



NEW DIRECTIONS

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

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REGIONAL CONSUMER FORUM

The Regional Consumer Forum met in Cadillac via teleconference with Ludington and Traverse City in November. They received affiliation updates, information regarding the MDCH, (Michigan Department of Community Health) site visit, customer service report and an update on the Quality Oversight Committee. They also went over the purpose statement:



Northwest
COMMUNITY
MENTAL HEALTH
Affiliation

The purpose of the Regional Consumer Forum is to provide broad, regional consumer perspective and partnership with the **Northwest Community Mental Health Affiliation (NWA)** in a meaningful and valuable role. Members of this forum will serve as an advisory group and will partner with the NWA to:

- Provide ongoing consumer perspective to aide the NWA in region-wide performance improvement efforts.
- Receive and share information between local affiliate consumer groups and the Regional Consumer Forum in order to aid the NWA in informing and educating our broad consumer population.
- Serve as a voice of consumer advocacy to other local, regional, state and national groups, bodies and legislatures in an effort to continue to reduce stigma, raise awareness regarding mental illness, developmental disabilities, recovery and political issues such as parity and budgets.
- Assist the Northwest Affiliation in ensuring ongoing compliance with consumerism guidelines.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 National Study Secondary Students with Autism
- 2 Assistive Technology/Sensory Impairments
- 3 Consumer Advocacy Council
- 3 Recovery Council
- 4 Learning Communities
- 4 Ongoing and Upcoming Events

PASREP Keeps People with Disabilities in Workforce

By: Cyndy Viars, Disability Advocates

People with functionally significant disabilities who are employed may qualify for the **Personal Assistance Services Reimbursement Employment Program (PASREP)**. The statewide program exists to as a support to people with disabilities who cannot afford the full cost of personal attendant services needed to retain employment. PASREP promotes an independent approach to living and working. Participants report that they are able to continue employment and contribute to their family income by utilizing the program resources.

People with disabilities may qualify if they are currently employed or have a bona fide offer of employment, working no fewer than 24 hours per week. They require at least 5 hours of weekly personal attendant services. PASREP participants must also be able to employ, manage and maintain records for their personal attendant staff.

The income ceiling is based on the correlation between the amount of personal assistance needed and the participant's household income. At minimum, participants must earn SGA.

Currently, the PASREP waiting list is short. Along with maintaining the wait list, four Centers for Independent Living provide advocacy and certification. For more information log on to www.dakc.us/PASREPage.htm or contact Cyndy Viars at Disability Advocates of Kent County at 616-949-1100 ext. 225.

Email subscriptions!

Receive *New Directions* through your email. If you would like to receive *New Directions* electronically please submit your email address to Leslie.Sladek@nlcmh.org writing “*New Directions*” in the subject line. Your address will be used solely for distribution of *New Directions*. It will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

Contributions!

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

Facts from NLTS2: Secondary School Experiences of Students with Autism

A recently published fact sheet from **the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2** provides a national snapshot of the secondary school experiences of students with autism. Approximately 1,000 youth with autism are included in NLTS2's nationally representative sample of more than 11,000 students with disabilities.

The following questions are addressed in the fact sheet:

- What is the pattern of course taking of secondary-school-age students with autism and in what settings are courses taken?
- What are the characteristics of classroom instruction provided to students with autism, and how do they differ in general, vocational, and special education classes?
- What types of accommodations, services, and supports do schools provide to students with autism?

The fact sheet is available in PDF format

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncser/pdf/20073005.pdf>

Information can also be found on the NLTS2 web site at:

<http://www.nlts2.org/>

In Brief: A Synthesis of Three NLTS2 Reports

Information needed to improve the education and outcomes of students with disabilities has been compiled by the U.S.

Department of Education in the document: "*National Longitudinal Transition Study-2: A Synthesis of Three NLTS2 Reports on Going to School, Youth Achievements and Services and Supports.*"

This document synthesizes three reports in order to describe classroom contexts and instruction, highlight student outcomes, discuss challenges faced in providing services for youths with disabilities, and propose possible policy next-steps according to the data.

The report is available in PDF format at:

<http://projectforum.org/docs/NLTS2forweb.pdf>

**From: The National Center on Learning Disabilities
and Reference Points**

*Taken from Monday Bulletin on Services to Youth, January 2008
Update, Issue 307*

Northwest Michigan Blood Drive ~ We need you

This is our seventh year of participating in the Northwest Michigan Blood Drive that will take place on Wednesday, February 6 from 10:00 am-2:00 pm. in the Northern Lakes CMH, Third Floor Board Room, TC office. It takes about one hour from start to finish. To sign up for a time slot Call Cindy Petersen at 922-4850.

There is a shortage of blood donations during these winter months and on average, one out of five people entering hospitals will need blood. You can make a difference - it's about life.

Assistive Technology for People with Sensory Impairments

DO-IT has created training materials on making science and computer technology accessible to individuals with sensory impairments. They are designed for individual as well as large-group presentations. Materials include DVDs and handouts from the Alliance for Access to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (AccessSTEM) and the Alliance for Access to Computing Careers (AccessComputing) at the University of Washington in Seattle. The development and distribution of these materials is funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF Cooperative Agreement #0227995 and grant #CNS-0540615.

They are designed for individual as well as large-group presentations.

Most of these materials are available on the **DO-IT** web site at <http://www.washington.edu/doit>. At this location you will also find a Knowledge Base of questions and answers, case studies, and promising practices. Select the "Search **DO-IT** Knowledge Base" link on the vertical bar on the left side of the **DO-IT** home page.

Note that the DVDs include talking menus to assure that they can be operated by individuals who are blind. In addition, all of the video presentations on the DVDs are open captioned and an audio described version of each is included.

*Taken from Monday Bulletin on Services to Youth, January 2008 Update,
Issue 307*

FACING US CLUBHOUSE – Check it Out

If you live with depression or bipolar disorder—or are simply seeking inspiration and support for living a full, healthy and happy life—the Facing Us Clubhouse is your online home for wellness. © **DBSA 2007**

The following is an email that has been passed on by several of the advocacy organization spreading the news.

Online "Clubhouse" New Opportunity for Support and Hope

On December 3, the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) launched www.FacingUs.org, an unique website with innovative and interactive features that will enable those living with depression and bipolar disorder to create their own personal wellness tools to aid them on their road to recovery. Users are able to create customized personal journals, wellness plans and wellness books that can be printed with artistic covers; or they can visit the Media Room and listen to audio files of guided meditation or view a yoga video. The site is designed to be a "clubhouse," an online community that provides inspiration and encouragement to others and it's available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All the resources plus a personal touch, at

<https://www.facingus.org/>

CONSUMER ADVOCACY COUNCIL

The CAC met in December and January. The following is a summary of the main points of its meeting:

The by-laws were amended in December with the removal of the vision and mission statements (these are not normally part of the by-laws).

It was suggested that the CAC look closer at its role and purpose in 2008. They also discussed the upcoming January agenda and the housing discussion, whom to invite and the questions they would like answered. The meetings will be on the 2nd Wednesday of the month next year with a forum taking place at the May consumer conference.

In January they hosted speakers from Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services and Legal Aid. The presentation was beneficial to the members. The CAC received feedback from staff who has reviewed the Promoting Recovery Conference Guidelines (Tips) that were presented at office meetings in December and are working on a brochure to market the Consumer Advocacy Council. Finishing up the meeting they discussed the upcoming February meeting and are looking to invite The CWTA (Crawford/Wexford Transit Authority) and BATA (Bay Area Transportation Authority).

The CAC meetings are open and they welcome others to attend the meetings. The scheduled time and location are on page 4 under upcoming meetings.

Recovery Council

The first NLCMH Recovery Council meeting was held January 25 in Cadillac. Twelve representatives were chosen to be on the council by **Greg Paffhouse, CEO**, which includes two consumers and one staff from each office plus **Mary Beth Evans**, Recovery Coordinator, who will serve as the Chair for the meetings. More information on the members will be in a future edition of New Directions.

The next Recovery Council meeting is scheduled for February 22 in the Houghton Lake office from 1:00-3:00. Everyone is encouraged to attend as a partner. The council's first duty will be to adopt a new NLCMH recovery definition/policy which stems from the activities mentioned in Learning Communities, page four. Participation in both the Learning Communities and the Recovery Council meetings are encouraged in order to transform the local public mental health system of care to one based on recovery.

You can see a picture of the Recovery Council in the Virtual Recovery Center at www.northernlakescmh.org. For more information contact Mary Beth Evans, CPSS, Recovery Coordinator, at marybeth.evans@nlcmh.org or 989.366.2950.

Kandu Island

Snow tubing! Everyone is looking forward to this. Kandu members will be traveling to Shanty Creek to enjoy this outdoor activity. Kandu Island is still in the process of hiring a new director. Presently, Assistant Director Greg Irish is keeping the drop-in open with help from Barb who prepares their snack and Charles who assists a couple days a week. Recently the member list was updated and continues to grow. NAMI Connections continues to hold its peer support group meetings at the drop-in on Fridays. This group is open to anyone with a mental health diagnosis regardless of whether they attend Kandu Island or not. The drop-in is a great place to network with peers and make new friends. Learn from others, play a game of pool, and share your knowledge.



New Beginnings

Drop-in

New Beginnings members are enjoying their clean floors and new carpet after several weeks of the drop-in being closed. The new carpet is wonderful but the reason for receiving the carpet was not so great. The drop-in was flooded and had to go through a thorough cleaning and replacement of all the floors before they could open up for members again. Winter is a bit quieter as many days the buses only run on the main roads.

"Our Tree of Life"

Peace

Sometimes in our garden of life,
We have to pick the weeds of anger and hurt;
Plant the seeds of forgiveness
To get the fruit of love.

We have to pick the weeds
Of gossip and intolerance;
Plant the seed of equity
To get the fruit of justice.

And when we pick the weeds
Of abuse and violence;
Plant the seed of understanding,
We have the fruit of peace.

Anne Marie Lawrence



CLUB CADILLAC

The New Year started out with members volunteering at First Night, a Cadillac tradition. The clubhouse is also in the process of hiring; they are in the first interview stage presently. Members are also assisting in the painting of the kitchen and dining room.

Learning Communities

The second Learning Community Meetings at NLCMH were yet again a great success! There was a great turn-out from each office location despite hectic weather conditions. We truly appreciate all the acknowledgement and recognition we have received from staff, family members, consumers, and the NLCMH Board throughout our six counties. At one of meetings, a NLCMH Board Member attended and stated that the Board has been informed of what we are doing at our Learning Community Meetings and is very supportive of everything the communities hope to accomplish!

The agenda was yet again packed full of information and topics to get through in only two hours. Two learning topics were covered at the second meeting: Recovery Definitions and Creating a Recovery Environment. At the November meeting participants were asked to bring with them their personal definitions of what they thought recovery was to share at the January meeting. Along with their personal definitions of recovery, attendees were asked for words and/or phrases they would like to see included (or excluded) in the final organizational definition of recovery for NLCMH. The second learning topic, Creating a Recovery Environment, was a specific time for questions to be both asked and answered about various things in our CMH system environments such as:

- What does a good, recovery-oriented environment look like?
- How can the environment HERE help people recover or keep them from recovering?
- What is the environment like here?
- What can we do, make or purchase to make Recovery be the main focus upon entering the CMH buildings?
- Identify some recommendations for initial improvements.
- Identify some things that are both positive and negative and assess for barriers and negative messages.

The response from both learning topics was both amazing and empowering! They are posted on the NLCMH web site (www.northernlakescmh.org) in the new Virtual Recovery Center.

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 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.

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 at Pine Rest, Traverse City Clinic. This group is a collaboration between Pine Rest and the Association for Children's Mental Health (Jane Shank).

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 4 - MDCH Recovery Council, Lansing Community College, 9-3:00pm

Feb. 5 - Recipient Rights Advisory Committee, 2:30- 5:00 pm, in Traverse City.

Feb. 13 - Consumer Advocacy Council 1:30-3:30 pm Traverse City with Video to Houghton Lake

Feb. 21 - NLCMH Board meeting, 204 Meadows Dr., Grayling 6:00 pm

Feb. 22 - Northern Lakes Recovery Council from 1-3:00 pm in Cadillac

Mar. 12 - Consumer Advocacy Council 1:30-3:30 pm Traverse City with Video to Houghton Lake

Mar. 20 - NLCMH Board Meeting, Traverse City office 6:00 pm

Mar. 28 - Northern Lakes Recovery Council 1-3:00 pm in Grayling
April 1 - Recipient Rights Advisory Committee, 2:30-5:00 pm, in Traverse City

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

2nd Tuesday - Feb. 12 and Mar. 11 from 12:30-2:30 pm in Houghton Lake

2nd Wednesday - Feb 13 and Mar. 12 from 1-3:00 pm in Grayling

2nd Friday - Feb. 8 and Mar. 7 from 1-3:30 pm in Cadillac

3rd Tuesday - Feb 19 and Mar. 18 from 1-3:00 pm in Traverse City

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