

the

GrapeVine

Lenawee Community
Mental Health Authority



Greetings from the Director

How was 2008 for you? Did the year fly by too quickly? Was it mostly a year of joy, prosperity and celebration? I suspect for most it was as usual, pretty much a mixed bag of highs and lows. However, I am sure that for some, perhaps many, the economy, personal losses, family crises or other situations have taken their toll, and reflections on the year will be clouded with remembrances of frustration and anxiety.

I am not a fan of trite sayings or clichés in response to difficult situations. However, I was struck by a quote that my son recently sent me. I thought it might be a source of hope in light of recent events in our world, the tough personal and economic times we all have faced this year, and something to lean on in the days ahead.

“No flowers wear so lovely a blue as those

which grow at the foot of the frozen glacier; no stars gleam so brightly as those which glisten in the polar sky; no water tastes so sweet as that which springs amid the desert sand; and no faith is so precious as that which lives and triumphs in adversity.” – Charles Haddon Spurgeon

I wish you all a safe and happy holiday....and a very Merry Christmas

Roger Myers

Community Forum

We would like to thank everyone who took time out of their busy schedules to participate in our Community Forum held October 29. It was a GREAT Success! We had 93 people attend the event and readily share their thoughts about LCMHA and the Lenawee County community. The information will assist us as we prepare our local and regional plans. The majority of the participants were LCMHA consumers who were willing to share their experiences, concerns and recommendations. We were pleased to be joined by staff, Board members and several of our Community Partners. We've placed the comments in categories or

“themes” to make it easier to address the concern. Some of the comments were repeated in many groups but we did not list them here (to save space and money). They are recorded on the master lists. This list has been shared with the LCMHA management team, the Consumer Advisory Committee and the LCMHA Board. We have also started the process of sorting out who will address each category or concern. The results of each step in this process will be published in the Grapevine. Here are your comments:

Community Forum Results October 2008

THEME 1: CURRENT POSITIVES STAFF

- Great referral source
- No staff turnover, so we have the same worker
- Available for crises and emergencies
- Get answers to questions; willing to find answers
- Offer transportation to events
- Independence is fostered
- Wonderful influence; I have got to know over the year.

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LCMHA Board
Judy Ackley—Chair
Debra Bills—Secretary
Scott Clites
Fred Gallagher
Mark Jackson
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Nate Smith
Jim VanDoren
Robert Wilson
William Zimmerman—Vice
Chair

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Of Interest
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- Creative staff that changed my life in a drastic, major way
- Non judging
- Help people
- Caring
- Supportive
- Help people stay independent
- Well trained staff
- Help people learn new skills.
- Consumers are in charge of their services
- Sincere

ENVIRONMENT

- Location
- People are well cared for and protected
- Dignity and respect
- Professionalism
- Treated like an individual, not a number
- Timely appointments
- Monitor in the waiting room
- Waiting room
- Good method of getting consumer feedback
- Diversity in population

PROGRAMS/SERVICES

- Making new friends
- Like the services
- Med review, getting weighed
- DBT
- Home services
- Inter-Connections
- Children's program
- Learning new skills like cooking
- Going out into community
- Extra programs and activities
- Interactions with Customer Services
- Recipient Rights
- *Grapevine*
- Casemanagement
- Nurses
- Psychiatrist
- New Focus
- Volunteer activities

LEADERSHIP

- CMH has a good Director and Board
- Visible leadership

THEME 2

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

- Suicide prevention
- Collaborative with Court and D.H.S., other agencies networking
- CMH cares about what community thinks through surveys, etc.

THEME 3

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Speakers bureau
- Good community outreach

IMPROVEMENTS/NEEDS

MENTAL HEALTH FOCUS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- More insurances that qualify for services
- More educational groups
- More peer support
- Quicker appointments with psychiatrists
- Provide services to all, not just some
- More information from doctors
- Outreach to rural areas
- Doctors
- Limit the number of times a consumer has to tell their story at intake
- Work to keep lines of communication open with consumers to learn of community experiences
- Have a local casemanager or CMH doctor on call 24/7
- More meetings at home
- More resident activities at residence
- Better flow/follow-up of paperwork
- More Speakers Bureau assignments
- Use peer supports more
- CSMs available when a person needs them
- Better understanding of what a Clubhouse does
- More activities
- More program time
- Not enough services for the community
- Not enough activities at the homes

- DD parent mentor and peer to peer
- More family centered
- MI model and DD model are different with supports and services (needs)-when and how they are determined
- More volunteer activities to help get a job
- Lesson on self esteem and personal issues
- More caseworkers
- Worry about someone needing services and how to respond to the need
- Not enough people getting involved from other agencies
- Need more assistance for people in jail who have a mental illness.
- Grief counseling
- Marriage and dating counseling
- Decrease meds as we get better so we can at least drive
- More responsibility for peer support specialist and understanding of what they represent
- More decision making for consumers
- More one on one with staff and more flexibility with staff time
- Aging populations lacks services

FINANCIAL STABILITY OF COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH; GENERAL FUND

- More funding to go out to eat sometimes
- More money
- See the budget bigger like it used to be
- Better pay for staff
- Pay for work at home

EDUCATION

- Confusing how to access services
- Understanding medical necessity from one consumer to another
- Confusion about the lack of CMH services in Trenton Hills and HOPE Center
- Wording of PCP paperwork



- needs to be more understandable
- List all existing supports and services
- More education about self determination to the community
- Families feel that CMH makes the decision about cuts and don't understand it comes from a higher level
- More education about MI
- Education for children with special needs

COMMUNITY FOCUSED CONCERNS

- Budget crises
- Economic conditions
- Lack of job opportunities
- As the money dries up, we are losing our ability to provide prevention
- Stigma-reactions from people
- More respect for CMH consumers in the community
- Lack of empathy from the community
- Eliminate staff bathrooms in city and county buildings
- More activities for kids 16 and younger
- More communications for schools about children with MI
- More child care services
- Future for young people
- No substance abuse treatment for children
- Lack of residential treatment for kids
- Some people are falling through the cracks
- More bingo
- More activities in evening
- Singles activities

TRANSPORTATION (There were multiple comments; the following describes the main concerns.)

- Lack of transportation on weekends and evening
- Limited hours
- Limited transportation options, especially to rural areas.

HOUSING

- Homelessness
- Lack of affordable housing

HEALTH CARE/INSURANCE/MEDICATION

- Prescription coverage for a finite length of time
- Our kids can't get meds when they are in residential
- Funding cost of medications
- Medical/dental not available
- Lack of Medicaid funded doctors

SAFETY

- More traffic crossing lights for pedestrians
- Better snow removal in winter
- Drug problem in Adrian
- Close up drug and crack houses

The Lenawee Community Collaborative (LCC) has recently reestablished the Access to Healthcare Committee. We will send the concerns listed under Health Care/Insurance/Medication to this group to address. We know that they are already looking at the issues regarding availability of Medicaid Doctors, dental services and the numbers of community members who have no insurance. We will report their findings and updates as they become available. The LCC also has a committee that is focused on homelessness. We will forward housing concerns to them. Finally, we will ask the LCC to take another look at the issue of transportation and the concerns that are listed under safety. Stay tuned, there is a lot more to come! Have a safe and happy holiday season!!

10 Ways to Serve Your Community This Holiday Season

The holiday season is often one of joy and anticipation as children look forward to visiting relatives, eating sweets, and opening presents. However there are a multitude of ways that children benefit from giving the gift of joy to their communities – a gift that doesn't cost a dime. Here are 10 simple and unique ways that children and their families can serve their communities:

1. Turn off the lights! – We use a lot of energy around the holiday seasons. Don't forget to turn off the decorative lights during the day or whenever you leave your home.

2. Invite a family to your home for the holidays– While donating food is always helpful, opening up your home to guests is a great way to spread joy and is much more personal. Invite them to join you in helping someone else.

3. Send holiday cards to the spouses and children of men and women in the military– We should never forget the sacrifices made by our enlisted men and women. A homemade card for their families shows that we're thankful for their sacrifice as well.

4. Bake cookies for your neighbors – They may or may not be in need, but we don't always know the value our gifts bring to others; and that's okay.

5. Share your stories – Get your class to write and illustrate a short story and donate them to a neighboring school or a homeless shelter; it's a nice twist on the pen pal letter.

6. Listen to stories – Spend some time with your grandparents, or other senior citizens in your community, and listen to the stories they tell; they'll appreciate the company and you will be surprised at their experiences.

7. Clear the way – Depending on your weather, volunteer to rake the leaves or shovel the snow at the home of an elderly neighbor.

7. Talk to a bell ringer – Even if you don't give money, ask the Salvation Army volunteers outside the mall or grocery store what they're doing; they will be thrilled to talk to you and may give you ideas about how you can serve your community.

9. Clean up – ask your teacher if he or she needs help cleaning up the classroom before winter break; they' will appreciate the opportunity to see their families a little earlier as well.

10. Think ahead – 2009 is almost here. Begin thinking about how you can help your community on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, a National day of service on January 19, 2009, or by planning a project for Global Youth Service Day, April 24-26, 2009.



The Domino Strategy™ for Responsible Alcohol Use

Siena Heights University and the community of Adrian, MI have been selected by FACE to serve as one of four pilot sites in the nation for implementing the Domino Strategy™ for Responsible Alcohol Use. The Domino Strategy™ is a marketing campaign that encourages people to count the number of alcohol beverages they consume, similar to the counting systems that are used in other public health initiatives.

This strategy is a harm reduction model that uses marketing strategies to relay its message including posters, bookmarks, magnets, key cards, Public Service



Announcements, billboards, etc. The domino is used as a symbol for counting drinks and helps to associate a specific icon with this prevention

strategy. This project also offers an alternative to abstinence only education while still promoting zero drinks for those under the age of 21. This prevention strategy is geared to decrease underage drinking and to increase responsible drinking behaviors for persons 21 years of age and older. Finally, this innovative approach seeks to educate the public on the “domino effects” of drinking, outlining the cause and effect of consuming large portions of alcohol.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this project, please feel free to contact the Lenawee Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition at (517)263-7861. For more information, please visit the Domino Strategy™ website at www.dominostategy.org.

Holiday Stress

By Trudi Grossman

November marks the beginning of turkeys, Christmas shopping, cold weather and the dreaded seasonal stress that seems to accompany much of these preparations. Whether you're with your family or celebrating alone, holiday stress can come in many forms: feeling isolated, overburdened, lack of money, family issues and much more. Trying to make the perfect holiday impression comes with an avalanche of expectations that no one person can fulfill.

Keeping calm and cool during that holiday rush can be done by thinking ahead. Surround yourself with family and friends and let any little squabbles float away in exchange for making special memories that will last forever. Do a little at a time, shop ahead, breathe, and understand that perfection is rarely achieved and highly overrated. Look at the big picture, and understand your limitations and strengths. Sometimes just some eggnog and good old fashioned games with someone is great holiday fun. If you find yourself alone during the holidays check with your local community center or newspaper about activities and events that you can attend to make new friends or reconnect with old ones. The wonderful thing about holidays is that there are plenty of organizations and people that welcome people into their homes, churches and hearts during the holiday season.

Christmas is not all about getting presents and spending money. My favorite gifts are the ones my sons made for me and can be hung on the tree or used as décor in my home. These are small presents made with minimal money, but warm my heart every time I look at them.

Please reach out during the holidays if grief or stress is taking its toll on you. You can call Lenawee Community Mental Health Authority Customer Service at 263-8905 for help and guidance.

LCMHA Staff Updates



- Susan Bradley 20 years of service November 2008
- Kathy Illenden 20 years of service November 2008

PARITY FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

The Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act) of 2008 (2008 Parity Act), signed into law on October 3, 2008, significantly expands upon the mental health protections of the Mental Health Parity Act of 1996 that have been in effect until this year. The Act will protect over 113 million people across the United States, including the 82 million individuals enrolled in Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) group health insurance plans who are not protected by State parity laws.

Details are available on the website www.TheNationalCouncil.org (Once at the site, type in “parity fact sheet” in the search box.)



Scrapbook



Doris Ostrander was the 2008 Sharing Hope Award Recipient. Doris is a Peer Support Specialist at the Inter-Connections Drop In Center as well as the Assistant Director. She is involved in many committees at LCMHA as well as through our Affiliation. Doris works tirelessly to help reduce stigma and promote recovery for all persons with mental illness and developmental disabilities.



Karaoke was a highlight of the activities enjoyed by all who attended the Focus Hope Fun Festival for the community sponsored by Hope Center, LCMHA, Inter-Connections Drop In Center and New Focus Clubhouse.




Bob Wilson reads his poem at the Sharing Hope Talent show. Watch future Grapevines for the poem to be published.



Roger Myers, Executive Director of LCMHA, presents Doris Ostrander with the 2008 Sharing Hope Award.



CMH staff donate lots of food to the St. Joe's Food Pantry.



Save the
Date

- **January 29**—LCMHA Board Meeting
- **February 26**—LCMHA Board Meeting



WORTHY WEBSITES

www.michigan.gov/healthcarehelp

The link to MDCH website that shows: *How Can I Get Free or Low Cost Health Care for Me & My Family? and much more.*

www.lcmha.org

website for services and resources, upcoming events, past Grapevine newsletters, Recipient rights and more..

www.TheNationalCouncil.org
National Council for Community Behavioral HealthCare

Do you have something interesting you would like to share? Contact Customer Services with your ideas, poems,

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Don't forget to contact LCMHA**

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