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MONTANA MENTAL HEALTH *Bulletin*

The Newsletter of the Montana Mental Health Association, whose mission is educating and advocating for the mental health of children and adults in Montana. MMHA is an affiliate of the National Mental Health Association.

Association Receives Grants to Work with SAAs and LACs

MMHA project will strengthen community-based mental health groups

As executive director of MMHA, Deb Matteucci had been attending meetings of the three regional adult mental health Service Area Authorities (SAAs) and Local Mental Health Advisory Councils (LACs), and was impressed. Although the organizations are authorized through state statute, they operate with basically no budgets and depend on the energy and expertise of volunteers. Despite this, in just a few short years, these grassroots organizations were already making a big difference. But, in talking with members of the SAAs and LACs, Deb heard over and over again that these groups weren't reaching their

(Continued on page 4)

New Faces at MMHA and the National MHA

The Montana Mental Health Association is pleased to announce that Tracy Velázquez has been hired as executive director. Tracy has worked in and with the non-profit sector and on public health issues for the past twenty years. Her experience includes helping build the capacity of community and faith-based organizations across the state through the Office of Rural Health's Faith-Health



David Shern and Tracy Velázquez at NMHA Policy Conference

Demonstration Project. She also served as the Director of Major Gifts for the Montana State University Foundation and area executive director for the American Cancer Society. Tracy is a fellow with the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest, based in Washington DC. Fortunately for Montana, former executive director Deb Matteucci remains in the mental health field, working to improve services for mentally ill offenders in Montana as the first state behavioral health program facilitator. She will also join the MMHA board.

Another change with MMHA is the return of Molly Protheroe as President of the Board. Rich McRae stepped down in October due to professional commitments and the board gratefully and unanimously voted for Molly to resume her leadership role. Thanks, Molly!

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Legislative Update

*Interim Committee recommends two bills for 2007 Session;
MMHA Board approves public policy platform, agenda*

The Children, Families, Health and Human Services Interim Committee meets in between Montana's odd-year legislative sessions. The final meeting before the 60th Montana Legislature convenes in January 2007 was held September 12th and 13th at the Capitol in Helena.

The Committee's interim studies included Mental Health Crisis Response (SJ41) and Child Protective Services (SJ37). They have worked on these two studies and their proposed 2007 legislation since the 2005 legislature concluded.

Twelve proposals were considered for recommendation to the upcoming Legislature; five were mental health related bills:

- Including "gravely disabled" in the definition of "emergency situation" (LCCF07).
- Insurance Parity to end insurance discrimination against those with mental illnesses (LCCF09).
- Change in use of restraints on persons while transporting them to or from a mental health facility (LCCF10).
- Secure Crisis Stabilization via behavioral health inpatient facilities (LCCF13). This has also alternately been called "72 Hour

Presumptive Eligibility" and "Community Crisis Care."

- Amending the definition of "professional person" to include psychologists (LCCF14).

The Committee as a group agreed to endorse LCCF13 and LCCF14 with Senator Dan Weinberg carrying both bills. The other bill drafts may be revised and introduced by individual members of the Committee after the November 7th, 2006 election.

The implementation of a public statewide 2-1-1 number (2005 Senate Bill 428) for safety, health and human services referral has moved forward informally to address possible funding sources for the system.

On October 20th, the MMHA Board adopted a Public Policy Platform and Agenda for 2007-2008. They also approved supporting both 72 hour eligibility and adequate funding for the Mental Health Service Plan (MHSP); the Association's support was sought by members of the Service Area Authorities. If you would like a copy of the Platform and Agenda or would like to serve on the Public Policy Committee, please contact Tracy Velázquez at 587-7774, tracy@montanamentalhealth.org or Suzanne Hopkins, 538-4206, suzanneh@lewistown.net.

Thanks to the Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch for their generous donation to the Montana Mental Health Association, to help make this newsletter possible. Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch (YBGR) is a multi-service organization providing mental health services and programs to emotionally disturbed youth and their families. **MMHA salutes YBGR as they celebrate their 50th anniversary in 2007.**



MMHA Officers

Molly Protheroe, President
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Esther Kramer, Secretary
Scobey

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Deb Matteucci
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Teri Sanddal
Bozeman

Dawn Smith
Great Falls

Affiliate Representatives

**Mental Health Assn. of Daniels
County**

Mental Health Assn. of Great Falls

Mental Health Assn. of Sheridan Cty.

**Mental Health Assn. of Sweetgrass-
Stillwater Counties**

**Yellowstone County Guardianship
Council**

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Science Solutions



Bridging mental health research & clinical practice

MMHA's exclusive National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Outreach Partnership Program is a nationwide educational outreach initiative of NIMH, with support from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS). Through this Partnership, MMHA can disseminate the most recent mental health and substance abuse research advances to you! To see all of the Science and Service News updates, go to: www.montanamentalhealth.org. This issue's hot topics:

New Strategies Help Depressed Patients Become Symptom-Free

Results of the nation's largest depression study show that one in three depressed patients who previously did not achieve remission using an antidepressant became symptom-free with the help of an additional medication and one in four achieved remission after switching to a different antidepressant. The study, funded by NIMH, shows that people whose depression is resistant to initial treatment can achieve remission — the virtual absence of symptoms — when treated with a secondary strategy that either augments or switches medications. This is the first study to examine the effectiveness of different treatment strategies for those who did not become symptom-free after initial medication. "If the first treatment attempt fails, patients should not give up," said NIMH's director Thomas Insel, M.D. "By remaining in treatment, and working closely with clinicians to tailor the most appropriate next steps, many patients may find the best single or combination treatment that will enable them to become symptom-free." "Augmenting earlier in the course of treatment, or perhaps prescribing a combination of drugs to patients initially, may be more effective than using one treatment alone."



Obesity Linked with Mood and Anxiety Disorders

Results of an NIMH-funded study show that nearly one out of four cases of obesity is associated with a mood or anxiety disorder, but the causal relationship and complex interplay between the two is still unclear. The results appear to support what other studies have found—that obesity, which is on the rise in the United States, is associated with increasing rates of major depression, bipolar disorder, panic disorder and other disorders. However, in contrast to other studies, this study found no significant differences in the rates between men and women. In addition, it found that obesity was associated with a 25 percent lower lifetime risk of having a substance abuse disorder.

Suicide Awareness Quilt

The MMHA is collecting 12 inch quilt squares for a 2nd Suicide Awareness quilt. If you are interested in donating a square, you may send it to the MMHA at PO Box 6133, Great Falls, MT 59406.

potential.

“I had worked as a member of the advisory board for the Faith-Health Demonstration Project (FHDP),” said Deb, “and I saw what a tremendous difference a little training and technical assistance made to so many of the organizations involved. So I decided to seek out funding for a similar project for the LACs and SAAs.”

Deb first turned to the same entity that had funded the FHDP, the Compassion Capital Fund at the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services. With the support of the three SAAs and others, Deb submitted an application to provide two trainings for each SAA over the period of a year. Limited consulting would be available between these trainings for the SAAs and LACs. Because of their experience as providers of trainings and technical assistance on the FHDP, Deb teamed with Commonweal Consulting in Bozeman to create an application that built on both organizations’ strengths and met the needs identified by SAA and LAC members (see table).

Knowing that MMHA’s chances of receiving the grant were slim due to the very competitive nature of the grant (only 310 grants were made this year out of 1,376 applications nationwide), Deb also submitted the capacity building project to the Otto Bremer Foundation, a private foundation based in Minneapolis that focuses on increasing community engagement and participation. “In our meeting with a representative from the Foundation,” said Deb, “it was clear that they were excited by the fact that LACs and SAAs strive for 50% consumer participation, and that they are trying to engage non-traditional partners in the issue of mental health at a real grassroots level.”



Amazingly, MMHA was awarded both the Otto Bremer and Compassion Capital Fund grants. Brand new executive director for MMHA Tracy Velázquez now had the enviable task of figuring out how to expand the project in a meaningful way so that both funders would be pleased. “After attending a few SAA and LAC meetings, I realized that, in addition to providing the larger trainings to the SAAs, one-on-one work with the LACs had the greatest potential for increasing the viability and effectiveness of the whole system,” said Tracy. She reconfigured the expanded budget, putting the extra money in additional training and technical assistance, with a set aside for a conference or summit next fall. Commonweal Consulting’s role will now be not just providing trainings and technical assistance, but also coordinating other opportunities as they arise.

“Right now, I can say for sure that we’ll be hosting an Advocacy Workshop in conjunction with the CSAA Congress on December 2nd,” said Tracy (see announcement on page 7). “The timing is perfect for providing consumers and others with the information and tools they need to effectively communicate with policymakers this coming winter.” A condensed version of the advocacy workshop will be held in Eastern and Western Montana for those who can’t travel to Helena, and grant-writing and fundraising workshops will be held in April. In between, Dennis Alexander from Commonweal and the MMHA Americorps VISTA volunteer, Diane Sears, will be contacting and meeting with LACs and SAAs around the state.

Tracy says she’s trying to keep some of the money flexible to meet capacity building needs as they arise. If you would like to be on an advisory group for the project, please contact Dennis Alexander at 539-4797, or dennis@commonweal.net.

Rank the level of NEED within your Service Area Authority region	Very Needed	Some-what	Not Needed	Don't Know
Increasing community engagement	90%	10%	0%	0%
Fundraising & Grant Writing	85%	15%	0%	0%
Working with the Media	70%	20%	5%	5%
Leadership Development/Board Training	60%	40%	0%	0%
Community Asset & Resource Mapping	65%	25%	5%	5%
Strategic Planning	50%	40%	10%	0%
Community Needs Assessment	55%	40%	5%	0%
Program Development & Evaluation	40%	55%	5%	0%
Organization Development - bylaws, policies, financial, etc.	30%	50%	20%	0%

MMHA Partners and Programs

MMHA is pleased to be working in partnership with organizations around our state and the nation to reduce stigma and improve mental health through advocacy and education. In addition to the projects mentioned in this month's articles, other projects for 2006-2007 include:

Montana Project to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities and Equity Outreach. Research has demonstrated that 48% to 90% of women with mental health and substance abuse disorders also have histories of interpersonal abuse. For many of the women affected, their first abuse occurred when they were children or adolescents. This project's goal is to address the pressing need for expanded and improved services for women with mental health problems and/or developmental disabilities. Partners include Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence; MSU-Billings Montana Center on Disabilities; and MT DPHHS Developmental Disabilities Program.

Out of the Darkness, into the Light: Reducing Stigma around Children's Mental Illness. MMHA is in the final stages of production for a public education campaign to increase awareness of issues around children's mental health. Partners include Yellowstone Boys & Girls Ranch, Intermountain Children's Home, the MT Children's Mental Health Bureau, and Montana Children's Initiative.

Suicide Prevention. MMHA will be partnering with Montana's Youth and Young Adult Suicide Prevention Task Force to produce and air statewide radio and TV ads focused on reducing Montana's high rates of suicide.



("New Faces," continued from page 1)

At the national level, David L. Shern, Ph.D., was recently named president and CEO of the National Mental Health Association. Prior to joining NMHA, Dr. Shern served as dean of the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute (FMHI) at the University of South Florida, one of the largest research institutes in behavioral health services in the U.S.

Also in national news, Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, M.D., Ph.D. was elected as Chair of the board of NMHA. Dr. Aguilar-Gaxiola is Professor of Clinical Internal Medicine in the School of Medicine, University of California, Davis. He is also Founding Director of the Center for Reducing Health Disparities at the UC Davis Health System.

What's YOUR Mental Health IQ?

MMHA has produced some attractive bookmarks aimed at the general public with basic questions (yes, and answers on the back!) related to mental health. If you would like some of these bookmarks (see below) for your office, health fair, or to send with your holiday greetings to increase awareness and reduce stigma, call Natalie at 727-MMHA.

What's YOUR Mental Health IQ?

Take the short true/false quiz and have some fun challenging your knowledge of mental health topics ... The answers may surprise you!

T/F 1) Regular exercise can greatly reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety disorders.

T/F 2) Treatment success rates for disorders such as depression surpass those for other medical conditions like heart disease.

T/F 3) People who have schizophrenia don't usually recover from the disorder.

T/F 4) The number of hours a person works causes more stress at work than the office environment.

T/F 5) Workplace stress causes about 1 million U.S. employees to miss work each day.

T/F 6) Depression is a normal part of aging.

T/F 7) People who have mental disorders are more dangerous than people in the general population.

T/F 8) About every two hours, a young person kills himself or herself.

T/F 9) One in five Americans experiences a mental health disorder in any given year, but only one-third seek care due to the stigma and mis-perceptions surrounding mental disorders and their treatment.

Answers on the reverse side.

MONTANA MENTAL HEALTH
ASSOCIATION

Become a Part of the Solution! Join MMHA Today!

There's no more important time than NOW to join the Montana Mental Health Association! Why? Because many mental health issues and policies will be decided in the 2007 Montana legislature! What will happen to 72 hour eligibility for community crisis care . . . MHSP . . . prevention programs? MMHA will be there to advocate for sound policies and adequate funding for effective programs that help improve the mental health of adults and children in Montana.

As a member, you'll be able to count on us to let you know WHAT is happening, WHEN it's happening, WHO we need to reach, and HOW to make a difference! Plus, your membership will also help all our other work to reduce stigma, educate the public, and build collaborations across the state. **Memberships will be valid until the end of 2007.**

Please join at the most generous level you can, so we can keep making a difference!

Name: _____ Email: _____

Organization: _____ Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Membership Level:

\$25 Individual \$40 Family \$50 Professional \$250 Organization

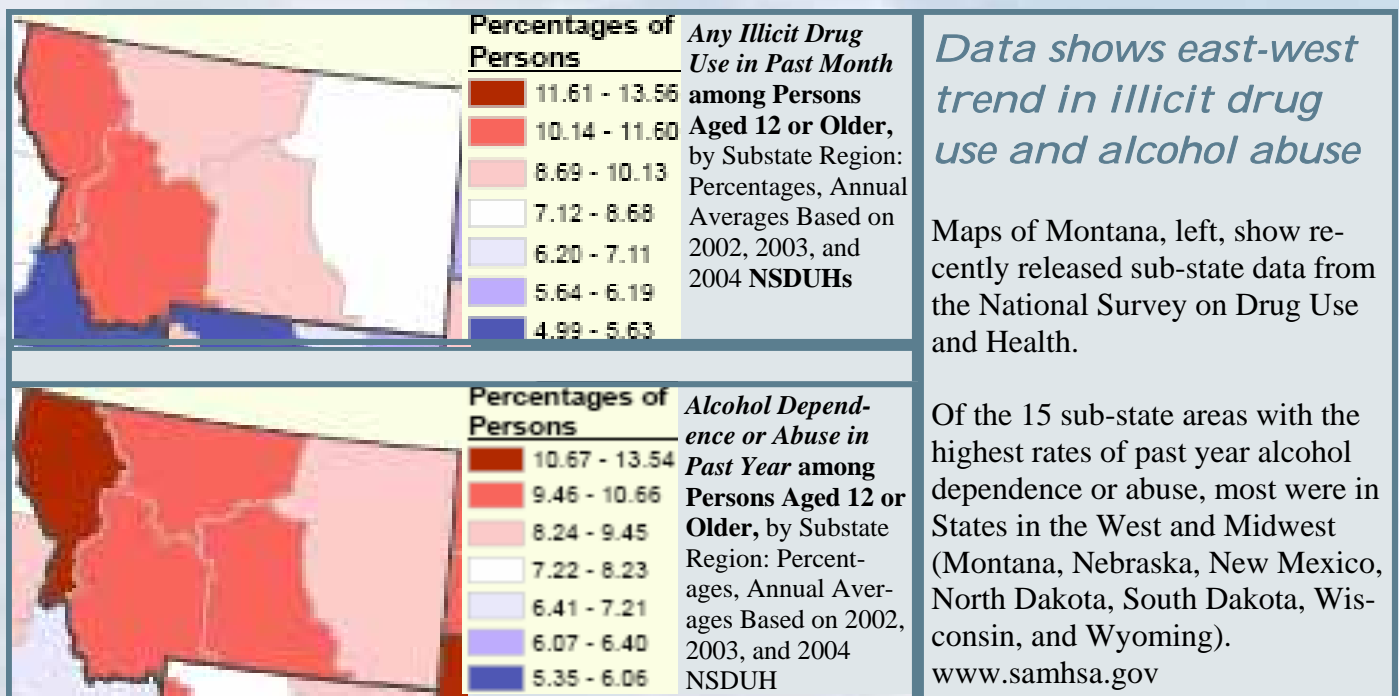
\$10 Living Lightly \$20 Family Living Lightly \$500 or more: Pacesetter

Other: \$_____ Amount is enclosed: or Bill me

Residents of Daniels, Sheridan, Sweet Grass, Stillwater and Cascade Counties: Did you know you have a local affiliate? If you'd like more information on joining an existing local affiliate or starting a new one, check here: _____

MAIL TO: MMHA, P.O. BOX 6133, GREAT FALLS, MT 59406 or FAX to 406-587-7794

For your information . . .



You are cordially invited to attend the 2006-07

Advocacy Trainings

for Members of LACs, SAAs,
and others with an interest in mental health issues

This valuable workshop will give you the skills and knowledge you need to feel confident about your right and your ability to be a part of the political process. Training is free, and travel scholarships are available.

In Depth Program, including tour of Montana Capitol:

Sat., Dec. 2 10:30 - 4 In conjunction with the CSAA Congress, Helena

Condensed Programs for those unable to attend Helena training:

Tues., Nov. 28 Noon - 2 In conjunction with ESAA meeting, Miles City

Wed., Jan 17 12:30—3:30 In conjunction with WSAA meeting, Missoula



Tentative Agenda For HELENA meeting:

10:00: Sign in, Coffee and snack.

10:30: **The Political Process in Montana.** How do bills become (or not become) laws? How are programs funded? Who are the elected and appointed officials and how and when can I contact them? And what is a “Third Reading,” any way?

Noon: **Working lunch. Advocacy 101:** what the difference is between lobbying and advocating, and why no one needs to be afraid to do either.

1 p.m. **Telling Your Story.** In small, facilitated groups, learn what makes a compelling story to tell to policymakers, and develop the story YOU would like to tell.

2:30: **Your advocacy toolbox.** Learn important skills, like: how to write an effective letter to the editor (or a policymaker), what it takes to be an effective spokesperson for your cause, building partnerships and alliances, and setting up communication networks for action.

3:15: **Tour of the Montana State Capitol.** Learn your way around one of the most beautiful capitol buildings in America. See where everything is, from the bathrooms to the committee rooms, as well as the offices of the Governor and other officials.

5:00 **Reception** hosted by MMHA, location TBA (not official part of agenda)

This training is made possible through the generosity of the Otto Bremer Foundation and the US Compassion Capital Fund. This workshop is solely for the purpose of increasing community engagement around mental health issues. No lobbying or advocacy for or against any position, bill, program, funding or policy will take place at this conference.

Registration is required so that we can have adequate materials for all. To register, please call MMHA toll-free at **877-927-MMHA** or email **info@montanamentalhealth.org**. Please indicate which training you will be attending. If you register by email please indicate in your message your name, your address, your affiliation (SAA, LAC, other), your email address and phone number. Also indicate if you are requesting a travel scholarship. **Deadline for workshop registration is three days prior to each event.** We will contact all registrants by email (if available) or regular mail to confirm the location and times. Trainings may be postponed or canceled in the case of EXTREMELY inclement weather.



An Affiliate of the National Mental Health Association

Great Falls Office: 417 Central Ave., #310
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 info@montanamentalhealth.org

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please check with event sponsors to confirm

11/10-11, call for times	WRAP Workshop, Center for Mental Health GF, 761-2100
11/15 10-1	WSAA, St. Pat's Hospital, Msla. www.wsaamt.org
11/16 10-5 11/17 8:30-4	Mental Health Oversight Advisory Council, Shodair Hosp., Helena
11/23 - 24	Thanksgiving Holiday.
11/28 10-2	ESAA, Eastern MT Mental Health Ctr, Miles City. www.esaamt.org
11/30 8:30	Corrections Advisory Council Park Plaza Hotel, Helena.
12/1 10-2	CSAA, Intermountain Children's Home, Helena. www.csaamt.org
12/2 10-3	CSAA Congress, MMHA Advocacy Training, Helena location TBA, www.csaamt.org
12/5 11:30	MMHA Board Teleconference, info@montanamentalhealth.org
12/20 10-3	WSAA, St. Pat's Hospital, Msla. www.wsaamt.org
1/3 noon	Swearing in of Montana Legislature, Capitol, Helena

Operation Healthy Reunions Helps Our Returning Servicemen and Women

NMHA is proud to champion *Operation Healthy Reunions*, a first-of-its-kind program that provides education and helps bust the stigma of mental health issues among soldiers, their families, and medical staff to ensure that a greater number of military families receive the care they deserve. In partnership with the leading military organizations, NMHA distributes educational materials on such topics as reuniting with your spouse and children, adjusting after war, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Some facts:



- Mental disorders were reported in more than 26% of returning soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan
- 1 in 6 troops from Iraq met the screening criteria for major depression, generalized anxiety disorder or PTSD
- About 1/3 of the adult homeless population has served in the Armed Services
- Almost 1,700 servicemembers returning from the war this year said they harbored thoughts of hurting themselves or that they would be better off dead. Over 3,700 said they had concerns they might "hurt or lose control" with someone else.

Materials are available online at <http://www.nmha.org/reunions/info.cfm> or call MMHA toll-free at 1-877-927-MMHA.