



# Coalition Briefs

A SEMI-MONTHLY UPDATE ON COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH IN NEW YORK

## More managed care help

Managed Care Technical Assistance Workshops resume on October 27th with Michael Kraten. The first session will be held at the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, Inc. at 281 Park Ave. South, Room A. Focusing on financial management, the morning session will run from 9:30am to 12:30pm and the afternoon will continue from 1:30pm-4:30pm. The afternoon session will focus on practical, hands-on information including the design and use of tools for agency implementation. This year the basic workshops are free, however, space is limited. Please RSVP prior to October 22nd by calling Pat Goldstein at 212/586-4555 or faxing us at 212/541-6183. □

## Welfare reform hearing

The impact of the Welfare Reform Act of 1997 on people with disabilities will be the subject of a hearing sponsored by the New York State Assembly Standing Committee on Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities in conjunction with the Committee on Social Services and the Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse on Friday, November 6<sup>th</sup>. The hearing will take place at 270 Broadway in Manhattan and will focus on. The purpose of the hearing is "to assess whether the implementation of welfare reform has proceeded in a way which accommodates the special needs of persons with disabilities, and provides the opportunities and support necessary to offer those persons increased access to employment." Questions and requests for more information should be directed to Legislative Associate Mary Coppola at (518) 455-4371. □

## Bye-bye Barbara

Dr. Barbara DeBuono, New York State's Health Commissioner is stepping down late this year to work for the New York Presbyterian Hospital System. According to Crain's New York Business, two leading contenders for her post have emerged: Dr. Russell Bessette, a plastic surgeon from Buffalo who chairs the New York State Public Health Council and Dr. Charles Aswad, chairman of the Medical Society of New York State. □

## Membership meetings

Concerned about the quality of care for people with serious mental illness under managed care, Coalition members are pursuing dialogue with two branches of government with responsibility for this population.

The Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) is in the midst of a readiness review, to determine whether New York City may proceed to the mandatory phase of managed care for clients eligible for the basic health plan. In an October 22 meeting with Coalition's membership, HCFA officials will speak about the progress of the review and explain the nature of the process they are directing. Also invited to attend the meeting are representatives of the City Department of Mental Health's Division of Healthcare Access and the Managed Care Office of the NYS Department of Health.

Following up on September's membership meeting with SOMH managed care officials who outlined program and implementation plans, Barry Brauth, SOMH Director of the Bureau of Financial Planning will talk with Coalition members on November 16 about Special Needs Plan (SNP) financing models and the fiscal assumptions that underlie the State's approach. □

## "Best Practices" is great

"Discovering and Implementing Best Practices for Behavioral Healthcare" was an informative, educational and exciting conference. With four plenary sessions and two workshop periods including four seminars each, a broad range of issues was discussed. The emphasis was on practical applications of service delivery concepts. The real potency of the day came from the strength of the presenters. Although all of the speakers were excellent, some speeches were exceptional. Coalition Executive Committee member Dr. Mildred Allen's talk on "Multi-Cultural Issues in Community Mental Health" captivated an audience that could easily have been distracted by the lovely lunch. Michael Kraten, John Mercurio, Simon Budman and Kathleen Sciacca presented successful workshops. The conference capped a successful collaboration with the New York and National Councils for Community Behavioral Healthcare. □

## Don't be left outside the tent

On November 12 The Coalition will host a performance of the Big Apple Circus. The non-profit performing arts group has traveled the entire world to bring a unique brand of circus performers to New York. Tickets are going fast. Don't miss out on the opportunity to enjoy a marvelous circus and help promote community mental health all at once. Inquiries should be directed to Judeth Podell at The Coalition. □

## City celebrates Jody Silver

Community Access's Jody Silver, a recipient of The Coalition's Consumer Leadership Award, will be among the honorees on October 21<sup>st</sup> when City Comptroller Alan Hevesi celebrates disability awareness month with an awards ceremony in Council Chambers at City Hall. RSVPs are required. Call (212) 669-3089. □

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## — Help Wanted —

**Paul J. Cooper Center for Human Services, Inc.**, Mental Health Clinic is seeking the following:

Clinical Supervisor for Mental Health Clinic: CSW with five years of supervisory experience. Familiar with OMH and managed care regulations. Bilingual (Spanish/French Creole) preferred. Competitive salary and benefit package.

Fee-for-service Certified Social Worker to work seven to twenty hours per week to provide individual, group, and family therapy. Bilingual (Spanish/French Creole) preferred.

Interested parties should send resumes to: **Paul J. Cooper Center for Human services, Inc.**, 1117 Eastern Parkway, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Brooklyn, New York 11213. Attention: Personnel Department. Fax # 718-467-3087. □

## Children's Mental Health

At its first fall meeting on October 8<sup>th</sup>, the Children's Mental Health Alliance of New York City (CMHA) examined the many issues impacting on the delivery of mental health services to the children and adolescents of this City. First, although NYS Office of Mental Health (SOMH) is still analyzing the numerous responses received to its Request for Information (RFI) on Mental Health Special Needs Plans (SNPs) for Children and Adolescents, the following trends have already become apparent: (1) There was much interest in blended funding, and SOMH is exploring possible implementation of blended funding for at least one of the three SNPs. (2) Many respondents voiced serious concern about the cost of the benefit package outlined in the RFI, and (3) many also suggested the need for a restructuring or redefinition of who will and will not be eligible for such a SNP. For further information, contact Marilyn Kneeland at 212-586-4555x14. □

## New use for Bellevue

Crain's Health Pulse reported early this week that New Jersey developer Castle Senior Living has proposed to turn the Bellevue men's shelter into a \$50 million assisted living complex. Under the plan the 320,000 square-foot shelter at 30<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> would be leased from the City. The facility would include a 175 unit assisted living facility with a portion of the units allocated for seniors with depression or dementia. □

## Member notes

**ARMI** has found a unique way to quash neighborhood opposition to community residences. In addition to inviting neighbors to visit their facilities, they hire them. At Independence House in Washington Heights, 75% of the 12 member staff are longtime neighborhood residents. At Garden House in the East Village, nearly half of the staff walks to work. In addition to eliminating community objections, **ARMI** has discovered that it is a great way to find committed employees. □

Queens Borough President Claire Shulman and Rev. Floyd Flake were among the community leaders that joined **Queens Child Guidance Center's** Board President Hank Aufarth and Executive Director Sandy Hagan for the grand opening of the newly renovated South Jamaica Clinic. The newly enlarged facility will house an expanded after-school remedial reading program, intensive counseling for troubled teens and children and other programs. The facility had reached its capacity of 800 families per year, but it is hoped that the number of families served will now increase substantially. □

## Public hearing on disabilities

The National Council on Disability (NCD), an independent federal agency, will conduct a hearing in Albany on November 20 to discuss policy issues impacting people with psychiatric disabilities. The hearing will be held in Albany, beginning at 8:30 a.m. and will address a myriad of issues related to people with psychiatric disabilities. Among the topics on which NCD is soliciting testimony are: the impact of managed care on people with psychiatric disabilities, the implications of the federal civil rights laws on people with psychiatric disabilities and access to affordable community-based housing for people with psychiatric disabilities. For more information, contact Stacey Brown at (202) 272-2004 or check NCD's website at [www.ncd.gov](http://www.ncd.gov). □

## Voluntary enrollees are healthier

A recent study performed by the Commonwealth Fund showed that voluntary enrollees in Medicaid managed primary care are less likely to report that they are unhealthy than their counterparts in traditional fee-for-service Medicaid. They were only half as likely to have had a recent serious illness, and two thirds as likely to report their health as fair or good. Voluntary enrollees are more likely to be living with a partner, younger and twice as likely to be working full-time. This data indicates that cost per beneficiary and utilization will likely be higher when Medicaid managed care becomes mandatory. □

## Email the editor

Submissions for Coalition Briefs are accepted by email. Member agencies that wish to publish a want ad or a member note can email submissions to [jfrubin@cvmha.org](mailto:jfrubin@cvmha.org). Submissions are also accepted by fax at (212) 541-6183. □

## Upcoming Events

October 22	Membership meeting at CVMHA
October 27	Managed Care Technical Assistance at Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies
October 28	Government Relations Committee at ICL
November 11	Veteran's Day
<b>November 12</b>	<b>Big Apple Circus</b>
November 16	Membership Meeting at PRFI