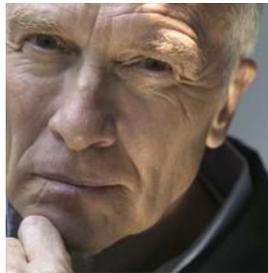


Mississippi Profile

WINTER 2010

Information Publication from the Mississippi Department of Mental Health

DMH Participates in Graduation Taskforce



Supporting a Better
Tomorrow... Today

In June 2009, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health was invited to serve on the Graduation Rate Task Force, established by the Mississippi Legislature during the 2009 session. The Task Force was asked to develop specific goals to move Mississippi's educational attainment to the national average by 2025. Several recommendations included in the December report are in response to mental health issues as the result of a student survey questionnaire administered by the Task Force to gain information as to the types of support services available to students.

"It is exciting that this task force recognizes and understands the impact that a young person's mental health has on his/her ability to graduate and enter the workforce," said Kris Jones, DMH Task Force Representative. "I look forward to continuing to work with the task force in order to ensure that these recommendations are implemented."

The mental health recommendations include:

- Universal screening of students
- Professional development opportunities to increase faculty/staff capacity to identify students who may have mental health needs or be at-risk
- On-campus mental health services, provided by a mental health professional which include counseling services and medication consultation and management
- Increase access to mental health-related educational resources and referral information for students and families
- Participation in Think Again and Shatter the Silence activities to engage faculty, staff and students in activities to support mental health education and eliminate stigma associated with seeking help and support
- Development of positive peer support/mentoring networks for students
- Include mental health education as a part of comprehensive clinical training for all teachers (K-16)

For a complete list of the recommendations, visit www.mississippi.edu/graduation/.

Executive Director's Message



It's that time again. The 2010 Legislative Session began this month and as many of you know there are several bills which affect mental health services in Mississippi.

I encourage each of you to keep track of bills impacting mental health services. One way you can do this is by visiting www.dmh.ms.gov. You will see a link in my message on our Web site to a list of bills regarding mental health. Our agency could not provide the level of services and supports to Mississippians without the efforts of our legislators.

In this edition of Mississippi Profile, you will see several activities highlighted including our involvement in the Graduation Rate Task Force. We are honored to be a part of this effort and have the opportunity to present information on the impact of mental health in schools. The Task Force developed excellent recommendations many of which are related to mental health.

Also included is an article about three of our facilities which received honors for their commitment to safety. I am proud of the dedication to safety our staff has for the people we serve. It is truly an honor when three of our facilities are recognized for their efforts.

I would like to congratulate the award recipients from the 2009 MHMR Conference. Two words can describe all of the winners: dedicated and passionate. We are blessed to have upstanding and caring individuals providing services in Mississippians mental health system.

Again, I want each of you to know how much I value your dedication to this state and the services and supports we provide. I know the next several months may be stressful, but I will continue to fight for quality mental health services in Mississippi and I know you will too.

Sincerely yours,

Edwin C. LeGrand III
Executive Director

Mississippi Profile



Winter 2010

Mississippi Department of Mental Health
Board Members
Margaret Ogden Cassada, M.D., Chairperson
J. Richard Barry, Vice Chairperson
George Harrison
Jim Herzog, Ph.D.
Robert Landrum
John Perkins
Rose Roberts, LCSW
Sampat Shivangi, M.D.

Edwin C. LeGrand III
Executive Director

Wendy D. Bailey, Editor

The Mississippi Profile is devoted to providing the public with information about services provided or administered by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. It also strives to increase public awareness and knowledge about mental illness, mental retardation/developmental disabilities, substance abuse, and Alzheimer's disease and other dementia to improve health and quality of life.

This publication is free of charge to persons interested in mental health, mental retardation/developmental disabilities, substance abuse, Alzheimer's disease and other dementia, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, or the individuals it serves. It is the policy of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health to comply with federal and state laws assuring equal opportunities of employment and services.

The editor reserves the right to edit all materials printed in this publication. Send requests for items to be included in the newsletter and other inquiries to:

Division of Public Information
ATTN: Wendy Bailey
MS Department of Mental Health
1101 Robert E. Lee Building
239 North Lamar Street
Jackson, MS 39201
Phone: (601) 359-1288
TDD: (601) 359-6230
FAX: (601) 359-6295
wendy.bailey@dmh.state.ms.us

DMH Receives Children and Youth Grant

Over the next five years, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) plans to develop and expand programs for youth with mental illness who are transitioning from child mental health services to adult mental health services and/or from an institutional setting to the community.

DMH's Bureau of Community Services has been awarded a System of Care grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to help with the development and expansion of programs for youth ages 16-21. The \$8 million, six-year grant will require state and local match funding. The grant funding will be provided to local Community Mental Health Centers to increase their capacity to serve transitional aged youth and to provide a broad array of accessible and coordinated services/supports.

"Our goal is for youth in Mississippi to have the necessary supports and structure to be prepared for independent living and to be productively engaged in the community," said Sandra Parks, DMH Director of the Division of Children and Youth. "We strongly believe these programs will enable Mississippi's youth to have a brighter future."

In Mississippi, an estimated 12,300 youth between the ages of 18 – 21 years have a serious emotional disorder (SED). According to national studies, youth with a SED have a higher dropout, arrest, and unemployment rate than their peers without a SED. Young adults with a SED are nearly 14 times less likely to complete high school and are 82% more likely to be unemployed after exiting high school than their peers without a serious emotional disorder.

Anticipated outcomes of this project include: improved social and clinical functioning outcomes, decreased caregiver strain, improved educational events and outcomes, fewer juvenile justice and/or adult justice system incidences, enhanced employment skills and opportunities, fewer out-of-home placements, and stable housing situation.

Three DMH Facilities Receive Honors for Safety

Three DMH facilities were honored for their safety at the Annual Mississippi State Agencies Self-Insured Workers' Compensation Trust Training Program on October 15th. The annual meeting is held by the Trust and F.A. Richard and Associates (FARA).

The top five agencies in the state were selected that had decreased their cost in workers compensation claims. DMH is honored to have three facilities in the top five.

Boswell Regional Center received the top honor. North Mississippi Regional Center in Oxford and North Mississippi State Hospital in Tupelo were also honored.

"This honor is reflective of DMH's overall commitment to safety," said Steve Milner, Loss Control Manager, Department of Finance and Administration. "It's a significant accomplishment when three out of the five recipients are mental health facilities."



Boswell Regional Center received the top honor. Pictured are Raymond Johnson, director of Boswell Regional Center and Charlotte Luckey, Personnel Officer.

MHMR 2009 Award Winners

Professionals from the fields of mental health and intellectual and developmental disabilities gathered at the Pearl River Resort in Philadelphia on Oct. 28 - 30 for the annual MHMR Conference. The conference theme, "Attitude Over Adversity," characterized the achievements and triumphs for individuals with mental illnesses/intellectual and developmental disabilities, and professional commitment to continued excellence in the fields of mental health/intellectual and developmental disabilities, and chemical dependency fields even in the most difficult of times.

The MHMR Awards Luncheon was held on Oct. 29. Six awards were presented to individuals who have gone above and beyond to serve Mississippians with mental health needs. Awards were presented to (pictured left to right):

The Albert Randel Hendrix Leadership Award was presented to Dave Van, Executive Director of Region 8, who has demonstrated exemplary leadership in the field of services for persons with mental illness and/or mental retardation.

The Paul D. Cotten Leadership Award was presented to Dr. Jessey Higdon, Director of Interdisciplinary Programs at North Mississippi Regional Center, who has demonstrated exemplary leadership in the field of services for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Commissioners' Award was presented to Judy Ramey, Region IV Mental Health Services, who is actively involved in not only local activities, but who also takes an active role in helping to improve services statewide.

The Kinloch Gill Memorial Award was presented to Madolyn Smith, Executive Director of Life Help, who exemplifies a commitment to excellence in the field of community mental health and mental retardation services.

The James C. Stubbs Volunteer Award was presented to Bobby Stephens, who has demonstrated a continuing interest and effort in providing volunteer and advocacy services to citizens of Mississippi with mental health needs and/or mental retardation.

The Bradley A. Sanders Service Award was presented to Marc Lewis, Director of Jaquith Nursing Home, who has made outstanding contributions in the field of behavioral healthcare management in Mississippi.

Congratulations to all of the recipients!



HRC Helps Clients Build Friendships

“The most terrible poverty is loneliness and the feeling of being unloved.”

- Mother Teresa

The feeling of loneliness has many effects on people - effects ranging from depression to anger. Loneliness hurts and loneliness doesn't discriminate.

Hudspeth Regional Center (HRC) social worker, Jim Dickerson, took great notice of his clients when he began work at HRC about a year ago. Many of the women on the cottage where he works have no one to visit them. A few of the women had not had a visitor in 30 years.

Although the Hudspeth Center staff are great with the clients and go out of their way to make the clients feel special, the staff can't replace the personal feeling of self worth when someone special comes to visit and be your personal friend.

This lack of personal friendship sparked Dickerson into writing a grant to help HRC clients. The Council on Developmental Disabilities awarded Hudspeth Regional Center a \$55,000 grant. The premise of the grant is to hire high functioning individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to come to the HRC campus and be foster friends to the individuals served by Hudspeth Center. The program is entitled, "You've Got a Friend."

After these friends are paired, they will go to the mall, eat dinner at a restaurant, or other activities which friends would do with each other. Dickerson feels there are measurable outcomes that will come from these relationships. His expectations run from increased social interaction with peers to the need of fewer medications.

"Grants are a necessity during this time of financial cutbacks," said HRC Director Dr. John Lipscomb. "The goal of Hudspeth Center is to best serve the clients we care for on and off campus. This grant will help us achieve this goal."

After a careful selection process and the pairing of individuals with IDD from off campus with clients on campus, the "You've Got a Friend" program is well on its way. Although it is too early for statistics, behaviors of HRC clients are changing for the better.

"What surprises me most about the program is the enthusiastic response it has received from both the community and the Hudspeth staff," said Dickerson. "People in the community have called to offer their assistance, and staffers who have no obligation to assist are volunteering time, energy, and ideas. There is genuine excitement on campus about undertaking something new."



Pictured is Erin and her new friend spending time together and sharing ice cream.

DMH Advocates for CIC Redesign

DMH will advocate for the redesign of the six Crisis Intervention Centers which are recommended for closure in the Governor's budget recommendation. This will prevent closure and provide voluntary access for individuals who are in need of immediate services.

At present, with the exception of chemical dependency services, MSH has a length of wait for inpatient treatment of 1-2 days, down from 13 days about four years ago. However, if the Governor's executive budget recommendations come to fruition, DMH will lose 37% of our adult acute care beds which will increase our waiting list and result in individuals waiting in jails for weeks as they were in the early 1990s. Every effort is being made to eliminate the wait for inpatient beds by providing the appropriate level of care as close to home as possible.

The Grenada Crisis Intervention Center pilot program began September 1 with the purpose of studying the potential for increased efficiencies and improved access to services without being involuntarily committed. The ability to accommodate both voluntary and involuntary admissions on a 24/7 basis has resulted in an 86% diversion rate from costly inpatient hospital care and has markedly increased the provision of timely mental health care within the community. This prevents the housing of patients in jail who are awaiting transfer to a state facility. Since the pilot project began, 66% of admissions have been voluntary and 34% involuntary with the average stay 11 days.

The Crisis Intervention Center redesign has many positive benefits including:

- The redesign will help us move towards reducing the use of jails for people waiting for civil commitment orders.
- It will save money which in turn will be used for partial funding for other crisis services such as PACT teams. PACT team services are targeted at individuals who are high users of hospital services and are designed to prevent the need of repeated hospitalizations.
- If an individual is transitioned out of an acute setting that is community-based there will be an increase in continuity of care due to the fact that the individual will be able to continue outpatient services many times with the same community service provider while also relying on their natural support system. Individuals will be able to stay connected to their community mental health provider while psychiatric stabilization services are provided.
- Medication compliance will improve due to the fact that when an individual enters a CIC to be stabilized, they will be seen by physicians at the community mental health center which may have already been providing care to the individual. The CIC will have a record of the individuals and know what medications to use for stabilization.
- The redesign will allow individuals with serious mental illnesses to access the psychiatric services they need on a voluntary basis before they decompensate to the point of meeting involuntary commitment criteria.
- The redesign will also improve the efficiency and decrease the cost per day of operating the CIC.

DMH MISSION

Supporting a better tomorrow by making a difference in the lives of Mississippians with mental illness, substance abuse problems and intellectual or developmental disabilities one person at a time.

DMH Helpline Offers

'Talk About it'

News & Updates

- Members of the Department of Mental Health's Focus III class graduated in July. Congratulations!
- Members were selected for the Focus IV class and a kick-off event was held in December.
- DMH's Office of Constituency Services staff was presented with certificates by the Governor's Office. The special recognition was for distinguished accomplishments on the occasion of outstanding Constituent Services to the people of Mississippi and the Office of the Governor.
- The first quarterly report of the DMH Strategic Plan is available at www.dmh.ms.gov under Online Documents.
- Kathy Van Cleave, DMH Director of the Division of Alzheimer's, was named Honorary Champion for the Alzheimer's Association's Jackson Memory Walk.

It's no secret that the top choices of communication for young adults is text messaging and e-mail. That's why the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) has added a new feature to its' statewide Helpline services which offer individuals the option of sending a text or online message to a member of the Helpline staff. Staff are available to provide help with mental health issues and suicide intervention around the clock.



DMH is partnering with AnComm's 'Talk About It' program which is an anonymous online messaging and emergency notification service to provide this new feature. Because of the stigma associated with mental health, many young adults are afraid or embarrassed to seek help. 'Talk About It' offers young adults a more comfortable and easy way to initiate contact with the Helpline while remaining anonymous.

"We believe young adults will gravitate toward this program because it is less intimidating than calling a Helpline and speaking directly with a staff member," said Shannon Rushton, DMH Director of Constituency Services. "The program will allow our Helpline staff to provide a service to the many teenagers in Mississippi who need to discuss mental health issues but may be ashamed to talk to someone. Our goal is to continue to shatter the silence surrounding mental health and create a new avenue of communication that will reach out to young adults."

Mental health issues are on the rise among young adults in Mississippi. In 2007, more than 50 young adults died by suicide. Many young adults are in need of someone to talk to who can provide support and resources. Individuals who access the 'Talk About It' program can discuss a variety of topics including depression, bullying, suicide, stress, grief, death of a loved one, relationship issues, self-esteem, physical/emotional/verbal abuse, cutting/self-injury, drugs, alcohol, and peer pressure among other topics.

Individuals can access the program by visiting www.dmh.ms.gov and clicking on the 'Talk About It' button on the home page. After creating an account, individuals can anonymously e-mail a Helpline staff or communicate via text messaging. The DMH Helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-877-210-8513.