

BYLAWS
of the
CONSUMER ADVOCACY COUNCIL
of
NORTHERN LAKES COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH

VISION

We strive to build a community where the behavioral health needs of all persons are addressed with dignity and respect and that persons with behavioral health care needs and persons with developmental disabilities, work and learn with all members of a community without fear of discrimination, abuse or stigma.

MISSION

Our mission is to promote advocacy of the development, implementation and review of the accessibility to the highest quality of public behavioral health care programs and services which promotes recovery, resilience and hope to be delivered to any person who needs such services.

NAME

The Name of the group shall be the Consumer Advocacy Council, informally referred to as the CAC in this and other documents and records of Northern Lakes Community Mental Health (NLCMH).

YEAR

The CAC year shall coincide with the Fiscal Year of the NLCMH, currently starting on October 1 of each calendar year.

MEMBERSHIP

DEFINITION

Membership of the CAC shall consist of twelve (12) primary consumers, or family members of persons receiving behavioral health care services and persons with developmental disabilities, within the service region of NLCMH. At least eight (8) of these members should be primary consumers. "Membership is 12 members with the preferred option 6 members from Grand Traverse/Leelanau, 3 members from Wexford/Missaukee and 3 members from Crawford/Roscommon; there should be no less than 2 members from Wexford/Missaukee or 2 members from Crawford/Roscommon; if a third vacancy exists longer than three months the third seat can be filled regardless of residency."

TERM

Each Regular Member shall serve for two year terms and may be reappointed for a total time of six years (three two-year terms).¹ After a maximum of three (3) consecutive terms, a person must leave the CAC for at least a period of one year before serving further terms on the CAC. When replacing a person leaving before the end of the term the new member will be appointed to a new two year term, beginning the month of appointment."

COMPENSATION

Each Member shall be paid a per diem and reimbursed for necessary expenses equal to that provided in NLCMH Board of Directors policies for each meeting attended.

GOOD STANDING

All Members of the CAC shall remain in Good Standing throughout their terms in order to stay on the CAC. Members will notify the Chairperson or the Executive Office of Northern Lakes CMH if they are unable to attend a meeting. If a member misses two (2) or more meetings, unexcused, in the operational year s/he may be subject to removal by consensus of the entire CAC. Their unfilled terms shall be filled by persons with consensus of the entire CAC. The council operates with a consensus model other than election of officers and nomination of new members.

RESIGNATION

Any Member of the CAC may resign their seat on the CAC in a letter addressed to the Chairperson of the Council and delivered to the Administrative Offices of NLCMH. Their unfilled term shall be filled at the earliest convenience of the Council.

APPOINTMENT

Any person interested in serving on the CAC shall submit a Letter of Interest to the CEO of NLCMH. The CEO shall bring these Letters of Interest to the CAC and the CAC shall select candidates to be interviewed for vacancies on the CAC. The CEO shall help seat the first CAC members and shall serve as an advisor to the CAC with respect to the future selection of members.

EXPECTATIONS

- Attend CAC meetings and functions
- Be informed about NLCMH and the CAC
- Respect the confidentiality of others
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to meetings
- Serve on workgroups and offer to take on special assignments
- Inform others about the CAC
- Listen, work well with people individually and in a group
- Take responsibility and follow through on a given assignment
- Be sensitive to and tolerant of differing views
- Have a sense of humor and enjoy this experience

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERSHIP

DEFINITION

The CEO of NLCMH shall serve as an Ex-Officio member and shall appoint other staff members of NLCMH, outside health care providers and other interested persons in order to provide guidance, counsel and support to the CAC as the Members seek such guidance, counsel and support. The CEO should ask for the consensus of the entire CAC with regards to these appointments.

TERM

Each Ex-Officio Member of the CAC shall participate without term limits.

COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

TERM

The Members, collaborating together on a consensus basis, will appoint one of the Members to serve as Chairperson of the CAC. The Chair shall serve for a single two year term. If the Chairperson steps down the Vice-Chairperson will serve the remainder of the Chairperson's term. If the Vice-Chairperson decides not to serve an election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson will take place.

ROLE

The Chairperson will conduct the meeting.

Also, the role of the Chairperson is to serve as a Liaison to: The Staff of NLCMH, other CMH contract providers or committees and other allied professional organizations and to the general community. The Chairperson shall serve on other committees as requested by the CAC and approved by the CEO of NLCMH or as requested by the CEO of NLCMH and approved by the CAC.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

TERM

The Members, collaborating on a consensus basis, will appoint one of the members to serve as Vice-Chairperson of the CAC. The Vice-Chair shall serve for a single two year term. The Vice-Chairperson would succeed the Chairperson after the Chairperson has completed a two year term unless the Vice-Chairperson does not choose to do so. If the Vice -Chairperson steps down there will be an election of a new Vice-Chairperson at the next meeting.

ROLE

The Vice-Chairperson shall, in the absence of the Chairperson, act as Chairperson *pro tem*

MEETINGS

REGULAR MEETINGS

The CAC may meet up to twelve times per year to conduct the regular business of the Council. The CAC shall annually set forth the meeting places of the CAC and publish their meetings in public notices.

QUARTERLY OPEN STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

The CAC shall be responsible for the planning, implementation and review of quarterly Open Stakeholder meetings hosted in various cities and towns of the service region of NLCMH.

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The CAC shall use the consensus model of decision-making processing as the basis for actions, recommendations and reports generated by the CAC. See prior question on consensus.

The rationale for using the consensus model rather than vote-taking is as follows:

- Allows for a more natural deliberative discussion to take place that allows each person contribute to the decision-making process.
- Allows for the reaching of an agreement in a better method than could have otherwise been reached.
- Improved capacity to solve challenges together in the future.
- Provides mutual respect and dignity for each person.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the CAC is to help create a consumer-driven system of care which gives consumers informed choices and decision-making roles. The CAC shall:

- Advise and assist, in a meaningful and valued role, NLCMH and its network providers in designing, implementing and reviewing mental health, behavioral health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse treatment policies, procedures, practices and programs for consumers that are consistent with the mission and core values of NLCMH and its network providers.
- Support and monitor implementation of person-centered planning, self-determination, promotion of recovery and family-centered services to ensure consumers are being empowered to guide their own services and support tools.

ROLES

The roles that the CAC may serve include:

- Receive, review and make recommendations regarding the aggregated consumer satisfaction survey results.
- Receive, review and make recommendations regarding outcome evaluation measures and results.
- Receive, review and make recommendations regarding the aggregated grievance and appeal(s) results.
- Receive, review and make recommendations regarding the status of recipient rights protection.
- Receive, review and make recommendations regarding persons requesting services who have been referred to another provider.
- Receive, review and make recommendations on information provided by consumers serving in Customer Services positions within NLCMH.
- Receive, review and make recommendations regarding the information received from contract providers of NLCMH.

- Design, implement and review quarterly Open Stakeholder Meetings hosted in the various cities and towns of the service region.
- Receive, review and make recommendations regarding the development of NLCMH's strategic/long-term plan.
- Communicate on a semi-annual basis with the Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Committee to facilitate communication between the two groups.
- Communicate once a year with the Board of Directors of NLCMH in order to present an Annual Report, summarizing their activity and recommendations.
- Represent NLCMH on Northwest Michigan CMH Affiliation committee(s).
- Serve as an Appeals Committee, if so designated.
- Serve as a voice of consumer advocacy to other local, regional, state and national groups, bodies and legislatures.

DEFINITIONS

“BEHAVIORAL HEALTH” is the collective term used to encompass and mean “mental health”, “developmental health” and “substance abuse health”.

“CONSUMERISM” means active promotion and advocacy of the interests, service needs, and rights of consumers of public and private mental health, behavioral health, developmental disability and substance abuse care services.

“CONSUMER-DRIVEN” means any program or service focused and directed by participation from consumers.

“FAMILY MEMBER” means a parent, step-parent, spouse, child, sibling or grandparent of a primary consumer, or an individual upon whom a primary consumer is dependant for at least fifty percent (50%) of his/her financial support.

“INFORMED CHOICES” means that an individual receives information and understands his/her options.

“PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING” means a process of developing an individual plan of service with your mental health agency. The process may involve friends, family, professionals and individuals the client wishes to participate. It addresses both medical and personal goals to assist them on the path of recovery. The plan not only identifies the goal, but also puts in place the steps to assist in achieving the goal including who if anyone will assist in attaining the goal. During this process the clients choices will be honored, as well as their preferences and recognizing their abilities.

“PRIMARY CONSUMER” means an individual who has received or is receiving services from the Michigan Department of Community Health, Northern Lakes CMH or

another CMH programs or a contract agency or services from the private sector equivalent to those offered by Northern Lakes Community Mental Health.

“RECOVERY” means the process of personal change in developing a healthy and balanced life of purpose, hope and positive contribution. The emphasis is on one’s abilities and potentials. Recovery includes positive expectations for all consumers. Learning self-responsibility is a major element to RECOVERY.

“SELF-DETERMINATION” means building a meaningful life in one’s community encouraging recipients, including those who have a guardian or employ the services of advocates, to be involved in their plans and choices. This life shall include the aspirations of all humans; **freedom** to make choices, also the **authority** over funds needed for support, **support** to organize resources that enhance one’s life, and **responsibility** for the use of those funds.

¹ The following guidelines will apply for the first twelve members of the CAC who are being appointed in February, 2004 because of the newly merged Northern Lakes Community Member Health.

- Seven (7) of the members shall be appointed to serve from February, 2004 until September 30, 2005. They may serve for two more consecutive terms through September 30, 2009
- Five (5) of the members shall be appointed to serve from February, 2004 until September 30, 2006. They may serve for two more consecutive terms through September 30, 2010.