



North Soundings

MEETINGS

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

NSMHA MH ADVISORY BOARD:	02/02/10, 1:00-3:00 P.M.	03/02/10, 1:00-3:00 P.M.	04/06/10, 1:00-3:00 P.M.
NSMHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:	02/11/10, 1:30-3:00 P.M.	03/11/10, 1:30-3:00 P.M.	04/08/10, 1:30-3:00 P.M.
ISLAND COUNTY MH ADVISORY BOARD:	02/22/10, 9:30-11:30 A.M.	03/22/10, 9:30-11:30 A.M.	04/26/10, 9:30-11:30 A.M.
SAN JUAN COUNTY MH ADVISORY BOARD: CALL BEFOREHAND TO CONFIRM: 360-378-4474	02/15/10, 11:45-1:45 P.M.	03/15/10, 11:45-1:45 P.M.	04/19/10, 11:45-1:45 P.M.
SKAGIT COUNTY MH ADVISORY BOARD:	02/01/10, 12:00-1:00 P.M.	03/01/10, 12:00-1:00 P.M.	04/05/10, 12:00-1:00 P.M.
SNOHOMISH COUNTY MH ADVISORY BOARD:	02/08/10, 5:30-7:00 P.M.	03/08/10, 5:30-7:00 P.M.	04/12/10, 5:30-7:00 P.M.
WHATCOM COUNTY MH ADVISORY BOARD:	02/08/10, 12:00-1:30 P.M.	03/08/10, 12:00-1:30 P.M.	04/12/10, 12:00-1:30 P.M.

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Recovery Around the Sound

A PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH SOUND MENTAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION
REGIONAL SUPPORT NETWORK FOR ISLAND, SAN JUAN, SKAGIT, SNOHOMISH AND WHATCOM COUNTIES

VOLUME XXIV WINTER 2010

An Update from NSMHA...

Charles Benjamin,
Executive Director,
NSMHA



As I reflect over the past year it is evident that NSMHA has experienced a lot of different and difficult undertakings in 2008-2009. Here are a few of the highlights and lowlights that occurred in our system:

1. Completion of the transition from a monthly capitated payment to a Modified-Fee-for-Service payment system for most mental health services has resulted in the following:
 - More people with a mental illness are in service;
 - More people with a mental illness in service are receiving more hours of service;
 - Productivity rates are increasing.
2. A welcomed settlement of the litigation between NSMHA and Skagit County regarding mental health involuntary treatment legal hearings.
3. 2009 budget reductions amounting to \$2.2 Million were imposed that resulted in the following very tough decisions:
 - Elimination of two Clubhouses, Child Crisis Outreach, Children's Long-term Inpatient Program contracted position, LKI Child Crisis Service Program, and Marty Smith Funding.
 - Elimination of 15 beds at Western State Hospital resulting in a reduction of \$2.8 million in funding.
 - Decreased services to include NSMHA operations, Non-Medicaid Adult Outpatient Services, Out of Network Services, County Administration, and Western State Hospital Liaison Services.

Once again, NSMHA and all of our stakeholders must commence preparations to address the challenges and opportunities that are facing us. It is quite apparent that the struggling economic conditions that are hitting our nation are not going away soon. NSMHA has already been informed by the Governor and the State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) of more budget reductions. It is NSMHA's estimation, based on current information, that we could face additional budget reductions that total \$2.5-3.1 Million in 2010.

While these are very difficult and trying times, now is the time for us to band together and carry our message of grave concerns to our state elected officials. Our state elected officials have an extremely daunting task ahead of them and I certainly do not envy them in this upcoming legislative session. Yet, all of us need to express our concerns and the consequences of their decisions. While we all know that the public mental health system will have its funding reduced, perhaps we can have a positive impact on the magnitude and direction of those budget reductions. NSMHA is not alone in the plight of budget reductions. The local news media has covered several stories of substantial revenue and budget shortfalls in all five counties of the North Sound Region.

Yes, NSMHA will have very difficult decisions to make in the upcoming months of 2010, and it is my intent to keep a focus on the people with mental illness. I can't begin to realize the anxiety and emotions they are enduring during these trying times. We all must do what we can to assist them in seeing the rays of Hope while pursuing their Path(s) to Recovery.

Please join me in this ever challenging endeavor.

Respectfully, Chuck

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Clubhouse Closures bring change to Drop-in Centers

by Margaret Rojas, Contracts Coordinator & Legislative Liaison, NSMHA

During this last legislative session NSMHA experienced reductions in funding that resulted in the closing of two clubhouses in the Region. After much deliberation with community members, it was determined that the Region could not operate both Clubhouses and Drop-in Centers. Through a number of community forums, it was determined that Clubhouses would be closed and Drop-in Centers would remain open.

Because of the advocacy and passionate pleas by those attending Clubhouses, NSMHA decided that we could take elements of the Clubhouses and use them in the Drop-in Centers; the first move was to re-purpose the "drop-in" in the Centers. The Centers are now called Peer Centers; these Centers include Rainbow Recovery Center in Bellingham operated by Whatcom Counseling and Psychiatric Clinic, Peer Connections in Mt. Vernon operated by Sunrise Services and the Bailey Center in Everett operated by Compass Health.

All three centers have embraced a new direction, one that is Peer driven, Recovery oriented and open to anyone with a mental illness. So what does that really mean?

- Peer Driven is the implementation of policies and organizational processes where Peers are integral to the governance, operation and planning of Peer Center programs;
- Recovery Oriented is demonstrating the belief that people with mental illness can and do recover; by providing an individual with a person-centered and self-directed Recovery Plan and the appropriate supports to achieve a level of Recovery;
- Anyone with a mental illness is welcome at any of the three Peer Centers. It is the job of the Peers and other staff at the Center to engage individuals and help them find their "Path to Recovery".

NSMHA is proud of the work Compass Health, Sunrise Services and Whatcom Counseling have put forth to make this transition as successful as possible. Of course, this couldn't be possible without the partnerships they have built with the Peers attending and employed at the Centers!

If you'd like to visit the Peer Centers you may either "drop in" or call ahead for a tour, the contact information is below.

Rainbow Recovery Center: (360) 752-2577 Peer Connections Center: (360) 848-8615

Bailey Center (425) 349-8386

Regional Crisis System Review

by Greg Long, Deputy Director, NSMHA

At the direction of the North Sound Mental Health Administration's Board of Directors, a comprehensive review of the mental health crisis system is being conducted and to be completed by April of 2010. Crisis and Involuntary Commitment Services are available to anyone in the Region, services are brief evaluation and stabilization services. The review is being led by independent consultants, Barbara Mauer and Dale Jarvis of MCPP Consulting. This process started with the development of a data book which presented the statistics of how the current system is performing. In the coming months, the review will look at the crisis line, crisis centers, coordination with law enforcement, crisis outreach and involuntary commitment services. Two of six stakeholder meetings have occurred with over 50 consumers, advocates and professionals from hospitals, aging services, developmental disabilities, law enforcement, and mental health participating. For more information, contact Greg Long at 800.684.3555.

Federal Block Grant updates!

Contracts for the Federal Block Grants were approved at the September 2009 Board of Director's meeting. Below is a list of contracts by county, with total Mental Health Federal Block Grant Funding at \$1,098,134, an increase over last year due to a funding shift at the State level.

Island County

- o **Training Resources in Partnership (TRIP)** offers parent support groups, educational training, one on one help, an annual family event, and a web site (www.trip-ns.com) full of resources in the North Sound Region. TRIP is currently serving Island, Skagit, Snohomish & Whatcom Counties. \$24,205.

Skagit County

- o **Catholic Community Services** outreach program for school children in east Skagit county not eligible for Medicaid Services. Services include individual mental health treatment, group services, and some family treatment. \$26,600.
- o **Compass Health** provides transitional mental health services for those ineligible for other mental health services in Snohomish and Skagit counties. \$186,564. (Funding for Skagit & Snohomish).
- o **Skagit County Human Services** for the provision of an Outreach-Intervention Mental Health Specialist to work with engaging the homeless population in Skagit County. \$70,000.
- o **Sunrise Services** funding to build capacity of Peer Counselor/ Advocates at Peer Center, moving in the direction of Peer driven and Peer run services. \$73,511.

Snohomish County

- o **Snohomish County** provides short-term case management for those ineligible for other mental health services in Snohomish County. \$70,000.
- o **Compass Health** provides transitional mental health services for those ineligible for other mental health services in Snohomish and Skagit counties. (Shared funding with Skagit). \$186,564.
- o **Compass Health** funding to build capacity of Peer Counselor/ Advocates at Peer Center, moving in the direction of Peer driven and Peer run services. \$73,511.
- o **bridgeways** provides transitional housing/outreach for those at risk of homelessness, hospitalization & incarceration in Snohomish County. \$65,650.
- o **Hope Options (Everett Housing Authority)** provides intervention and case management services to vulnerable seniors with mental health or behavioral issues whose housing has become unstable. \$37,138.
- o **Senior Services of Snohomish County** provides in home depression screening to Snohomish County residents age 60+ using the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS), an assessment tool highly rated for depression screening within this population. Individuals who score 14 or higher on the GDS receive follow-up depression care management (medication treatment monitoring, follow-up and advocacy with primary care or prescribing physician, short-term cognitive behavioral therapy, etc). \$39,800.



- o **Stillaguamish Tribe** provides comprehensive mental health services for those ineligible for other mental health services, including an assessment, diagnosis, recommendations and an individualized treatment plan suited to meet needs. When appropriate, life skills training is utilized within the treatment plan that helps clients move toward success in life and work. \$20,000
- o **Tulalip Tribes** provides cultural activities for the Tulalip Tribes youth and families. With the Federal Block Grant funds, they have been able to enhance an array of culture driven activities; the Salmon Ceremony, the Canoe Journey, Cultural Encampment, Culture night, regalia making, cedar crafts, drum making and canoe pulling practice. \$81,840.

Whatcom County

- o **WCPC (Whatcom Counseling and Psychiatric Clinic)** This funding shall be used to enhance the existing Gladstone House Residential Peer Support Project. Peer Counselors are available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The onsite peer support is to help residents strengthen their independent living skills. \$24,752.
- o **WCPC** funding to build capacity of Peer Counselor/ Advocates at Peer Center, moving in the direction of Peer driven and Peer run services. \$73,511.
- o **WCPC** provides an Evidence Based Practice, Gatekeeper, which includes the following services: case finding, engagement, mental health services and referral services, as appropriate, for at-risk older adults and to provide evaluation, treatment, case review, psychiatric consulting and prescription services for a time limited period. \$44,352.
- o **Sea Mar** program will partially fund a full time Master's Level Clinician, preferably bilingual and/or bicultural, to provide assessments at the provider level to integrate physical and mental health care of non-Medicaid individuals. \$70,000.
- o **The Opportunity Council** program will serve adults with mental illness who are homeless, including older adults and members of local Tribal communities at the Whatcom Homeless Service Center with housing case management services. \$49,200.
- o **Sun Community Services** provides a program that serves consumers released from jail and/or inpatient facilities by providing housing, psychiatric support in conjunction with a case manager and medication providers and assistance in remaining clean and sober. \$57,500.

Mental Health & Substance Abuse tax comes to all 5 Counties!

All five Counties in the North Sound Region; Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom have passed the 1/10 of 1% sales tax.

This law, enacted in 2005, allows counties to exercise a one-tenth of one percent sales tax to support mental health, chemical dependency and therapeutic court services. The need for this funding across the region is apparent in this economic downturn and State funding reductions.

Each of the counties developed their expenditure plans with public input, forming advisory boards and committees to work on the process. Projected revenue for all five counties is in the \$17 million range, with the current economy affecting the projections. Several of the counties funded support in the schools, as well as, enhancing their mental health courts among other programs. Each county will reassess and realign their funding and programs as they move forward.

Strategic Planning for 2010-2013

by Greg Long, Deputy Director, NSMHA

Every four years, the North Sound Mental Health Administration (NSMHA) develops a strategic plan focusing our efforts for the future. This is an especially challenging, but an important time to be planning for the future. The public mental health system is facing further funding reductions due to the recession and the State budget deficits. This comprehensive strategic planning process began in February of 2009 from discussions with the Board of Directors. During the spring, a new mission, vision and organizational profile were developed by the NSMHA Planning Committee. This fall, Stakeholder Forums were held in all five counties of the Region with over 140 participants to gather ideas on how mental services should be shaped for the upcoming four years. Simultaneously, an online survey was conducted to gather wider input from stakeholders and the general public. Over 540 people participated in the survey. Now, NSMHA staff are working to develop internal organizational strategic goals and formulating the plan. The plan will go to the NSMHA Planning Committee in early 2010 and then to the NSMHA Board of Directors for approval.

Eating Disorder Training & Resources

by Charissa Westergard, Quality Specialist, NSMHA

Beginning in the fall of September 2007, NSMHA responded to an identified need for improved availability of eating disorder treatment within the North Sound Region. With the aid of a Federal Block Grant, NSMHA was able to sponsor three annual trainings and monthly clinical consultations provided by eating disorder treatment experts. The trainings were well attended not only by NSMHA provider agency clinicians, but also by professionals from other allied agencies, as well as, consumers and advocates.

In addition to attending training, several NSMHA provider clinicians made an additional commitment and participated in the monthly clinical consultations. As a result of the focused and expert guidance received via the consultations, there are now clinicians representing three NSMHA-contracted agencies across the three largest counties in the Region who developed further skills in treatment for individuals struggling with eating disorders. It is NSMHA's hope that this improved availability of treatment resources will serve to benefit those individuals in need.



Poem by - Diane Sturgeon

*I like art and singing.
I know they're two,
but both help when I'm blue.
Singing to give encouragement
to my spirit from God.
All kinds of crafts and
art to enrich one's life,
even if one isn't a wife.
One can dream big and
wish for more.
God doesn't take score.
I love to paint, abstract, and
almost real,
better than being put through
a grill,
by unknown people who want
a thrill,
Making fun of one
like a dentist drill.*

Excerpted from the North Sound H.O.P.E. A literary publication by *Those Super Peers* at the Mount Vernon Peer Connections Center.

A Note From our Regional Ombudsman

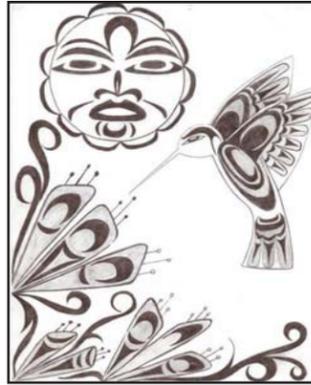
Chuck Davis, Mental Health Ombuds, Skagit Community Action Agency

Ombuds thanks the many people who use us for assistance in resolving problems with the community mental health program. As the year ends, we have several personnel changes. Susan Lange has moved on to a challenging leadership position in the Skagit Community Action Agency. Rocio Lopez, our Latino outreach volunteer, is taking a maternity break, having just delivered a baby girl. Kim Olander has joined Ombuds in Susan's place. Kim's housing specialist experience will be of great value in the mental health community's on-going housing challenges. We are looking forward to two new opportunities in 2010. First, Ombuds will be conducting more quality review team visits, looking for problem areas that need attention as well as spotlighting what is working well.

Second, we will help represent the consumer voice on several important projects. One is a Performance Improvement Project (PIP) that is studying how to get people in to see a prescriber more quickly after entering treatment services. Another is the Region's committee studying how to ensure consumers are always treated with dignity & respect. If you see us out and about, stop and chat with us. If you need our assistance, call us at 1.888.336.6164 or 360.416.7004. Our services are free!

Chuck Davis - Ombuds

NSMHA still has posters from our 2006 & 2007 contest winners, as well as copies of our poetry/story book "Faces of Recovery". If you would like any of these items please call 360.416.7013.



Brochure art provided by Roselle Fryberg, Tulalip Tribes

2009 North Sound Tribal Mental Health Conference "Preserving Native Wisdom"

June 10th & 11th 2009 was our ninth annual conference and one of the best yet! It was held at a new venue this year; the Tulalip Resort & Spa, and the conference attendees couldn't say enough good things about the facility, food and staff. It is a truly beautiful resort. We had an excellent lineup of keynote speakers and presenters this year. Our keynote speakers were Swil Kanim, Dr. Jeff King and Brian Cladoosby who all shared their personal stories. For our breakout sessions, we had Natosha Gobin, Sheryl Fryberg, Patricia Blondin, Rudy Vendiola, Sherry Guzman, Cherie Ross, Marina Benally & Ervanna Little Eagle, as well as, Swil Kanim and Dr. Jeff King. Rudy Vendiola once again did an excellent job as our Master of Ceremonies; he is always enjoyed by all!

This year we also had two panels on the second day; the Traditional Wisdom Panel who shared their knowledge, wisdom and community experiences with us, and the Youth Journey Experience Panel where youth who have experienced the Canoe Journey shared their personal stories. These panels were appreciated for their powerful presentations and message.

The conference this year would not have been possible without the support generously provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the Tulalip Tribes and the Sauk-Suiattle Tribes. Thank you so much!

Save the Date!!
Thursday May 13, 2010
 for the 10th Annual Tribal Mental Health Conference
"Every Person has a Story"
 at the Skagit Resort, Bow, WA

If you're not sure you are on the mailing list to receive a conference brochure, please call 360-416-7013 to request one, or go to:
<http://nsmha.org/Tribal/Default.htm>

Integrated Primary Care Comes to Swinomish!

by Yoli Quevedo, Swinomish Tribal Mental Health

Swinomish Tribal Mental Health continues to build their program. The Domestic Violence program has a perpetrator treatment provider, a youth educator and is hiring a trauma victim treatment provider. In addition, the soon-to-be added mental health therapist will also be assigned to the middle and high school to assist native youth with their struggles and challenges. Meanwhile, over at the Tribal Medical Clinic, Yoli Quevedo, RN, Ph.D. is continuing her training through the University of Massachusetts School of Medicine to become a Behavioral Health Consultant. The medical clinic uses an Integrated Primary Care model that incorporates a Behavioral Health Consultant (BHC) as part of the primary care team. This means that the BHC will be able to provide support for the primary care providers by delivering 15-20 minute interventions in the exam room for patients experiencing such difficulties as stress, anxiety, pain and so on. This is a wonderful new direction for the mental health program. It is exciting to be able to offer more help to a larger number of people.

Peer Connection Center Holds Fundraiser!

by Eve Brown, Peer Connections

The Peer Connection Center Fundraiser was successful and a very special evening.

The Skagit Valley Peer Connection Center held its first fundraiser on Saturday, November 14th from 6-9 pm. Christ the King Church provided the extra large room and all the facility amenities for the evening, including coffee. The auditorium was decorated with tables of red and gold, with old 45 records, and Carnations in vases, donated by a supporter. The DJ and Auctioneer, Lonnie Wilkinson donated his entire evening to set up and entertain; his swing music and singing were just the right touch; a few people even dared to dance a little! Antonella Novi, representative for NAMI and Peer Center Support Specialist, gave an insightful keynote followed by her Flute Song on a native flute.

The Auction was fun for everyone with more than 55 in attendance, many of them NAMI supporters, Sunrise Services employees, and some from other backgrounds. Next year we would like to see more attendees from agencies, businesses and the community. We had over 66 Donations in our Silent and Live Auction: 26 Gift Certificates, 15 Baskets and 25 Items. The Community really supported us in donations! In addition, we received cash donations from our sponsors ranging from \$300-1,000, totaling \$3,900! This came from NAMI Skagit, the Skagit County hospitals, Kiwanis Noon Club, one anonymous and 3 private donors. With the auction bringing in around \$3,800 that brought our totals up to \$7,700, this was so encouraging in a time of recession and for our first fundraiser!

We had a great team for the fundraiser, Lisa Hanks of Sunrise, Marti Wall with NAMI and many others.

In addition, there were about 9 peers and Peer Staff there the whole night helping to set up, serve desserts & pizza and help as cleanup crew; this included setting back up 350 chairs! I worked very fast and persistently since September for this event and am very pleased with our first fundraiser. We had an article in the Herald prior to the event and community awareness will be extremely important to increase our fundraising for next year.



Choice
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 Hope
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