



The X-Files

"Working together to enrich our community one life at a time."

Volume 6, September 2008



Robert Johnson,
Executive Director

Behavioral Health Comes Of Age

A significant event happened October 3, yet it was back page news. The President signed into law, legislation requiring group insurance plans to provide equal coverage for primary and mental health treatment. Finally, equality in mental health benefits for those with insurance plans. Prior to this historic event, it was rare to have any but marginal mental health benefits in all but the most expensive plans.

Advocates for parity legislation have been working with Congress for more than 12 years and finally got it through on the coattails of the \$700 billion rescue plan.

It is surely ironic that we had to have a nation brought to its knees by the Wall Street meltdown before the plight of those with mental health and substance disorders could get a seat at the table. The market tsunami was an excellent time to force this issue through.

It is more than a feel good piece of legislation; it is, and will prove to be, a lifesaver for those suffering mental illness, substance abuse/addiction and those with co-occurring disorders. I am delighted about this passage, imperfect though it may be.

The cost to insurance companies to carry increased coverage will be a one to two percent increase to their total

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Budget Cuts Hit Region Ten

With the prospect of state and local funding cuts, Region Ten's Leadership Team has met in three, all-day sessions to determine how the cuts will affect the agency.

Ex. Director Robert Johnson issued the following statement to the media:

In response to Gov. Timothy Kaine's request that all state agencies prepare budgets reflecting cuts of 5, 10 and 15 percent, Region Ten's board and staff are reviewing its fiscal year 2009 budget. While we're concerned about the potential of extreme cuts to our services, the picture is not yet clear. Over the next few weeks, it should become more so.

We are doing this budget work first with our consumers and their needs in mind. Region Ten will do everything possible to ensure core programs remain intact and functioning at a high level. We see our role as good stewards of the funds given to us to serve the mental health, substance use and intellectual disability needs of people in Charlottesville and Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene,

Louisa and Nelson counties. We will continue to work with our community partners to provide quality services to those who need them.

Just as each one of us during these trying financial times must adjust personal budgets, the Region Ten community will adjust our budget. The first step we've taken is to implement a hiring freeze. Once the leadership team has assessed all spending, we will revisit that decision.

While planning to manage with less, we continue to partner with the Governor and General Assembly in their commitment to shore up Virginia's mental health system. To that end, we have trained staff in the new laws regarding involuntary commitment criteria and outpatient treatment.

Though this latest financial shortfall presents us with a great challenge, we are confident we will weather the storm. Region Ten remains committed to working together to enrich our community one life at a time.

Board President Joe Szakos

and Johnson sent letters to each of the legislators representing Region Ten's coverage area urging them to not cut back services through the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services.

At the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards conference in Roanoke, Sen. Edward Houck told attendees that "everything should be on the table" when it comes to looking at the budget. If not, Houck said, other areas must make up the deficit and perhaps unfairly shoulder the burden.

Other delegates urged CSBs to focus on asking that no cuts be made, rather than asking for additional funding.

Johnson said projecting what effect the budget cuts will have on Region Ten is difficult because the exact numbers could change.

"Our primary goal is to maintain our current systems of care and support intact and functioning as close to normal as possible under reduced funding," Johnson said.

Paul Patrick honored by VACCSB

Region Ten's Paul Patrick, a member of the Consumer Advisory Council, was given the Joseph V. Gartlan Award for Leadership and Advocacy at the Virginia Association of Community Services Board conference in Roanoke Oct. 2.

Patrick was honored for his work establishing "On Our Own" and his

work with "VOCAL", Virginia's Organization of Consumers Asserting Leadership.

Ken Moore and Reed Banks introduced Patrick as someone who talked about recovery long before it was popular.

Patrick has been a mental health advocate for more than 20 years.

Congratulations Paul!



Paul Patrick poses with the hand-carved Joseph V. Gartlan Award. Patrick is an active member of Region Ten's Consumer Advisory Council

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health costs. Expect spending for care to go up about 30 percent or so after the law goes into affect. (January 1, 2010 for most plans).

Here's some of the other good news; with more funding available, expect more community hospitals to start or expand treatment for mental illness and substance disorders. Consumers will find more choices for care. Public mental health agencies have always experienced additional budgetary stresses because they shoulder as much as 50 percent of the care nationwide for those with limited insurance coverage. Expect this burden to ease significantly. Expect our field to begin attracting new people who will bring talents currently lost to the business world. This will happen as new dollars flow into the field and colleges and universities start offering more behavioral health curricula.

Emergency rooms will properly code services for mental health and/ or substance abuse services they offer.

The parity law excludes:

- Employers with fewer than 50 employees
- Insurance companies not currently carrying mental health coverage
- Companies that can prove the law increases their costs more than 2 percent.

Still, all in all, many of us old timers can retire to our badminton and squirrel feeding paradises knowing we finally hit a triple. For this October baby we can thank the non-partisan work of Sen. Pete Domenici (R-N.M.) Sen. Ed Kennedy (D- Mass.) and the late Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.) as well as countless groups such as NASADAD, NAMI, NAADAC and individuals like you and me who work on the front lines but out of the spotlight.

Region Ten's Softball "Fall Classic"

Region Ten decided to move it's annual Softball Extravaganza between the Democrats and Republicans to the Fall.

It turned out to be a great decision as the weather Sept. 20 was perfect for a day at the ball park.

As Lynn Shoen stood over blistering coals grilling hot dogs and hamburgers, Dominique McLaughlin and Mary Williams bagged peanuts and popcorn for the hungry crowd.

The first game of the day was between two Charlottesville television stations: NBC-29 and the Newsplex. Rather

than play softball, the media battled it out with their feet in a hotly contested game of kickball.

Ralph Tobias, of NBC-29 kicked in the game-winning run to beat the Newsplex, 3 to 2 in extra innings.

In the second contest of the day, Democrats and Republicans met on the field for a game of softball.

Mike Guthrie, head umpire from Roy Wheeler Realty, went over rules with both teams before the game.

Guthrie told the coaches that anyone found cussing or yelling epithets at the opposing team would be fined \$50

to be paid to the opposite party's election fund.

After that warning, field chatter was uncharacteristically subdued.

The Republicans proved to be no match for the Democrats and their hot bats. The Dems drove in run after run, beating Republicans to the tune of 18 to 5.

We'll wait and see if the score of the Region Ten "Fall Classic" softball game is a forecast of the presidential election. Who knows? Region Ten could become famous as an election outcome predictor. Thanks to all who made the day a success.



Left: Charlottesville Newsplex team member Myles Henderson shows how it's done in kickball.



Right: The Newsplex team strategizes before the kickball game. Jared Guest, (in headband) is the assignment editor at the station and took on the same role at the game.



Left: Amal Dave, a UVA law student playing on the Republican team, waits for his pitch.



Right: Lynn Shoen exercises her barbeque skills under the direction of coach Carl Hicks.



Left: NBC-29's Ralph Tobias approaches the game-winning kick.



Right: Robert Johnson, Don and Jane Lewis partake in some of Lynn's barbeque.



Left: Buddies Jeff Carr and Ralph Tobias show that a good time was had by all.



Right: Jeff Sobel decides "peanuts or popcorn?" while Dominique McLaughlin tells him both are excellent.

Staff Honored at Recognition Luncheon

On September 17, Region Ten recognized staff members who celebrated an anniversary with the agency in the first six months of 2008.

In the past, this recognition took place during the holiday party. Executive Director Robert Johnson decided to hold a separate event twice a year.

Honorees, their guests and supervisor gathered at the Doubletree Hotel for a buffet luncheon.

Each of the supervisors introduced the staff member getting the award and told a little bit about what they do for Region Ten and how well they do it.

There were counselors and consumer

advocates, emergency services workers and supervisors

Guests heard about people who worked in the mailroom, in house-keeping, at Fourth Street and in Greene among others.

Don Lewis introduced Allan Kanter, who's been working for Region Ten for 30 years. Lewis said Kanter was the consummate substance abuse counselor who showed an amazing amount of enthusiasm for his job.

Lewis said Kanter's temperament was ideally suited for the work he does.

Together, those honored



Honorees: A few staff members recognized for service at Region Ten gathered to have their picture taken after the luncheon. From Left: David Myers, Allan Kanter, Vivian Vest, Molly Peck, Shannon Wright, Bic Kolcum, Savannah Ray, Steve Cowan, Ken Moore. Cheryl Cottrell, Barbara Talley and Iris Robinson also received awards, but are not pictured.

had 120 years of service with Region Ten. The next appreciation luncheon is planned for early 2009 and

will recognize staff who celebrated Region Ten anniversaries in the last six months of 2008.

Notes from the PCDA

—Ken Moore

The Partnership for a Consumer Driven Agency has continued to meet regularly to discuss issues and concepts relevant to human services and consumer interests. Love and spirituality, recovery motivation, and commonalities among disabilities were explored.

Recently the PCDA began examining the relatively new peer specialist workforce—the issues, problems and benefits of uniting an intentional peer provider model with traditional services. Many questions have been raised, and the committee will continue to move in the direction of creating better and more efficient strategies to assist greater consumer involvement.

If you work for Region Ten, or receive services from Region Ten, and are interested in becoming a member of the PCDA, please contact Ken Moore at kennethm@regionten.org.

Staff Changes/ Anniversaries

New Hires :

Nathan Drumheller, Louisa
Kerbie Gay, Intern
Kimberly LeClere,

Clinical Assessment

Kelly Westen,
Behaviorial Specialist
Jennifer Bonjrada,

Substance Abuse Clinician

Melissa Luce,
Direct Care Coordinator
Savannah Brock, Residential
Janice Carey-Johnson,
Residential

Jerry Kestner,

Substance Abuse Clinician

Lisa D' Oliviera, Recruiter

Transfers:

Cheri Demarchi,
Prevention Services.

Anniversaries:

Karen Rifkin, 20 years
Valeria Durham, 15 years
Rosanna Smith, 5 years
Deborah Fraser, 5 years
Heather Wilkins Dumas, 5 years

Want to Help?

Has Region Ten helped you or a loved one and you want to help us help others? Either clip this donation form and mail to:

Jeff Sobel, development coordinator
502 Old Lynchburg Road
Charlottesville, Va. 22903
Or e-mail him at jeffs@regionten.org

♥ \$25

♥ \$50

♥ \$100

♥ Other



Contact me about other giving options

Consumer Advisory Council's "Campaign for Recovery"



Left: Steve Pocklington, the first speaker after lunch was up for the job as he kept everyone awake with his lively presentation on what it takes to walk through fire.



Above: CAC members Myra Anderson and Paul Patrick Honoring Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services Commissioner Paul Reinhard with a plaque honoring his agency's support of the conference.



Above: Paul Reinhard and Region Ten Ex. Dir. Robert Johnson pose with the plaque.

The Consumer Advisory Council held its third annual conference Sept. 19 at the Hilton Hotel on Emmett St.

More than 200 spent the day learning the ins and outs of recovery.

The first speaker, Marjorie Jacobs, talked about three, universal conditions of life and how our understanding of them empowers recovery.

Kathy Muscari talked about the how important it is to take care of the self and how that is complimented by the idea that "helping others helps me."

How to see each other in a new light was the topic of Stephen Pocklington's presentation. He spoke of others who take the heat and lead the recovery movement by sharing their light and personal stories.

Amy Long talked about the challenges, pitfalls and joys of working in the mental health field. Long is a psychiatric nurse who openly discussed her disability. She talked about how to preserve "difference" in a world where difference is often shunned.

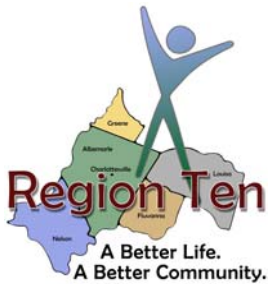
You can view both Jacobs' and Muscari's Power Point presentations by going to www.regionten.org and clicking on "What's New."



Presenters Kathy Muscari (top left) and Amy Long (top right) speak to the crowd of more than 200 conference participants.



Marjorie Jacobs (far right) engages the crowd in a bit of laughter yoga.



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