

LENAWEE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY



THE GRAPEVINE

A WORD FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Despite all of the lobbying and letter writing by our consumers and staff alike, the Medicaid Expansion proposal was not included in the Governor's budget. This is not good news for us, as we continue to see so many people coming to our doors who have no insurance. The Medicaid Expansion program would have covered individuals who are at 133% of poverty. This is **not** just the unemployed. Many service workers are paid less than \$10/hour and would have been eligible for insurance.

Unfortunately, our budget deficit situation is serious due to these increasing numbers and high cost of medications. Non-emergent cases are being added to the waiting list for the time being. Hopefully this is only a temporary measure as we try to balance the budget against ever-increasing demands. We are watching closely the alternative "Healthy Michigan" legislation

being proposed and will continue to advocate for approval in whatever form it takes. Many thanks to all of the hardworking individuals who contacted their legislators—they definitely heard you.

There was one bright light in April—that was the ABW Open Enrollment period, and with the help of our Peer Support Specialists who assisted consumers in completing the necessary paperwork, we were able to add 92 consumers to this program—which is great news!

The establishment of the new Regional Entity, which will formalize the relationship we have with our partners in Monroe, Livingston and Washtenaw, will be finalized by July 1st. Things will be a little different going forward. The Regional Entity will give each "partner" an equal voice on the newly created Regional Entity Board. The



*Sandy Keener
Executive Director*

Regional Entity will be designed to support the local efforts of each CMH at the same time allowing our Region to speak with one voice to MDCH. There will not be much change in the day to day business.

We are very excited to be planning the integration of our meds clinic with the Family Medical Center, to be built on the site of the old New Focus Clubhouse. Construction is scheduled to begin this Fall and the clinic will take about 11 months to build. This one-stop medical facility will be a huge asset to this community, and can only improve the current services being provided.

June 2013

LCMHA website: www.lcmha.org

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SHARON SMITH RETIRES AFTER 18 YEARS WITH CMH

May 31st saw the retirement of a familiar face at CMH. Sharon has attended, coordinated, and taken minutes at many meetings in the community over the last 18 years.

A farewell lunch was held in her honor, and her coworkers

presented her with some very nice parting gifts, including some plants for her garden—where she will be spending a lot of time this summer! She is also planning on doing more traveling and visiting her daughter in Texas.

Happy Retirement Sharon!



**PLEASE SEE LCMHA
FY2012 ANNUAL
REPORT INCLUDED IN
THIS ISSUE**

STATE WALK-A-MILE IN MY SHOES RALLY

Last month was Mental Health Awareness month, and it was a smashing success for Lenawee County. The 8th of May was the 9th Annual Walk-A-Mile; a gathering at the capitol building for consumers state wide to represent their counties and be heard. Lenawee had 53 people in attendance, a much larger turnout than previous years. We heard inspiring speeches from a number of consumers, and celebrated health and recovery as individuals and as a community. State Rep. Nancy Jenkins and Senator Bruce Caswell were in attendance and graciously gave us the opportunity to discuss a number of topics with them, such as the debate on the expansion of Medicaid.



PATH TO WELLNESS CONFERENCE

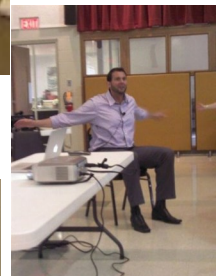
On May 22nd we were proud to host our second annual Path to Wellness and Recovery Conference. We were thrilled to see such a large number of people in attendance this year. The day opened with an energizing speech from Doug Gray, followed by a panel of Peers discussing recovery. A hearty baked potato bar was served for lunch by Coast to Coast Deli.

The afternoon was spent in break out sessions on treating and preventing addictions, and an “ask the experts” panel discussing mental health and recovery, nutrition and disability sensitivity. The day concluded with the drawings for some fabulous door prizes which were generously donated by local businesses in the community. Some of

the hot ticket items included Mud Hens tickets, pass books for Lenawee Transportation and Dial a Ride, prescription meds service from Wheelock’s and much more. Thank to such donations the cost of the conference was actually below our allotted budget, a true blessing during these tough times.

Though May has come and gone, we continue to keep our physical and mental health in mind as we prepare to enjoy the summer. Let us keep in the spirit of wellness and recovery as we continue on, and look forward to future success in our community gatherings.

*Mike Warfield,
Peer Support Specialist*



INTERCONNECTIONS DROP-IN CENTER

Inter-Connections has a lot going on as the summer approaches. Two of our staff have received special training to assist consumers and the community in their efforts to quit smoking. In addition, we are trying new things in our health initiative programs.

We just held our first cooking

contest. We used Flat-Out bread to come up with different meals and desserts. We had many different, great ideas. And everyone who participated had a blast being taste testers and judges!

We are planning a trip for members to Hayes State Park/Wamplers Lake in the near

future. More info will be available soon.

For more info about our programming and events, please call 517-265-9588 or stop by Inter-Connections at 110 W. Maumee St. in downtown Adrian.



NEW OPTIONS FOR QUITTING SMOKING AT INTER-CONNECTIONS

Mark Roman and Todd Bowen, both Peer Support Specialists at Inter-Connections, attended training to help the mental health community end smoking. The training was called CHOICES and stands for “Consumers Helping Others Improve their Condition by Ending Smoking.” This was a big step forward for the mental health community because people with severe mental illness have higher rates of heavy smoking. For example, 75% of people with schizophrenia smoke. The statistics are alarming—people with mental illness die on average 25 years before people who don’t have mental illness. Not to worry,

Todd and Mark are here to help. They learned valuable tools to help people quit smoking. They know that 70% of smokers reported wanting to quit someday. They also know that your chances of quitting are doubled if you use Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT). If you add in individualized support, which Inter-Connections offers, your chances of success double again. Combining NRT with individualized support will dramatically increase your chances of quitting. The tobacco industry is a \$32B industry. The savings on an individual level are staggering. For example, if you smoke 1

pack per day, at an average cost of \$7 per day, it adds up to nearly \$200 per month. There are plenty of incentives to quit smoking and now is the time. The staff at Inter-Connections is here to help reduce and eventually eliminate the staggering numbers associated with this terrible addiction. In addition to the Smoking Cessation Group offered at Inter-Connections on Tuesdays from 11:00-12:00, Mark and Todd will be available for tobacco awareness presentations in the community. For more info, contact them at 517-265-9588 or by email at interconnectionsdropin@yahoo.com.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME!

Recently I had the pleasure of assisting one of my consumers get new carpet and flooring put in her apartment in addition to all of the preparation for this “event.”

This included several days of helping her paint multiple rooms as she awaited the arrival of carpet and wood flooring along with sorting what items to keep, what to donate and what to simply throw away. With the help of many of my Case Managers, we assisted moving all of her belongings out of her apartment and then back in once everything was laid.

To say this was a “team effort” would be an understatement. For my staff, we jokingly say this type of work falls under the “other duties as assigned” category in our job description but really all who helped did so completely voluntarily and

with an open-heart knowing that we were helping someone achieve a long-awaited goal. To watch the joy in my consumer’s face of a “dream come true” will forever be emblazoned in all of our memories.

Throughout this process, my consumer gave repeated thanks and compliments, as did her family who live out of state and could not assist with this project. She has since written a note to our new Executive Director, along with hand-picked flowers from her flower garden, expressing her sincere thanks and sharing her view that the assistance she received from CMH staff was priceless.

For some, getting a fresh coat of paint and new carpeting may not be that big of a deal, but to her it was huge! She has

lived in this same apartment for at least 15 years and has made this house her home. She takes pride in her home and garden and I have never met a more creative person when it comes to home and lawn decorations. She has been waiting for this day for many years. She continues to beam when talking about her home and the joy she feels everyday when looking around her “new” home.

As for me and my staff who helped, we give thanks knowing that we were able to assist her in achieving this long-awaited goal. Like many things in life, it is these small acts of kindness that have a huge impact on others!!

*Judy Warren
MI Adult Supervisor*

WHAT IS ADDICTION?



No one can see addiction from the outside. There may be physical deterioration, lack of self-care, tremors or sores in the late stages but most addicts won't stand out in a crowd. So how can a person know if they or a loved one have crossed that invisible line into addiction?

In 1967 I discovered marijuana. The feeling of relaxation was such a relief from my normal hypersensitive state that it's almost impossible to describe. I had found the answer, the magic bullet that made me feel confident, sociable and care-free. The boyfriend who first introduced me to "weed" starting objecting to my increasingly frequent use: "It takes the edge off you." I brushed him off. Pot made me feel energized and motivated.



My choices in friends and activities seem to widen. The girl upstairs introduced me to her friends and for the first time I was included in a group's plans. These new friends were "normal". Here was camaraderie and closeness with the using crowd that I'd missed in my family. These party people were clever and fun. They became my family.

I smoked pot every day, all day long, and my budget for marijuana and alcohol was as much of a priority as rent. It never crossed my mind that I might "have a problem". My only problem was making sure of my supply. You were a good friend if I could count on you to help me out if I was low. In times of scarcity, I would drink or use any other drug available. "I'll meet God with a joint in my hand." That was my attitude.

CMH was still a big part of my life. I had been on meds since I was 12 and been in 3 different mental hospitals, plus jail. In the Day Treatment program for the 2nd time, it was just another meeting with another faceless psychiatrist when my world changed.

This doctor told me that binge drinking with my meds could kill me. What did he know? I'd been doing it for months already. When he cut me off the meds I left his office screaming and swearing.

The next 2 years were in and out of treatment centers for my addiction. The 3rd time I lasted the full 90 days and hooked onto people who were clean and sober when I got released. My life improved slowly but steadily. I went back to CMH, taking meds, completing the Day Treatment Program, and listening to the people who wanted to help me all along. Progress in recovery took patience, work, time, and the help of others.

If I came into the system today, medical marijuana would be affordable and readily available. The potency would be much higher. I may or may not receive some education or the suggestion I attend Engagement Group. There is only one thing I am absolutely sure of: I would not have the great life I have today if I had continued in my addiction.

In the March Grapevine, I shared some of my recovery story. My first boyfriend, my family, even some of my user friends had expressed concern for me. Why didn't I listen to these people? Why couldn't I see that

at age 32 I was just living day to day, rarely ever happy but always high, never really making any progress toward my hopes and dreams.

For me, drugs and alcohol were the solution, not the problem. Drugs and alcohol helped me cope with an impossibly harsh reality. I could not visualize myself ever functioning in the world clean and sober. My identity revolved around being a "partier". Anytime I had quit for even a day or two, I was profoundly miserable. What more proof did I need that drugs were nothing but a positive part of my life?

So I put up a defensive wall. If my use was questioned, my wall of defenses served me well. I would deny, ignore, rationalize, minimize, attack, distort, compare, or justify my use, and often cut the person out of my life completely. All my intelligence was focused on perfecting this wall. I believed my own lies. There was no way out.

Perhaps you know somebody who lives behind a wall like that. Long ago, you learned to back off from that wall. It just wasn't worth the trouble to talk with them about it. So we learn to accept them as they are or move on. We see the potential going to waste, the lack of growth, the lost opportunities. We see what might have been but are powerless to help.

In my years as an Addiction Counselor I rarely met anyone who came to the agency asking for help. We only ask for help as

WHAT IS ADDICTION....CONTD/...

a last resort. Whether it's the court, the family, the doctor or our Case Manager, there is usually some consequence folks are trying to avoid. The idea that alcohol and drugs could interfere with our lives is so foreign, our defenses so high, and the need to use so ingrained that sometimes it seems like a miracle that anyone recovers.

In spite of this, many people do recover, even those of us who are "Co-occurring", having both mental illness and substance use disorder. The prevailing treatment at this time addresses both problems at once since no matter which came first, poor mental health triggers the

addiction and the addiction interferes with mental health and medications.

In Engagement Group, we try to see our individual situations objectively. We express our thoughts and feelings openly, and are open to other views. We try to see the Big Picture, not just short-term solutions. We try to relate our experiences to the others, and in a safe place to put aside our defenses and see through other's eyes.

Nobody can force us to change. Change takes courage and effort. With marijuana in my life, I stayed "comfortably numb" (Pink Floyd). Without

marijuana I became discontent with my life, discontent enough to take actions long delayed to make my hopes and dreams reality. I discovered a whole world of people outside my protective wall. I also discovered that many of my fears were groundless, many of my perceptions distorted and I started to discover and re-align myself to this new world of experiences and feelings. I never know what the day will bring. It has been beyond my expectations.

For more information about available help, call Customer Services at 517-263-8905.



*Nilaine Gordon—
Peer Support
Specialist*

SHAKEN BY EVENTS?.....*TRY TO MOVE ON*

Are you going through an event that is traumatic—even hearing about one—can devastate you. From mass shootings to natural disasters, such episodes here and abroad pile on the stress. Learning how people respond and heal may help you cope.

Experiencing or witnessing a violent event can cause profound feelings of loss, fear, shock, helplessness, denial, survivor's guilt and ongoing flashbacks. Past victims of crime and abuse can suffer. So can people who subject themselves to endless media coverage of the incident. Sometimes we have strong reactions to events that didn't directly touch us or our families. Later, we may face lingering stress that affects our behavior, relationships and decision making. It's not uncommon for yearly anniversaries of an event to trigger stress and fear.

Personalities and events differ. Still, most people move through these stages as they recover from traumatic experiences:

- ◆ Accepting the event

- ◆ Grieving their losses
- ◆ Adjusting to a new reality
- ◆ Moving on from the event
- ◆ Having faith in a brighter future

People who take active steps to deal with the causes of their stress and emotions are likely to feel less hopeless and helpless.

If you have trouble coping with your feelings, these strategies may help:

- ◆ Take a break from watching, listening to or reading media reports about the event. Repeated exposure to death and destruction can heighten your response to it
- ◆ Keep the event in perspective. Focus on your daily routine and responsibilities. That can give you strength and purpose
- ◆ Learn the signs and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and other common reactions to extreme stress. That can help you realize you are not alone

- ◆ Talk with family, friends and survivors about your experience and your response to it
- ◆ Practice relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing, meditation, yoga and muscle relaxation exercises

Get help from a mental health professional if you experience any of the following persistent effects from a traumatic event:

- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Mood swings
- ◆ Sadness, hopelessness or guilt that leaves you unable to function
- ◆ Chronic headaches, stomach aches, colds, insomnia or balance problems
- ◆ Intense fear of being alone or of crowds

Everyone has a different way of reacting to and coping with traumatic events. Even so, being proactive and focusing on your abilities and strengths can help you heal after initial reactions of deep sadness.



Lenawee
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MISSION STATEMENT:

TO PROMOTE POSITIVE
OUTCOMES BY CREATING A
PATH TO RESILIENCE,
RECOVERY, WELLNESS AND
SELF-DETERMINATION

LENAWEE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH
AUTHORITY IS A MEMBER OF THE
CMHSP OF SE MICHIGAN



Bea Miller, CMH
Receptionist,
received her 20
year service
award from
Board Chair Deb
Bills at the March
Board Meeting



Marsha Dicenzo,
Agency Nurse,
received her 20
year service
award at the May
Board Meeting

Congratulations
to both!

USEFUL WEBSITES:

- www.aa.org—Alcoholics Anonymous
- www.na.org—Narcotics Anonymous
- www.smokefree.gov—Resources to help quit smoking



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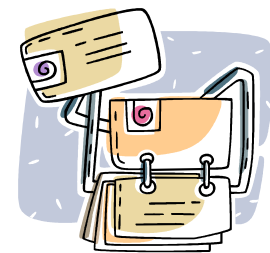
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