



NEW DIRECTIONS

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

Volume 4, Issue 1

April-May 2007

2006 Tax Benefits for Parents of Children with Disabilities

by Mike O'Connor, Esq.

If you have a child with a disability - a severe learning disability (SLD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), AD/HD, or other physical, mental or emotional impairment - you may qualify for valuable tax benefits.

According to parent attorney Mike O'Connor, "It's likely that 15-30 percent of families with a disabled child have one or more unclaimed tax benefits."

Did you know that "tuition costs for a special school that has a program designed to educate children with disabilities and amounts paid for a child's tutoring by a teacher specially trained and qualified to deal with severe disabilities may be deducted"?

Did you know that "Special instruction or training or therapy, such as sign language instruction, speech therapy, and remedial reading instruction" may be deductible? Did you know that related books and materials can qualify for the medical expense deduction"?

Did you know that "Parents who attend conferences to obtain medical information concerning treatment for and care of their child may deduct some of the costs of attending a medical conference relating to a dependent's chronic health condition"?

In 2006 Tax Benefits for Parents of Children with Disabilities, Mr.O'Connor provides a summary of the

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Recovery Coordinator Position (20 hours per week)

Must be or have been a mental health consumer who is committed to her/his own personal recovery and who expects recovery for all consumers. Peer Support Specialist Certification (within 9 months of hire). Send resume and salary history by March 30, 2007 to Human Resources, NLCMH, 105 Hall St., Ste A, Traverse City, MI 49684.

SAVE THE DATE – SAVE THE DATE – SAVE THE DATE



May 24, 2007

12:30pm -2:30pm

State Capitol Building, Lansing

Why We Walk...

Because May is Mental Health Awareness month
To enhance public awareness

Because legislators need to know Mental Health Matters
To put an end to the stigma related to mental illness
and developmental disabilities

Because Michigan does not have parity between
mental health and physical health care coverage
To promote mental health and wellness

Because we can make a difference

The Walk Rally this year will be in the afternoon so we don't have to leave northern Michigan so early! NLCMH consumers should contact Cindy Petersen at (231) 922-4850 for information and to sign up.

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April 15th Annual Community Easter Day Dinner: 3400 Veteran's Drive, TC, from 2:30-4:30pm Sunday, April 8.
First Baptist Church Easter Dinner served on Thursday April 5, 125 Stimson St., Cadillac.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month
Children's Mental Health Awareness Week May 6-12
Schizophrenia Awareness Week is May 20-26, "Realizing Recovery – Shattering Stigma"

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most significant federal income tax benefits. He advises you to print out this guide and provide your tax adviser with a copy. We agree with this excellent advice! Download your copy of 2006 Tax Benefits for Parents of Children with Disabilities by Mike O'Connor, Esq.

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/tax.2006.benefits.oco.nnor.htm>

LIVING SUCCESSFUL

DBSA's Recovery Education Center, an exciting new feature of the web site, provides a new way to receive training and education on mental health issues. Through video and audio media, mental health consumers, DBSA chapter leaders, and soon healthcare professionals can access practical training and education all developed from the perspective of people living with a mental illness.

One such program is DBSA's Living Successfully program designed for those living with a mood disorder. This video training is accompanied by a synchronized PowerPoint presentation and downloadable handouts. Living Successfully provides basic information on depression and bipolar disorder paired with specific wellness, recovery and life planning techniques. Provided in a four-part series, the program is designed to be taken at separate sittings so that users can take the course as time allows.

Future training programs that will be featured in the Recovery Education Center include both audio and video training series for health care professionals. The trainings will teach mental health professionals what their patients really want from treatment and how to help patients make recovery real in their own way.

Online training is something new to the mental health world. Because many people prefer to learn in ways other than reading, DBSA plans to stay on the leading edge of new technologies that can teach and support others living with mood disorders.

Living Successfully

010 Week 1 Course Training " Mood Disorder Basics"

020 Week 2 Course Training " Resources and Assistance"

030 Week 3 Course Training " Relationships and Recovery"

040 Week 4 Course Training " Building the Plan"

To visit the Recovery Education Center, go to <http://www.dbsalliance.org>.

The Living Successfully Training is also <http://www.softconference.com/dbsa/slist.asp?C=1242>

CHAT ROOM



Many members from the Chat Room in Houghton Lake have been involved and attending the anti-stigma meetings. They all received their cameras and have taken photos for a photobiography and have written their stories about stigma and recovery. Dr. Mary Pierce, a professor at Northwestern Michigan College, has graciously provided assistance in this area.

Members also had the opportunity to review and comment on the new Person Centered Planning Form, (Individual Plan of Service) for COO Mary Hubbard. Mary and others have been working on this, keeping Recovery and consumers in mind.

The Chat Room is also working with consumers in Grayling to address the possibility of a (new) drop-in center, for Grayling.

Club Cadillac

Club Cadillac has been invited to present at a Michigan Association of Clubhouse, (MAC) conference in Lansing, on March 29. Several members and staff are working on a power point presentation. In April Club Cadillac will host the MAC Association meeting in Cadillac. It will be an opportune time to show our Clubhouse, our community and promote recovery and community awareness of the need and assistance which is available in this community.

With spring weather approaching the lawn crew is organizing for this season, with renewed energy and hopefully new equipment to do bigger and better work this season.

The Club will be holding an Easter dinner for its members.

The Club has formed a sound and focused hiring committee working together to organize interviews and questions that will assist in securing new club staff, (Betty Clark – Director of Club Cadillac will be retiring later this year as well as Jerry Ingraham). There are seldom dull moments here!!

Consumer Advocacy Council

Volunteers needed on several openings. The council meets each month to help advise and make changes within NLCMH.

These are the openings:

Wexford/Missaukee – 1 Adult consumer & 1 Family member of a child

Grand Traverse/Leelanau – 1 Adult consumer, 1 Family member of a child, & 1 Adult consumer/family member

If interested please contact Chairman Ernie Reynolds at (989) 422-4476 Mon. - Fri. from 9:30am - 2:30pm or at woodsman@voyager.net or Greg Paffhouse (231) 935-3083 or (231) 876-3200, greg.paffhouse@nlcmh.org

NAMI – NLCMH ART SHOW 2007

Tuesday, May 1 to Tuesday, May 29, 2007

Traverse Area District Library

Reception Sunday, May 20, 2007 - 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Eligibility: You must be a resident of northwest lower Michigan who has/has had a mental illness or who has a family member with a history of mental illness.

Requirements: No entry fee is required. You may submit up to two (2) original artworks that you created within the last two years. All artwork must be submitted by the artist. Number of entries may be limited by available space. Works requiring hanging must be matted or framed and suitably wired for display in the library conference room. (Note: Registered NLCMH consumers may submit their artwork unmatted and unframed.) A glass display case near the Record Library will hold other art objects. Please note that we will not have surveillance of display areas and cannot guarantee the safety of artwork. An entry form with your name, address and phone number should be attached to each entry, on the back if possible. These will be available in each NLCMH office. Every precaution will be made to ensure the proper care of every piece submitted, but NAMI and NLCMH cannot be responsible for unintentional damage to artwork.

Deadlines: Entry forms and artwork must be submitted on April 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20, 2007 during normal business hours to the Northern Lakes Community Mental Health office at 105 Hall Street in Traverse City (see Receptionist on second floor). No art will be accepted after April 20.

Reception: An artists' reception will be held on Sunday, May 20, 2007 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Certificates of participation will be awarded.

After the Show: Arrangements for purchase of art work is solely between the artist and the interested party. Artwork must be picked up at Northern Lakes Community Mental Health office at 105 Hall Street in Traverse City on Thursday, May 31.

Questions??? Charlene 231-256-0152 or Cindy 231-935-3099 or info@northernlakescmh.org.

Regional Consumer Forum

The regional consumer forum met in February. They received reports from the PIHP (Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans), which is the affiliation part of our CMHs (and includes both West Michigan and Northern Lakes) for the management of Medicaid services. They also received reports from the Affiliation Quality Oversight Committee and the Performance Improvement Projects, (Co-ordination of Care, Improving Outcomes of Children with SED, [severe emotional disturbance]) and of Access and Timeliness of service for children with SED.

Information was provided on the ACT survey from 2006 and how the data will help improve this service. The state will soon have all CMHs conducting a satisfaction survey for different programs and the results will be shared.

Customer Service reported on Grievance and Appeals. Customer Service was said to be doing a "fantastic job" with "impeccable" policies from the recently completed External Quality Review. The reviews made several other positive comments in the other areas they were reviewing during this visit. This was their second visit and they will return again next year to continue their review.

West Michigan also reported on what they have done and will be doing for the affiliation consumer conference in May. *See upcoming events page 4!*

Working the Way Through Recovery

Kim works at the Benzie/Manistee CMH in customer service. She found out about our Anti-Stigma efforts and asked if she could join us at the Traverse City office. She has been participating with the activities as a consumer, but also hopes to bring at least some of the activities to consumers in Benzie County.

Kim has worked through her own recovery in a variety of ways; one of her present successes is the Gambler's Anonymous Groups she began in Frankfort. She has also started an online support group. To access the on-line support group link, go to Yahoo Groups, type in: gamblenomore2007; if one wishes to post something or would like to join the group: gamblenomore2007@yahoo.com.

The group meeting times are in the ongoing meetings on page 4 as well as the email address.

Stigma Busters Celebrations!

Friends, family members, staff and public are all invited to come and celebrate the accomplishments of the NLCMH Stigma Busters groups. Photobiographies will be unveiled at this time. All the celebrations will be from 10:30 to 1:00. The dates are as follows: April 10 in Cadillac; April 17 in Traverse City; April 19 in Houghton Lake; and April 20 in Grayling. People interested in submitting artwork for the May NAMI/NLCMH Art Show (see article at left) may bring their submissions to these celebrations to turn in at that time.

Kids with ADHD Need to Be On the Move

(The following comes from the CDC-funded National Center on Physical Activity and Disability - NCPAD)

One of the most common conditions in children is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Characteristics of ADHD include hyperactivity, fidgetiness, and/or squirming, which can make it difficult to stay on task, remain still, and focus on schoolwork. That can be a major challenge for some children with ADHD, who need to move more, and perhaps even learn more, while moving. Think about how difficult it would be if you were told to keep moving for 8 straight hours and not allowed to stop until you were completely exhausted! Similarly, ask a child with ADHD to sit for a few hours at a time: you'll see how difficult that can be for someone who inherently wants to move. You may as well have asked the child to stop blinking. There are inborn needs that require many children with ADHD to be constantly on the move, and while it's not possible to accommodate every child who has to move often, it would be good for teachers to understand how to build in more physical activity throughout the day to accommodate the need to be kinetic rather than sedentary.

Physical activity specialists have a great opportunity to assist frustrated teachers who have difficulty redirecting their children's behavior. From the perspective of "less is more," a little more physical activity during the school day may result in a little less fidgeting and higher levels of concentration for a period of time after the activity. Physical activity transports greater amounts of blood to the brain and increases core body temperature, both of which may elicit a soothing or relaxing effect on a child with ADHD. In particular, vigorous physical activity (exercise performed at a high heart rate/intensity level) in the right amount and at the right time of day may dissipate some of the excess energy that seems to build up in children with ADHD. While there is still a need for more research on how physical activity affects behavior in children with ADHD, the general consensus is that it seems to work with a certain portion of children with this condition. We need more research to determine the actual "dosing" effect that comes with various amounts, types, and intensities of different physical activities in order to provide more specific recommendations to teachers and parents. Until that time, using physical activity as a remedy for helping children with ADHD manage their behavior better could be a win-win for the child and the teacher or parent.

To sign up for NCPAD's free monthly electronic newsletter, click on <http://www.ncpad.org/newsletter/> or send an e-mail to listserv@listserv.uic.edu with this message in the body of the e-mail: SUBSCRIBE NCPAD-NEWS your first name your last name.

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Ongoing Events

DBSA (Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance) meets every Tuesday 7-8:00pm Club Cadillac. Contact Betty Clark at 775-5638

Dual Recovery Group, meets Mondays & Fridays from 1:30-2:30 at Club Cadillac. Questions call Club Cadillac at 775-5638.

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
Support Group for Teens (13-19)-, For Bipolar disorder and Depression. This peer-led group meets every **Thursday from 3:15-5:00 pm.**, at the First Presbyterian Church, 221 East Harris St., Cadillac

Healthy Choices- This group meets to discuss and share diabetic friendly recipes. Meets the fourth Monday of the month, from 11:00 am – 12:00 noon at 3003 S. Garfield (Kandu Island). For Information call Jeremy Wolf at 922-0903, or 645-4884.

Gamblers Anonymous - Friday from 7-8 p.m. and Monday from 9- 10 a.m. at the Frankfort United Methodist Church, 537 Crystal Ave, (M-22), Frankfort; gafrankfort@yahoo.com
If you know of other ongoing events that could help other consumers, please contact the Editor of *New Directions*.

Upcoming Events

April 3 – Recipient Rights Advisory Committee, 2:30 – 5:00 pm, in Traverse City.

April 10 – Stigma Busters Celebration, 10:30-1:00 Cadillac

April 11 – Consumer Advocacy Council 1:30- 3:00 pm Traverse City with Video to Houghton Lake

April 14-15 NAMI Michigan conference "Treating the Whole Person" in Lansing

April 17 – Stigma Busters Celebration 10:30-1:00 Traverse City

April 19 – Stigma Busters Celebration 10:30-1:00 Houghton Lake

April 19 – NLCMH Board meeting in Traverse City 6:00 pm

April 20 – Stigma Busters Celebration 10:30-1:00 Grayling

May 17 - NLCMH Board Meeting in Houghton Lake

May 17- Regional Consumer Forum in Ludington

May – NAMI/NLCMH Art Show at the Traverse Area District Library for the whole month.

May 1 - Affiliation Consumer Conference, "Recovery-Engaging in Opportunities for Health" West Michigan CMH is hosting at the Ramada Inn in Ludington

May 21-24 USPRA's 32nd Annual Conference, Orlando, FL for information visit www.uspra.org

May 24 - Walk a Mile in my Shoes Rally in Lansing.