



Coalition Briefs

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

Celebrating Barry Roff's life

On Friday, September 25, 1998, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. The Coalition will host a Memorial Celebration in honor of our beloved late Treasurer, Barry Roff. The event will be held in the Auditorium at Hunter College School of Social Work, 129 East 79th Street (between Lexington and Park Avenues). Please RSVP to The Coalition at 212-586-4555x16 or by e-mail to mailbox@cvmha.org if you plan to attend. □

SOMH at membership meeting

As planning for Adult Mental Health Special Needs Plans (SNPs) moves forward, two officials of the NYS Office of Mental Health - Barry Brauth, Director, Bureau of Financial Planning, and Keith Simons, Director, Bureau of Adult SNPs will come to The Coalition's Membership Meeting on September 24th to bring us up to date on statewide SNP developments and to answer questions of Coalition member agencies. Please let us know if you are planning to attend. □

New SNP team

Integrated Behavioral Health Services IPA (IBHS) and New York Presbyterian Healthcare Network have signed a letter of agreement to apply jointly to become a New York City mental health special needs plan. They will respond jointly to an RFP to establish a Medicaid managed care plan for adults with serious mental illnesses. "They have a very good hospital based network and we have a very good community based network so together we have a good basis for a plan," said IBHS President Murray Itzkowitz. □

MAXIMUS contracting with CBOs for Medicaid managed care outreach and enrollment

MAXIMUS, the enrollment broker for NYC's upcoming mandatory Medicaid managed care program, wants to partner with community-based organizations that are already working with Medicaid consumers for its outreach, education and enrollment services. Any CBO which provides health or Medicaid services and/or has a direct or indirect interest in the ownership of an organization which is a health plan or health or Medicaid services provider may contract with MAXIMUS only for space utilization for outreach and enrollment activities. Other CBOs are eligible to contract also for staff to conduct educational sessions, assist consumers in completing enrollment applications, assist in training employ-

ees of other CBOs, or arrange for and conduct other outreach activities. The projected contract rate is \$25 per hour.

The time frame for indicating interest is extremely short. If your CBO is interested in applying for such a contract, fax the MAXIMUS application form to 703-748-4353 or mail it to Alyce Bodoff, MAXIMUS Office Center, 1356 Beverly Road, McLean, VA 22101 by *September 29, 1998*. The due date was originally September 22, but a concerted lobbying effort by our own Marilyn Kneeland got the date pushed back a week. To obtain an application form, call The Coalition or contact MAXIMUS at 703-734-4200. □

GORR upheld narrowly

An appellate court ruled by a 3-2 margin that the New York State Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) did not have standing to challenge Governor Pataki's Executive Order #20, which established the Governor's Office of Regulatory Reform (GORR). The order "usurped the policy-making powers of the legislature and the role of citizens in shaping the regulations which flow from public policy" according to NASW. Because two justices dissented on a question of law, NASW and the other plaintiffs are permitted to appeal to the State Court of Appeals. The appeal of the suit Rudder et al v. Pataki will likely be heard early next year. □

Better your practices

There is still space available for The Coalition's fall conference. **Discovering and Implementing Best Practices for Behavioral Healthcare** is being co-sponsored by the New York and National Councils of Community Behavioral Healthcare. The conference will be held on October 13 at the Sheraton New York. Call Pat Goldstein at The Coalition for more information. □

Independant review law

Early this month Governor Pataki signed a bill allowing HMO members access to external reviews of coverage decisions made by their insurers. The legislation is scheduled to go into effect on July 1, 1999. □

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Member Notes

F.E.G.S. has opened an Intensive Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program (IPRT) for adolescents in Far Rockaway. The program, located next to the **F.E.G.S.** Far Rockaway Counseling center, is supported by Reinvestment funds and is the first adolescent IPRT license issued by the New York State Office of Mental

Community Access is pleased to present Studio 305, an exhibition of consumer produced artwork. The exhibition is made up entirely of works produced by **Community Access** members. The show will run through October 18th at Margaret Bodell Gallery Ltd. at 13 East 7th Street (between 2nd and 3rd Avenues). For more information contact the gallery at (212) 477-1820. □

Possible viral cause of depression

Reports on the CNN website indicate that scientists have discovered that there may be a viral cause for severe depression. Researchers at the Robert Koch institute in Berlin have identified the Borna virus as one possible cause, along with stresses and genetics, of the illness.

The Borna virus was first identified in horses in the late 19th century near the town of Borna, Germany. The animals got sick, stopped eating, walked around in circles and in some cases even took their own lives. The virus was discovered in the region of the horses' brains that controls emotions. Scientists have now discovered a similar viral strain in humans who suffer from severe depression.

An anti-viral drug, amantadine, which is used to treat Parkinson's disease, has been found to offer relief to some sufferers. Clinical trials are now underway at the Free University of Berlin. American scientists have indicated that the early results are encouraging, but inconclusive. Results from the first clinical trials in Berlin are expected later this year. □

Help Wanted

Beacon of Hope House, a provider of residential services to mentally ill adults is seeking the following professional: Program manager - requires an MSW and 3 years supervisory experience in a residential setting. Will be responsible for directing a 65 bed SRO, including supervision of staff and implementation of programming. Knowledge of entitlement system required. Experience with mental health, homeless and MICA population necessary. Requires some evenings. 24 hour beeper coverage. Bilingual (Spanish) a plus. Send resume with salary requirements to: Director of Personnel, 116 East 16th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10003.

Children's Mental Health Alliance

On Thursday, October 8th, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. the Children's Mental Health Alliance for New York City will convene its first 1998-99 meeting to receive current information from SOMH on mental health SNPs for Children and Adolescents and to plan advocacy strategy on children's mental health issues for the upcoming year. RSVP to Suri Duitch at Citizens' Committee for Children, 212-673-1800x18. □

Venture House, an innovative psychiatric rehabilitation program based on the clubhouse model, seeks a highly motivated, energetic, creative individual to become a part of our team. As a generalist staff worker in our community you would provide assistance to people with mental illness in regard to entitlements, advocacy for needed services, reporting to State and City agencies, management of transitional employment placements, job coaching and work with members of **Venture House** on unit, agency and program tasks.

Venture House members and staff work in partnership to run the program. The clubhouse is work oriented and employment focused. Staff need to be flexible and believe in recovery. BA preferred. **Venture House** provides health and pension benefits. Salary is in the low to mid-twenties. Venture House is open 7 days a week and staff rotate evening and weekend hours. Please send your resume to Ray Schwartz by October 15, 1998. 89-25 Parsons Blvd. Jamaica, NY 11432. □

State property for sale

At a September 2 meeting, officials of the New York State Office of Mental Health indicated that buildings on seven State psychiatric campuses are going to be offered for sale. Property at St. Laurence, Pilgrim, Hudson River, Mohawk Valley, Central Islip, Middletown and Binghamton will be sold to help reduce debt service costs. Officials indicated that this will not have any Reinvestment implications, but we'll keep you posted. □

Upcoming Events

September 21-22	Rosh HaShana - Coalition building closed
September 24	Managed Care Technical Assistance Seminar at NYANA
September 25	Coalition Membership Meeting at CVMHA
September 30	Memorial Celebration for Barry Roff at Hunter College
October 5-6	Yom Kippur - Coalition building closed
October 8	Sukkot - Coalition building closed
October 8	Managed Care Kickoff Day at CVMHA
October 13	Coalition-NYSCCBH Conference: Discovering and Implementing Best Practices for Behavioral Healthcare . Call The Coalition for reservation information; CEU credits are available.
October 15	Finance Committee at CVMHA
	Board of Directors at CVMHA
November 12	Big Apple Circus