



NEW DIRECTIONS

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

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Hope Conference

By Mary Beth Evans,
Recovery Coordinator

In September an incredible movement took place at the HOPE Conference in Traverse City. Approximately sixty

consumers attended the HOPE conference for a day packed with information and testimonials about Recovery. The HOPE conference celebrated the many moves that Northern Lakes CMH has made towards the system transformation towards recovery. Anti-Stigma projects have been occurring throughout the agency for close to a year now, and the conference proved that the efforts of making recovery a known aspect to both consumers and staff has been successfully begun. The Conference was MC'ed by **Cindy Petersen** who did a wonderful job encouraging consumers to share their various successes throughout the day.

Kathryn Thomas is currently an adult case manager out of the Grayling office, with a diverse employment background. She attended the conference and turned many heads when she stated: "We [social workers] come into this work as we have the need to help others, as it helps us, to help you [consumers]. We certainly did not come into social work for the money. A lot of staff suffer from depression and take antidepressants as well." The conference participants were very elated with the comment she made in that they know some of the individuals treating them suffer from mental illness as well. Hats off to Kathryn, as statements like this make it known that staff are indeed on board with the recovery movement.

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Regional Consumer Forum



Northwest
COMMUNITY
MENTAL HEALTH
Affiliation

The regional Consumer Forum met in August through a video connection from Traverse City (Northern Lakes) to Ludington (West MI). The Forum did not meet in May due to the Affiliation Consumer Conference.

The group went over the information concerning block grants and the changes for applying for these grants. They also reviewed the Customer Service quarterly report and the Quality Oversight Committee report.

There was a good amount of time discussing the upcoming Michigan Department of Community Health, (MDCH) review in September and looking at past consumer interview results from previous visits. The group was interviewed by MDCH when they were here; this is an ongoing process for the forum.

Results/Comments from the consumer conference were presented and discussed. Some items people liked and disliked about the conference are listed below.

Liked	Disliked
Identity theft presentation	Power point unavailable for this.
Lunch was good	Food
Consumers speaking and running the conference.	No Forum
Keynote speaker	No resource booth
Topics for future conferences rounded out the great meeting.	No breakouts

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Contributions!

Your personal contributions are a welcome addition to *New Directions*, subject to availability of space.

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Consumer Advocacy Council

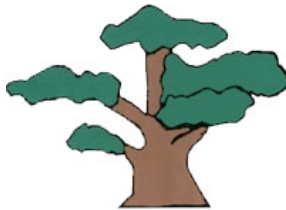
The Council met on September 12. Chair Ernie Reynolds was unable to attend so our Vice Chair led the meeting in some very good discussions.

Elections were held at the beginning of the meeting, with the Vice Chair moving up to the Chair position beginning October 2007. Our chair had finished his term as of this last meeting. A new Vice Chair was elected.

Discussion concerning advocacy in regards to recovery for people with a mental illness was discussed and the group talked about assisting consumers attending conferences so they may get the best from the opportunity. They plan to continue working on this. There was also discussion about the need for new Medicaid consumers to understand their entitlements as a Medicaid enrollee. All consumers new to the system need an advocate in their corner. The group questioned if this was not the job of customer service or peer support specialists. Customer service is available to help when their service is requested. Peer supports do not begin working with consumers until after their person centered plan is written. This will be discussed further for more clarity and to decide if the group wants to assist in recommending or implementing a plan for advocates to assist.

The group also heard from Recipient Rights Officer Jonathan Bennett and reviewed a new brochure for Customer Service Grievance and Appeals. Independent Facilitation was discussed as well and an update on the Hope Conference and anti-stigma events was presented by Cindy Petersen and those who attended the conference.

The next meeting for the Council will be October 10. They will be discussing the upcoming Consumer Forum and much more. These meetings are open to all to attend. They are at the Traverse City Office and video conference from Houghton Lake. Call ahead to verify video in Houghton Lake.



“Our Tree of Life”

NEW BEGINNINGS DROP-IN CENTER

A.k.a. Chat Room

All are adjusting to their new home, and now a new name! So when you call the drop-in don't be surprised by the answer on the other end as "New Beginnings Drop-in Center." The Drop-in received their Block Grant for camping equipment and a new computer. The members hope to do some camping close to home next summer and later look into going to Mackinaw.

CONSUMER MOVES UP

Recently I (Ernie Reynolds) applied to Northern Lakes Community Mental Health for the Certified Peer Support Specialist position in Houghton Lake. And to my amazement I was hired. I have been using CMH services since 1999 when I started on my recovery journey.

At times it seemed to be a long, hard, and unrewarding journey. Some bumps along the road in my physical health and a few setbacks for my mental health, but I continued to move forward on my recovery journey.

I was the director of the Chat Room Drop-In center in Houghton Lake for eight years. I learned much and have now advanced in my recovery journey. After leaving the Chat Room, I took a couple of months and got to know my family a little better. My daughter and I went on a very rewarding vacation to Four Corners, VT.

I am now employed at the NLCMH Houghton Lake office as a Certified Peer Support Specialist and it has started to bring even more personal rewards. I will be helping other persons with disabilities to achieve their own personal recovery journeys. I have a saying that I work at every day, "Just help one new person daily." I now have the chance to make a difference in many people's lives.

I look forward to the challenges that I may encounter. Working within the system, I hope to have better insight as to how the Community Mental Health system works. Helping to make changes toward a recovery based system is one of my goals. I have these challenges, (goals) in my own Person Centered Plan along with others.

I wish to invite any person with disabilities to call at the Houghton Lake office (989 366-8550) and ask for me, (Ernie Reynolds) if you have questions about your recovery and how I might be able to help you. I may also be reached by email at ernie.reynolds@nlcmh.org. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

VIRTUAL RECOVERY CENTER!

Northern Lakes CMH has a new Web site, with a new Virtual Recovery Center! Every day during the month of October, a new consumer recovery story will be added in the Virtual Recovery Center. By the end of October there will be 30 stories there! These are the stories created first as "photobiographies" during the anti-stigma meetings held at NLCMH last winter. You can see them at <http://www.northernlakescmh.org>.

CALL FOR ART ENTRIES!

Northern Lakes CMH is sponsoring an art show for the month of November. The deadline to submit art is October 22. Entry forms and flyers are available in all the Northern Lakes CMH offices and consumers may turn in their art at any NLCMH office as well. There will be a public reception on Friday, November 2, from 5-9:00 PM at the Inside Out Gallery, 229 Garland, in Traverse City. Give it a try, there is no cost to submit your art!

Health Tip of the Week

The following is from Dear Marci and fits in with so much of what is being taught to peer supports for sharing with consumers and the information Larry Fricks shared at the **HOPE Conference** as well. I thought it might be of interest to others as well:

It is time for Americans to start following the example of our healthier neighbors from other countries if we want to lead longer and healthier lives, according to an article on CNN.com

(<http://www.kintera.org/TR.asp?a=duLNI6PPIiJ0JmL&s=etlRK8PNJdJVI5PGJpG&m=bfKMIXNwFhIYH>)

Americans can start on the path to improved health at the dinner table - by following these eating and meal-planning habits of some of the healthiest countries in the world:

* Make produce and whole grains the stars of your meals. Give meat a supporting role. Try to keep to a two-to-one ratio on your plate: two servings of fresh produce and whole grains to one serving of meat or fish.

* Enjoy a long, leisurely meal. Divide your meal into courses rather than placing everything on the table at once. This allows you to enjoy each part of the meal and digest between courses.

* Lead a less "full" life! Adopt a practice called "hara hachi bu" (<http://www.kintera.org/TR.asp?a=7oIBJOMrGcIPL5J&s=etlRK8PNJdJVI5PGJpG&m=bfKMIXNwFhIYH>), which translates to "eight parts out of 10." When you are mostly, but not completely, full, stop eating. Americans often make the mistake of taking a rest and then finishing what is on their plates.

* Think "fresh," not "processed."
Avoid the supermarket's pre-packaged aisle and hit the fresh produce and whole grains aisle. Cooking with fresh products does not necessarily have to take more time. Throw some whole wheat pasta to boil and steam some broccoli or other vegetables in the same pot. (Add the vegetables towards the end of the cooking time so that you do not steam out all of the nutrients.)

Comment - I found the food pyramid by the USDA site to be very interesting as it gave you many ways to find out about portion size, what you should consume or not consume. There were great ideas about what portions are in different food categories and a tracking card that you can use to check on yourself. The site to CNN was also interesting and led to other interactive areas. The food pyramid is also in the Helpful Resources area of www.northernlakescmh.org.

HOPE CONFERENCE continued from page 1

Ike Powell and **Larry Fricks** from the *Appalachian Consulting Group of Georgia, Inc.* were the keynote speakers for this event. Ike began discussing the NASMHPD (National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors) report that was released entitled, **"Morbidity and Mortality in People with Serious Mental Illness"**. Ike and Larry focused on Peer Led Self-Help Management, stating that "people with serious mental illness die and average of 25 years earlier than the general population." (NASMHPD) Conference participants were asked various questions for group comment about this quote, including: "What do you think the report says has contributed to the early death of people in recovery from mental illness served in the public sector?" and "What role could peer specialists play to support peers to live longer?" Larry continued the session by discussing *Stress, Metabolic Factors and the Relaxation Response*. Specifically, Biodots were handed out to everyone to participate in an exercise following a generic technique taught at the Benson-Henry Institute of two essential steps: 1) Repetition of a word, sound, phrase, or concentrating on breathing, and 2) Turning away of everyday thoughts that come to mind and return to your repetition.

During the conference, various celebrations and activities were presented to participants including handing out T-Shirts to three participants who have never attended any mental health conference in the past, using puzzle pieces that were pre-placed on the tables randomly to "find your place in NLCMH recovery and stigma busters initiatives" (**Mary Beth Evans assisted**), and a general discussion out loud to "get to know you: building a network of stigma busters and recovery champions" in which participants were free to raise their hands to various questions such as "born in another country" and "has quit smoking" to name only a few (**Ernie Reynolds assisted**).

After the lunch break, **Mary Pierce** and **Jeff Morgan** from presented a documentary film that they filmed during the making of the storyboards that are seen throughout all four office locations. Various tears were shed during this time as well as laughs and smiles of courage as reality spread through the room that our paths towards recovery really do mean something and are helpful in helping others realize that they will be okay even though they suffer from the devastating impact of being labeled "mentally ill."

Greg Paffhouse wrapped up the day discussing the next steps for the recovery and anti-stigma initiatives, including the upcoming appointed Recovery Council, Learning Communities, and a Blueprint update.

Through all of this excitement, valuable information, and continued learning experiences, we need to recognize the behind-the-scenes people who helped create this conference: **Cindy Petersen, Val Bishop, Deb Freed, Stephanie Kretschman, Julie Schreiner, and Lindsey DeRousse** (who is a Grand Valley State University intern). Thank you very much, ladies, for making this a day to remember.



CLUB CADILLAC

Fall is bringing new beginnings and changes to Club Cadillac. The old will still remain as the Club has many great programs that members have come to expect over time.

Marsha, Todd and Fred attended training in South Carolina recently and came home with great ideas for the club.

New Director Andy Ulrich started his first full day on Sept. 19. He worked with Betty until her retirement at the end of the month. The club members planned planning a retirement party for her with the community invited on September 27. The members also had a private retirement party for Betty.

Daniel and Jenny from Baker College and Tamara, Mary, Angela and Maria from Northwestern Michigan College are serving as interns with Club Cadillac presently. Interns have always added to the clubhouse and are a welcome addition for all.

Once again Club Cadillac will have its annual talent show in October, planning is in progressing the past this has been enjoyed by all. The talent bank of so many is not even realized until the talent show. It is amazing what talent that members have and that we often do not know about each other and what those talents are until an event like this takes place. Members are also discussing their annual Thanksgiving dinner for the Northern Lakes Board meeting that takes place in November.

Kandu Island

Gail Hockett was hired as an assistant at Kandu Island. Regrettably, Michele resigned her position as Director. Business will run as normal so stop by and visit with your peers and enjoy a part of your day. Kandu Island has started holding Connections Recovery Support Group meetings on Fridays at 1:30. These meetings are open to all people with a mental health diagnosis. They hope to start a second group in the near future with more consumers who are attending training in September.

Ongoing Events

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

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

Connections Recovery Support Group Traverse City, Fridays 1:30-3:00 pm Kandu Island (open to all with a mental illness). More information 932-1590.

Connections Recovery Support Group Houghton Lake CMH, every other Thursday starting Oct 4 (Oct 18...)

2:00pm Contact Ernie for more information 989 366-9420.

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; the e-mail address is: gafrankfort@yahoo.com

Parent Support/Education group - meeting the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 1:00 Pine Rest, Traverse City Clinic. This group is collaboration between Pine Rest and the Association for Children's Mental Health (Jane Shank).

NAMI of Northwest MI support meeting 2nd Monday of the month 7-8:30pm, Munson Medical Center, doctors dining room. (*October special presentation*)

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

Upcoming Events

Oct 8 – **NAMI of Northwest MI** presents Hearts and Minds 7:00pm, Munson Medical Center, doctor's dining room.

Oct. 10 - **Consumer Advocacy Council** 1:30- 3:00 pm Traverse City with Video to Houghton Lake

Oct. 18 – **NLCMH Board meeting** at ROOC, Inc. in Roscommon 6:30 pm

Consumer Advocacy Council Nov. - possible Consumer Forum TBA

Nov 6 – **Recipient Rights Advisory Committee**, 2:30 – 5:00 pm, in Traverse City.

Nov. 15 - **Northwest Affiliation CMH Regional Consumer Forum** in Traverse City in Cadillac, video to Ludington

Nov 15 - **NLCMH Board Meeting** in Cadillac 6:30 pm

Nov 20 – **Recipient Rights Advisory Committee**, 2:30 – 5:00 pm, in Traverse City.

Nov 22 – **NAMI of Northwest MI presents IOOV** (In Our Own Voice) a consumer panel presentation on mental illness to help reduce stigma. 7-8:30pm Northern Lakes CMH board room.