

## Mental Health Transformation Update September 2008

Connecticut's Mental Health Transformation efforts have been organized into four domains: **Consumer/Youth and Family Driven; Community Education; Data-Driven Decisions;** and **Workforce Development.** As we come to the close of the third year of the grant the impact and lessons learned include:

### Consumer/Youth and Family Driven

While much has been accomplished, more work is needed to realize a mental health system transformed by those closest to it – consumers, youth and family members. Current steps toward this goal:

- A Consumer/Youth and Family **Advisory Council** informs the transformation process, participates in decision making and guides implementation to ensure movement toward this goal. Recently the Advisory Council formally outlined their roles, functions and membership.
- **Consumers, Youth and Family** are involved **at all levels** of the Transformation process including:
  - planning councils and collaboratives, ad hoc committees, grant review committees and evaluation activities.
  - Over 50% of reviewers for a recent MHT RFP were consumers or family members.
  - Other state agencies are involving consumers and family members in planning and procurement processes as a result of MHT.
- **12 individuals** in recovery, youth, or family members **have been employed** as a direct result of the MHT Grant (as of August 30, 2008).
- **Consumer Recovery Employment Consultation Service (C-RECS)**, implemented by Focus on Recovery United (FOR-U), is preparing and supporting persons in recovery for employment in the behavioral health workforce. This includes:
  - Training;
  - Post-hire support, retention and career development efforts;
  - Consultation and technical assistance to agencies to promote culture change supporting the success of persons in recovery as workforce participants.
- **Quality Improvement Collaborative (QuIC)**: Consumers/youth/family will identify and implement recovery -resilience oriented performance measurements for quality improvement. They will design an assessment system to evaluate the service delivery models and programs and recognize consumers/youth/families as experts in their own recovery. QuIC Partners include: Regional Mental Health Boards, Advocacy Unlimited, NAMI and FAVOR.
- **Consumer Research and Evaluation Network (C-REN)** trains consumers and family members to undertake evaluation work. C-REN will also provide consultation and/or technical assistance to consumer-run projects.

### Community Education

Community Education efforts reach persons across Connecticut in a variety of ways:

- A Town Hall Meeting, **“Opening Doors, Opening Minds”** was broadcast live on CPTV on June 26, 2008. Over 200 viewers called in or e-mailed questions. The Town Meeting can be viewed online at [www.cpbn.org/program/opening-doors-opening-minds](http://www.cpbn.org/program/opening-doors-opening-minds).
- Since launching in October 2007, the **Ct.NetworkofCare.org** website has received 2,500,000 hits. MHT staff has provided demonstrations of the site to over 300 persons across the state. Training sessions have been added to the DMHAS Training and Education Catalog for fall 2008.
- In October 2008, **CPTV** will broadcast the first of three half hour **documentaries on mental health**. Plans are in place to secure foundation funding to expand this to a ten part series.

### Data-Driven Decisions

- A **Memorandum of Agreement** was signed by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Developmental Services to pilot a data sharing project. The analysis of the data and results of the pilot will be shared with State Agency Commissioners on October 1, 2008.

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### Workforce Development

The Yale Center for Workforce Development has implemented multiple initiatives to address Behavioral Health Workforce issues. Key to the sustainability of these efforts is the **CT Workforce Collaborative for Behavioral Health**. A memorandum of agreement will ensure the commitment of several state agencies to this process.

A **Request for Qualifications** was released in June to identify two communities that will receive infrastructure support for implementing Wraparound services.

The Coordinating Center for Wraparound Initiative and the Court Support Services Division will expand the impact of the **Wraparound initiative** by linking it with a school-based juvenile justice diversion funded by the MacArthur Foundation.

### Mini Grants

A **request for proposals** was issued in the spring 2008 releasing **\$1.3 million dollars** to consumer/youth/family organizations, state agencies and private non-profit organizations to promote infrastructure changes consistent with the goals of the Mental Health Transformation Grant.

Seven review committees, consisting of 52% consumers and family members, reviewed 74 applications, funding 35.

### Lessons Learned

MHT recently conducted a survey of all participants in the MHT process. Results indicate that in order to meaningfully involve more consumers, youth and family, outreach and education efforts must:

- o address accessibility of meetings;
- o explore topics that are relevant to them;
- o create a welcoming culture.

Respondents suggest providing transportation or increasing stipends, identifying additional opportunities for involvement beyond workgroups, offering accommodations and respecting the contributions of those already involved.

Expect Change

Connecticut's Mental Health System is Transforming

*To learn more about Connecticut's Mental Health Transformation Initiative visit*

*[www.ct.gov/dmhas/cwp/view.asp](http://www.ct.gov/dmhas/cwp/view.asp) and click on Mental Health Transformation, or call (860) 418-6738.*