



Coalition Briefs

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

To be Frank...

A fixture of numerous mental health budget discussions, Frank Maresca, recently retired from his position as Chief Budget Examiner in the Division of the Budget. His retirement became effective late last month.

Maresca is a veteran of such major mental health campaigns as Reinvestment the recently approved 3% COLA and 10% Medicaid fee increase which will begin on December 1. His humor and budget mastery will be missed.

Sadly, the Mental Hygiene unit headed by Maresca will cease to
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CQC releases 'Layering' report

In late August, the New York State Commission on the Quality of Care for the Mentally Disabled released a new report on the services available in adult homes.

Titled, "Adult Homes Serving Residents with Mental Illness: A Study on Layering of Services," the report is, in part, a response to an April 2002 exposé in *The New York Times*. The series of articles generated a great deal of pressure on Albany by describing the poor care received by residents of adult homes, the poor oversight of services, and the high cost to the public.

Since May 2002, the Commissioner of Health has been engaged in a discussion with a group of medical and mental health providers, adult home proprietors, residents, advocates and many others in an attempt to solve the systemic problems. The 'Layering' Report is designed to inform this
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The WORKbook arrives!

After much anticipation, approximately 15,000 copies of "The WORKbook, a Guide to New York City's Mental Health Employment Programs" were recently distributed to programs and individuals throughout the mental health and social service communities. Designed for individuals who receive or may benefit from employment services in the mental health system, the guide describes the range of mental health employment programs in New York City and helps consumers to make direct and informed choices about which program is right for them.

The WORKbook provides a

comprehensive listing of 115 mental health programs in New York City that assist people in attaining their career goals and aspirations. Information is available on different program approaches and services, and details specific program features such as admission criteria, participation requirements and descriptions of training components. A section entitled "Going to Work," offers helpful hints about Social Security benefits, the Ticket to Work program, VESID and other resources. Also included is a list of questions that individuals may want to ask providers when choosing an employment program.

To request copies of the WORKbook for mailing or pick-up, please contact Deborah Short at 212-742-1122, or email her at dshort@nyworkexchange.org. The WORKbook will also soon be
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Calendar of events

NY Work Exchange Benefits
Breakfast with Edwin Lopez-Soto
September 10, 9:00 AM
Co-Occurring Disorders Committee
September 10, 2:00 PM
HIPAA Gap Analysis with Robert Belfort
September 13, 9:30
ICI Employment Specialist Training
September 17-20, 9:00-5:00
Membership Meeting and welcome reception for Exec. Dep. Comm. for Men. Hygiene Dr. Lloyd Sederer
September 26 3:30 PM

BIG APPLE CIRCUS NOVEMBER 13

All meetings are at The Coalition unless otherwise noted. Please call for more information or to RSVP.

HIPAA is here

On September 13, 2002, Robert Belfort, Esq., who led the Coalition's highly successful HIPAA Education Seminars, will lead a HIPAA review session. Only those agencies who have purchased the Gap Analysis Questionnaire are eligible to attend.

The Questionnaire is a 400-question instrument designed to illustrate the gaps between current business practices and HIPAA requirements. It can still be purchased by contacting the Coalition. All 'Covered Entities' according to HIPAA must either comply with the Transactions &
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Maresca

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exist as an independent unit. Instead, it will be merged with the Health and Environmental Affairs unit led by Dennis Norton. Effective September 1, the merged unit became the Health and Mental Hygiene unit.

While Norton does not have direct experience in mental hygiene issues—his old unit dealt with such topics as nursing homes and Medicaid—the new Assistant Chief Budget Examiner who will cover mental health, Mike Attwell, previously worked in mental hygiene.

We wish Frank well in all his future endeavors and look forward to working with our new colleagues! □



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'Layering' report

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discussion by presenting a detailed analysis of the different publicly-funded services available to residents.

The sad conclusion of the report is that services are so fragmented and so poorly coordinated among the different service sectors as to diminish the care received by consumers.

The report can be downloaded from the CQC web site at <http://www.cqc.state.ny.us/publications/pubmhcrs.htm>. □

HIPAA

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Code Sets rule, or submit a request for delay by October 16th.

Almost all agencies that bill Medicaid, Medicare or third party insurers for services will be affected by HIPAA. In addition, HHS finalized the Privacy rule in August.

An analysis of this rule as well as many other documents on HIPAA compliance are available on the Coalition's website, www.cvmha.org/policy/HIPAA or call Gilad Rosner at 212-742-1600x210 for further information. □



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available online at the New York Work Exchange website, www.nyworkexchange.org.

Program of Study

Summer is officially over as the New York Work Exchange kicks off its Fall/Winter Program of Study with "Professional Development for Employment Specialists," to be held on September 17-20th, 2002. This four-day comprehensive training is ideal for direct service staff and will explore the multiple roles and duties required of an employment specialist from career planning to job development and job retention supports. Experts Colleen Condon and Cecilia Gandolfo will provide participants with the practical skills and knowledge needed to provide effective employment services to individuals with psychiatric disabilities.

In addition, on September 10th, the Work Exchange will begin the "Benefits Breakfast Series," to be held the second Tuesday of every other month. This series of working meetings is designed to offer technical assistance to individuals assisting consumers with benefits issues and navigating the Social Security system. Edwin J. Lopez-Soto, Esq. will facilitate.

Other Fall workshops include "Culture Brokering: Building Cross-Cultural Skills for Rehabilitation Providers," and "Employment Support Services and Clinical Services: How do they fit together?" The Program of Study curriculum is designed to address the knowledge

and critical skills needed by providers, peers and advocates in their efforts to help people with mental illness acquire and sustain meaningful work.

To request a copy of the Program of Study, please contact Deborah Short at 212-742-1122 x235 or email her at dshort@nyworkexchange.org.

VESID Application Amended

On August 29, 2002 the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) released materials announcing several alterations to the request for application (RFA) for Supported Employment Program contracts.

Changes include new contract rates and stipulations about who can apply for the new rates. The due date for the application has been extended to September 25th, 2002. An additional bidders' conference will be held in Albany on September 10th, 2002. This conference is mandatory only for new applicants who choose to enter this application process based on the amended application.

This Supported Employment RFA replaces the structure and process for VESID-funded programs which provide Intensive Supported Employment Services. Organizations currently under contract with VESID for SE services must apply under this process.

For more information, the application is posted on the VESID website at www.vesid.nysed.gov/supportedemployment. Please note that the amended materials can be found in the Q&A section of the website. □

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NOVEMBER 13

CALL JUDETH (X104) FOR TICKETS TODAY