford to do this. This is a terrific opportunity, you can do it with 2 of your CMH friends. Just see Heather Flannery or myself for information. Once you start though, remember it takes 30 days to make a habit. ~ Nancy Henry

Editors Note: Nancy has worked this program with the assistance of *Solutions for Wellness* the program endorsed by Linda Hamilton referred to in the article Complete Wellness.

Regional Consumer Forum

The Regional Consumer Forum (RCF) met on April 21 in Traverse City with a video connection to Ludington (West Michigan CMH).

Affiliation updates covered many items; among some of those gone over were the EQR (External quality review) in which we did quite well. That was Phase 1 of the EQR; they will be requesting more information beginning in August for Phase 2. Other items covered were the upcoming MDCH (Michigan Department of Community Health) site visit, the budget, and evidence based practices (EBP).

The forum members were also able to go over the upcoming Consumer Conference, local consumer meeting updates, Walk a Mile in My Shoes event, and much information on the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA). They will be able to provide information to fellow consumers about the Medicare program as that information is released to all concerned. The group discussed having Social Security come in to either do trainings on this and/or come in to assist consumers in signing up for the correct plan. It was decided that this should be recommended to our CMHs so that they look into this.

The next meeting will be in August at the Cadillac office.

CONSUMER ADVOCACY COUNCIL (CAC)

The Consumer Advocacy Council held another Consumer Forum at the Consumer Conference. The forum was well attended with great input. Results from the forum will be compiled and presented to the Northern Lakes CMH Board in the near future. Look for the results in the next issue of *New Directions*.

The forum also put together a consumer survey that will be shared in the near future with both consumers and staff. Questions on this survey were different than that of the agency in that we are looking for outcomes. The survey also asked questions about service knowledge so we may help educate ourselves in areas that we know little about.

Complete Wellness

I recently read an article in a national magazine entitled, *A Dark Secret*. The article was a bit of a surprise as to what that secret was. In the article Linda Hamilton (most recognized for her role in *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*) reveals her diagnosis of bipolar disorder. She lived without treatment for many years even after speaking with a professional at age 22. She did as many others before her have done: she self-medicated with alcohol and drugs.

Hamilton stated that she feels strongly about the link between mental and physical health; because of that she has agreed to be a spokeswoman for a program called Complete Wellness (www.completewellnessapproach.com).

This program was created by the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey along with Eli Lilly and Company. The program is based on the premise that people battling mental illness need nutritional and fitness counseling, and appropriate strategies to stop smoking and drinking.

The program is personalized and to participate you must have authorization from your doctor. It's easy to access all the essential material from the web. After you sign up you will receive regular contact with the company for 6 months. There is much more available on the web, but you do not need to use the computer to try this program out. No computer? Ask your caseworker or someone at the clubhouse or drop-in to help you get an application.

Peer Support

Need someone to talk with? People who understand or have been through like experiences? Have you thought of attending a support group? A peer run support group?

NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) C.A.R.E. (Consumers Advocating for Recovery through Empowerment) might be a good place to start. NAMI C.A.R.E. facilitators are trained people with a mental health diagnosis like you. It is a support group that is for consumers of all mental health diagnoses... a place to feel like you belong and are not alone in dealing with your illness and life. We all go through similar experiences and the group wisdom can be beneficial to all, empowering us in our recovery.

In Traverse City NAMI C.A.R.E. meets at Grace Episcopal Church, 341 Washington the 2nd Monday of the month from 6-7:30 PM.

Information/Questions call Leslie at 231-326-7671 or Will at 231-935-4825.

Traverse House News

A report on the Consumer Conference, *Recovery: Taking Charge of your Life*, by Karen

The main speaker was Randy Graise. He has a rare bone disease and spends his waking hours in his wheelchair, which doesn't mean it stops him from going on with his life. It doesn't matter if you have a disability, it's what you do with it. He told the audience that the sky is the limit, as long as you believe.

Make your Voice Heard: Laura Isquith – If a person is having problems they need help with, Michigan Protection and Advocacy can help.

We also had an opportunity to listen to the Patriots Choir, from Cadillac.

After Lunch - several of us went to the Communications Group - A professor from NMC talked about Building Communications one on one. She emphasized eye contact and maintaining a safe distance.

Jaqueline Castine was the post note speaker for the consumer conference. She spoke about her fall as she became ill and the trauma surrounding that time, and also about her recovery and what she has been able to do during this time, including a recent book titled, "*I Wish I Could Fix It, But....*"



Jaqueline Castine and Randy Graise

Kandu Island

Kandu Island Drop-In Center would like to thank everyone who conceived, believed, did the work, and achieved a tremendous success in hosting the Northwest Michigan 2005 regional consumers' conference!

Kandu Island would also like to thank the Chat Room Drop-In for hosting the spring regional Drop-In Directors meeting on May 12, 2005. The meeting was inspirational and informative. Kandu Island has been selected to host the fall regional Drop-In Directors meeting.

The Drop-In received a sizeable donation from the Food Coalition as a result of the local postal carrier food drive. Many thanks to all who helped out on Saturday, May 14th at the UAW hall. The volunteer effort was greatly appreciated by NWMHSA (Northwest Michigan Human Services Agency).

Thanks to the keen eye and hard work of a few udnaks*, Kandu now has an outdoor island known as a picnic table. During the spring clean up, the udnaks discovered the table, sanded it down, weatherproofed it, and delivered it to the Drop-In. This true to the fact can-do attitude is greatly appreciated and serves as an inspiration to us all. We look forward to another great summer in Traverse City.

*An UDNAK is a.k.a. a council member, volunteer, mentor, and/or attendee of the Drop-In

The Bridgeway Patriots Choir provided music for lunch at the Consumer Conference held in Traverse City. They were decked out in their red, white and blue shirts.



Chat Room Members at the Consumer Conference wearing their matching t-shirts for the Walk A Mile Rally in Lansing

The Chat Room hosted the JIMHO regional seminar on the May 5. There were 16 directors present. Greg Paffhouse came and was gracious enough to answer any questions about CMH and its involvement with the Chat Room. Many issues were discussed: new locations, board member difficulties, troubleshooting of issues, and a good time was had by all. This is the second time in the last 2 years we have sponsored the event and we look forward to hosting more in the future.

The Chat Room has finally moved and is on the move. New location is on the west side of Houghton Lake at 9103 W. Houghton Lake Drive, across from Coyles Restaurant. We can be contacted at 989-422-4476. Our daily attendance has risen to between 11 and 15 consumers a day. Trips to Traverse City, Lansing, Sault Ste Marie, and Greenfield Village, and some picnics, and camping out are in the works for the summer.

The Chat Room just had a surprise inspection from MDCH and we placed in complete compliance with Medicaid. The rating of 4, up from 2 just last year, has given us the incentive to continue growing.

Thanks should be extended to NLCMH for helping us to succeed and enjoy our independence, and for sharing their advice so we can grow, grow, and grow even more in the coming years. *Ernie*

Customer Service

What is Customer Service? How can Customer Service help you?

A Customer Service Representative is present at Northern Lakes Community Mental Health first and foremost to assist you the consumer, (parent, guardian...). We will answer questions for you and the public or potential clients concerning services, access, people centered planning... and direct you to other agencies as seen appropriate to the need.

We are here to help you **navigate the system and provide information** about other community resources and supports.

We are here for you!

We will answer your questions, or find the answer for you, receive and respond to suggestions and complaints, as well as assist you with the appeals process.

You are most likely familiar with customer service departments in stores or at service agencies (i.e., your phone company, electric provider...). If you have a problem with your phone service whom at the phone company do you speak with? Customer Service. We are no different than other service providers. CMH is a service provider, the people served have questions, complaints and **suggestions**.

You might have mentioned to your case manager in the past that the waiting area is too cold (just as an example). If we think about it, do you want your case manager or worker to spend time on this, or would you rather they have more time for you and other clients? Or how about if you show up for an appointment and it has been canceled due to unknown circumstances? Do you sit and brood over this, complaining to everyone at the clubhouse? Will they help you or make you feel better about the problem? We are here to help resolve these situations or direct you to the help you need, so... **Why not give us a call?**

Customer Service Report First Quarter

Access/2nd Opinions:

There were 532 requests for service, of these 34 were referred out.

There were 5 requests for 2nd opinions, of these 4 were upheld and 1 was overturned.

Appeals:

No appeals were filed in the first quarter.

Grievances:

There were 5 grievances filed, all with satisfactory results.

When the world says, "Give up,"

Hope whispers, "Try it one more time."

~Author Unknown

Ongoing Events

If you know of other ongoing events that could help other consumers, please contact the Editor of *New Directions*.

- **NAMI Support** second Monday of the month at 6:00pm Munson Medical Center-Doctors Dining room.
- **Quit Smoking Support Group** Wednesdays 11:15-noon NLCMH Traverse City office, 2nd floor conference room.
- **Support group** for parents of children with ADHD Third Thursday of the month 6:00-7:30pm. Child Guidance Inc, 947-2255.
- **Survivors of Suicide Support Group** third Wednesday of the month, 7-8:30 p.m., at Mercy Hospital 2nd floor Wexford Room, Cadillac.
- **NAMI-C.A.R.E.** Support group for people with a mental illness. 2nd Monday of the month, 6-7:30pm. Grace Episcopal Church, Corner of Washington and Boardman, TC.
- **DBSA** (Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance) meets every Tuesday 7-8:00pm. Club Cadillac. Contact Betty Clark at 775-5638.
- **Our Kids** support group, for parents/caregivers of kids with bipolar disorder, 7:00pm fourth Tuesday, Traverse Area District Library. 941-9128.
- **Bereavement Support Group**, available to the public through MMC's Hospice and Palliative Care program. Mondays at Hospice House 6:30pm or Tuesdays at the TC Senior Center 10:00am. For more information 935-8491

Upcoming Events

- June 7 Recipient Rights meeting in Traverse, (videoconference to other offices) 3-5:00PM
- June 8 CAC- Consumer Advocacy Council, Traverse City, (videoconference with Houghton Lake) 1:30-3:15
- June 16 Northern Lake CMH Board Meeting in Cadillac at 6:30PM
- June 17-21 NAMI Nation Convention: On the Frontier of Recovery. Austin, TX For information Contact Leslie Sladek at 326-7671, or visit www.nami.org
- June 20 & 21, 8th Annual Self-Determination Conference Holiday Inn South, Lansing
- July 13 CAC Consumer Advocacy Council in Traverse City (videoconference in Houghton Lake)
- July 21 Northern Lakes CMH Board Meeting in Grayling (Day's Inn) at 6:30PM
- July 28 Michigan Consumer Conference Kellogg Center Lansing

Club Cadillac

Club Cadillac is busy with plans for the summer. Jerry Ingraham has taken on the position of Clubhouse Coordinator, and his previous position as Job Coach will be filled by Shannon Houts later this month. If you would like to know more about the summer activities contact the Clubhouse at (231) 775-5638.

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