



Coalition Briefs

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

Mayor presents budget proposal

On Tuesday April 18th Mayor Giuliani released his proposal for a \$36.7 billion City budget. The plan calls for the restoration of some of the cuts he proposed in his January budget modification, but not those to the mental hygiene budget. The \$3.05 million in cuts of City Council additions to the budget remain in the \$545.1 million proposal for the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services (DMHMRAS)

The only substantial addition to mental health services is \$6.7 million to implement the Assisted Outpatient Treatment law signed by governor Pataki last year. This money will fund

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Fares finally fair

After a decade and a half and the near-unanimous passage of two bills, people with psychiatric disabilities will no longer face discrimination on the Metropolitan Transit Authority. On Monday, April 17th Governor Pataki signed a heavily amended ½ Fare Fairness bill. The compromise agreement gives the MTA 90 days (until July 17th) to implement the half fare program on New York City Transit, and the MTA's commuter railroads, the Long Island Rail Road and the Metro North Rail Road. The only shortcoming of the bill is that the half fare will not be available to people with psychiatric disabilities during rush hours on the commuter railroads. This is consistent with the current program for people with physical disabilities.

The Coalition will now turn its attention to implementation and working with the MTA to ensure that the reduced fare program is implemented in accordance with the bill that Gov. Pataki has signed and in accordance with the legislative intent. *Briefs* readers are encouraged to call Assemblyman Brennan and Senator Padavan to thank them for their efforts on behalf of this historic legislation. ©

State budget process breaks for holidays

Barreling toward a resolution the State budget process has been stopped in its tracks, not by partisan infighting or debates over out-year spending, but by the Easter/Passover break. All of the conference committees made their reports to the General Budget Conference Committee before the break, which began on April 18th. The Senate will return May 1st, and the Assembly will likely do the same but Speaker Silver has asked them to remain on call during the week following Easter. Staff people will of course be working during the week to iron out the details and get the budget language drafted and printed.

The Joint Conference Subcommittee on Mental Hygiene began its work with \$25 million on the table. Recognizing that more was needed to meet the pressing needs of the community, Assembly Mental Health Chair James Brennan led the effort to secure extra resources for the table. Division of the Budget's Frank Maresca and Executive Program Associate Barbara Cohn, in an effort to support an expansion in children's services and address the inflationary needs of the sector, helped secure the additional funding to bring the total available to \$33 million. Highlights of the Joint Conference Subcommittee on Mental Hygiene report

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SNP reauthorization taken from budget process

The chairs of the legislative mental health committees Assemblyman Jim Brennan and Senator Tom Libous did not want a major change in the State's mental health system to go forward without an opportunity for further review, so they worked together to separate the mental health Special Needs Plans (SNPs) from the budget process. If the reauthorization of the mental health SNPs had been done as a part of the budget there would have been very little chance for amendments to the bill. Because of concern about issues related to the rate and benefit package, UJA-Federation, Greater New York Hospital Association and The Coalition worked together to separate the SNP from the budget process.

The legislature now has until June 30th to consider changes to the SNP design before reauthorizing. The Coalition looks forward to the opportunity to work with our elected leaders to make the changes necessary to ensure SNP viability. ©

Kenneth Joseph "Frances" Olivero: 2.16.1950-4.15.2000

The mental health community lost a leader and a friend this weekend. Long-time Fountain House member and ½ Fare Fairness Bill campaign leader Frances Olivero lost his battle to cancer on Saturday April 15th. Frances will be badly missed, but will live on in the MTA ½ Fare Bill signed by Governor Pataki on Monday. Frances will also be honored for his advocacy efforts by an Assembly proclamation introduced by Mental Health Committee Chair James Brennan. Funeral services will be held on Wednesday April 19th at the Buckley Funeral Home, 445 W. 43rd Street. Viewing will be from 6-7:30 p.m. with a service to follow. Frances is survived by his mother, Eileen Dickson and his three siblings. ©

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— Help Wanted —

State budget

to the General Conference Committee include:

- \$6.8 million for a 1.5% COLA;
- \$2.5 million for an \$8-9 per visit for non-COPs agencies;
- \$7.6 million to fully restore cut shared staff positions;
- \$2.85 million to increase children's treatment capacity and
- \$1.3 million for rehabilitation and peer support services.

When the legislature reconvenes the General Conference Committee will have a final meeting followed by a legislative vote and a gubernatorial signature. This should take no more than a week or two. ©

City budget

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the borough-wide AOT teams at Bellevue, Woodhull, Elmhurst and North Central Bronx hospitals.

Of concern to the mental health community is a plan to impose \$3.05 million cuts to DMHMRAS every year until 2004. Last year's budget spared DMHMRAS from any responsibility to close out-year budget gaps, but not so this year. ©

Honoring Michael Winerip

New York Times Magazine columnist Michael Winerip is one of the mental health community's strongest allies in the press. His critically acclaimed 1994 book "9 Highland Road" remains a standard of excellence in the world of community mental health based non-fiction. His work in the wake of the Andrew Goldstein/Kendra Webdale tragedy helped raise public awareness of the needs of people with mental illness and moved policy makers. The Coalition will be honoring Mr. Winerip with our Mental Health Award on June 15th. Please join us. Contact Judeth Podell at x18 for information. ©

Free legal help available

The Urban Justice Center's Mental Health Legal Clinic is Now Offering legal assistance on eviction prevention, SSDI/SSI, public assistance, & managed care at the Muhlenberg Residence. All services are free. Hours are Tues. 10am-12pm @ 510 Atlantic Ave. Holland House clinic is open on Thur. 10am-12pm @ 351 W. 42nd St. Please call 212-533-0540x368 with questions or to schedule an appointment in advance w/ a Legal Clinic staff member. ©

New York Service Program for Older People, Inc. (SPOP) seeks Assistant Director of Adult Day Care. FT Social Worker to develop innovative Geriatric ADC program for dually diagnosed dementia/mental illness. Req. CSW & supervisory exp. in day care, dementia or psych. Competitive salary, exc. benefits. Fax resume to **SPOP** @ (212) 787-1230, or mail to **SPOP**, 188 W. 88th St., NY, NY 10024. ©

Hudson Guild seeks Director of Resource Development & Public Relations. Working w/ the ED, Board of Trustees, development staff & consultants, you'll be responsible for creating & implementing a fund development & PR plan to increase private funding & enhance visibility. Min. 5 yrs. fund development leadership exp. Exp. in PR, communications, or marketing in a non-profit environment desired. Salary \$80-\$100K based on qualifications. Please fax cover letter and resume by May 1st to: Lois A. Mirabella, Search Consultant (203) 333-4227. ©

The **Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service** in New York City is seeking a Director of Foundation and Government Funding. The outstanding candidate will be a team player and bring demonstrated skills in communication, critical thinking, conceptualization of social service programs and supervision. Successful experience in managing ambitious public and foundation grant-seeking required. Interested candidates should forward resumes to Eva Toth, DRG, 104 East 40th Street, Suite 304, NY, NY 10016, FAX (212) 983-1687 or e-mail etoth@drgnyc.com. ©

Venture House seeks Generalist Staff Worker to join team at innovative psychiatric rehab. program. Will provide assistance to people w/ mental illness in regard to entitlements, advocacy, reporting to State & City agencies, management of transitional employment placements, job coaching & work on unit, agency, & program tasks. Must be flexible & believe in recovery. BA pref. Health & pension benefits offered. Salary is low to mid 20s. Staff rotate evening & weekend hrs. Please send resume to Ray Schwartz, **Venture House**, 150-10 hilside Ave., Jamaica, NY 11432, by May 12th. ©

Upcoming Events

April 20	Passover: Coalition building closed
April 25	MICA Committee at Cumberland
April 26	Passover: Coalition building closed
April 27	Membership meeting at CVMHA
May 5	Children's Committee at CVMHA
May 11	Finance Committee at CVMHA
	Executive Committee at CVMHA
May 16	PLC*: Converting the Clinical and Corporate Culture
May 22	MICA Committee at The Bridge
May 25	Membership meeting at CVMHA
May 29	Coalition closed in honor of Memorial Day
June 15	Mental Health Awards at Pfizer
June 20	New York Work Exchange conference: <i>The Mission for the 21st Century: Employment Services for People with Mental Illness</i> at the Brooklyn Marriott

*PLC = Professional Learning Center