



Mid-Columbia Center for Living

Volume 10-03/4, December 2010

Contact us at:
www.mccfl.org

FALL-WINTER 2010-11 NEWSLETTER INTERAGENCY NEWS

In this edition ...

NEWS NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BARB SEATTER	2-3
EARLY ASSESSMENT & SUPPORT ALLIANCE (EASA)	3
NEW ARRIVALS AT MID-COLUMBIA CENTER FOR LIVING	4
BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION TEAM (BTT)	5
CENTRALIZED SCHEDULING	6
'TIS THE SEASON – FOR COLDS & FLU	6-7
COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS	7-8
THIS AND THAT... AND SOME DATES TO REMEMBER!	8-10

Vision:

"Empower people to make positive changes in their lives."



Thank-you Commissioners Lennox and Briggs!

Tri-County Mental Health Board Changes: Hood River County Commissioner Barbara Briggs and Wasco County Commissioner Bill Lennox will be leaving the Tri-County Mental Health Board in December.

- ▶ Barbara Briggs has been a board member and board chair since February of 2009.
- ▶ Bill Lennox has been a board member January of 2007.

We would like to thank them for their time and efforts on the Board and wish them both the very best in their future endeavors!

The respective Boards will meet in January to appoint new Tri-County Board Members!

News Notes from the Executive Director, Barb Seatter



Centralized Scheduling for Outpatient Mental Health Services Begins December 1, 2010 in Hood River

Centralized Scheduling is a key component of our Business Transformation Customer Service Initiative and is aimed at improving access to Mental Health services by reducing wait times for appointments and there by reducing our No-Show Rates. Beginning December 1, our Business Services Team (BST) will be scheduling all appointments and intakes instead of our historical practice of our clinical staff scheduling appointments. The Central Scheduling Model in other agencies has been proven

to support clinical staff in spending more time seeing clients, rather than spending time scheduling and rescheduling appointments. The BST will be able to access all clinical staff schedules to find best times to meet client needs and will also backfill cancellations to fully utilize open clinical time. Centralized Scheduling will be rolled out at The Dalles clinic in January and will soon expand to case management and other services.

Next steps in our Business Transformation include: Reviewing and updating standards for performance, supervision, and productivity, as well as, utilization management and central intake. For more information on our transformation process, please see articles by our Business Transformation leader Karen Fairchild and central scheduling leader Valerie Bellus in this newsletter. Thanks to all the clinical, BST, supervisor and management participation and commitment to these initiatives.

MCCFL hires an “Adult Services Coordinator” as part of statewide Adult Mental Health Initiative (AMHI)

Former Hood River case manager, Monique Adams, was selected from a group of very impressive candidates for the position of Adult Services Coordinator for MCCFL. In this new position, Monique will be responsible for working with clinical staff, residential treatment providers, the state hospital, Clackamas Mental Health Organization, and community partners in housing and supported employment to develop services and supports that will help enable adults with mental illness to live successfully in the community.

The Adult Mental Health Initiative, known as AMHI (Aim-High) is a state wide initiative designed to ensure that the right types of services are delivered at the right time to adults with mental illness, and in the least restrictive environment appropriate for their needs. The target populations that Monique will be primarily working with are adults from our communities currently residing at a state hospital or licensed community based setting, are under a civil commitment, or who are at risk of any of the above.

We are very lucky to have Monique in this new position not only due to her extensive experience working with adults with severe mental illness and understanding of our community resources, but also due to her commitment to the success and quality of life for the clients she works with, and her tenacity and ability to implement new and creative ideas.

See “E.D. News” on Page -3-

The Dalles Clinic Moves a Step Closer to a New Building

MCCFL has submitted a purchase and sale agreement to the owners of the property at 10th and Weber in The Dalles. Over the next few weeks, we will be reviewing documents and reports about the site to determine that there are no unforeseen problems with the land or purchase. If all goes well, we plan to complete the purchase of the land once our reviews are completed.

At the same time, MCCFL leadership and board will continue discussions with the leadership

and board of La Clinica regarding co-location of our clinics at the same site and to develop an integration model of primary care, mental health and addictions services. This is a very exciting time for the staff, our clients and the communities we serve, to not only have the possibility of a long awaited, and very much needed, new building, but for the opportunity of developing state of the art integrated services for the community. ■

Early Assessment & Support Alliance (EASA)

~ by Stephen Bradley ~

The Early Assessment and Support Alliance (EASA) is alive and active! The EASA team is dedicated to educating the public and identifying young people ages 15 to 25 years old in the early stages of psychosis. We then strive to engage potential participants and their families in treatment and recovery. One of EASA's goals is to help keep young people with the early signs of psychosis on their normal life path.

Why is early detection and intervention important?

- School success vs. failure & drop-out
- Self advocacy vs. inability to care for self
- Empowerment vs. trauma
- Family understanding vs. conflict
- Avoids self-medication through drugs
- Reduces suicide risk!
- Reduces risk of accidental death or harm
- Keep identity in life versus forming identity around psychosis
- Preserve insight
- Use lower doses of medications over shorter periods
- Better, faster recovery
- Cut symptom progression short
- Avoid homelessness



- Avoid legal involvement
- Avoid hospitalization
- Increased likelihood of keeping job & being successful adult
- It's effective!!!

The EASA team approach is intensive including social work, vocational/academic support, occupational therapy, psychiatry, nursing, individual therapy and mentoring. We provide family, employment & education support. Medications are used sparingly. Finally EASA's effort is focused on preparation and eventual transition of participants and their families for long-term management of the illness. Presentations have been made to public and private schools, private mental health providers, the Commission for Children and Families, LaClinica, WINGS, NORCOR Juvenile and parents. We are getting the word out and receiving referrals. Articles in The Dalles Chronicle with planned articles in the Hood River News and on Bicoastal Media radio stations. Efforts have been fruitful with numerous referrals and several new youth enrolled.

If you have suggestions for other groups, organizations or agencies that regularly interact with 15 – 25 year olds, please let us know, we are eager to spread the word about EASA. We are also happy to present to MCCFL programs as well. ■

EXPLORE the VOICES

Find the Truth

~ by Andrea S. Duckwall, Case Manager Enhanced Care Services (ECS) Program

On the 16th of November some of the enhanced care team traveled to Portland to a “Working with Voices” Workshop.

The Workshop was designed to help practitioners understand the experience of hearing voices and interventions that can be used to enable the voice hearer take control of their experience. We listened to Ron Coleman a mental health trainer tell us his route to recovery after spending 13 years in and out of the psychiatric system. He helped us to understand the experience the voice hearer was going through and gave us tools to help individuals deal with coping strategies.

Their Research has shown: *Hearing voices is not itself a sign of Mental Illness. *Hearing voices are experienced by many people without being ill. *Hearing voices is often related to problems in the life history of the voice hearer. *To recover from the distress the person who hears voices has to learn to cope with their voices.

Some of the key topics: *Recovery is not about getting rid of the voices but about the person understanding their voices in relation to their life experiences. *Make ourselves redundant in our client’s life. * Don’t change the beliefs of the client, recovery is not reducing the symptoms, it’s dealing with them.

The ECS team found the workshop very interesting, we work with clients on a daily basis that hear voices and feel that some of the strategies can help us understand what they are going through and how to help them cope in this world. We would like to share some of the information and strategies that we learned about with you at the January 5th Hood River office meeting. ♦

New Arrivals at Mid-Columbia Center for Living



James Tuning is our new Addictions Counselor in The Dalles serving the Intensive Treatment & Recovery Services (ITRS) program. James has been in the field almost five years in Goldendale, WA working with Comprehensive in the AOD field. He currently resides in Goldendale and his hobbies are anything outdoors, sports, etc. He has been married for six years and has two children ages five and two. He is also a Nebraska fan!

Mid-Columbia Center for Living welcomes Michelle Martell, RN as the agency’s new nurse.

Sarah Oaks will be our new (returning) Therapist with the Hood River Clinical Team!



Bobbie Bustamante is currently assisting Donna Bailey as a part-time Billing Specialist. She recently moved from Pendleton to The Dalles with her significant other, Jeff. Bobbie previously worked for the State of Oregon as a Child Support Case Manager. Before her position with the state, she worked for Umatilla County Mental Health for nine years as Accounting Assistant doing billing and assisting with the DD Program. Bobbie also has three daughters, loves to be outdoors (more so when the weather is nice). She enjoys warm weather, running, digging in the dirt and planting things.

Business Transformation Team

by Karen Fairchild, MIS/Program Evaluation Manager

Voting results are in

ENCOUNTER TRAINING
IS ON THE WAY!

Centralized Scheduling passes unanimously!!
Annex A will get a new
user-friendly look!!!

Although this set of votes isn't maybe as significant as what we saw on November 2nd, the Business Transformation Team's recommendations will have an impact on all of us. And they will mean some very positive changes for our agency. Thanks to everyone who participated in the process – I know it meant additional, often not so fun meetings and definitely some serious discussions but I think this first round of recommendations shows what can be done with the collective brain power of the people that work here.

Centralized Scheduling will quickly become a reality with Valerie leading the charge and Elizabeth volunteering to test some alternatives. Business Services Team (BST) will soon be scheduling all client appointments, placing reminder calls and backfilling canceled appointments. Complaints of playing telephone tag and not having reminder calls came through loud and clear on the 2010 Consumer Survey – Centralized Scheduling will definitely show that we listened to the concerns. And that little window for checking in at Annex A will soon be history. Thanks to design help from Jeremy, the lobby will have a new more welcoming look. The Centralized Scheduling Team is still working on how non-client appointments should be handled so we will be hearing more from them.

Lowell's Non-Billable Time group came through with several recommendations to either improve how we use our time or to help move some of that non-billable time

over to the billable category. After researching the issue, it was found that there was inconsistency in what was being encountered between AOD and Mental Health, that some people were missing encounterable codes and that it would be beneficial to track some non-billable time. This resulted in a vote for additional encounter training and creating a mechanism for better tracking of some non-encounterable time (such as report writing).

The Non-Billable Time group also came up with a couple recommendations that although everyone felt were good, there were concerns about the cost/benefit of both of them. This included creating a position dedicated to productivity training and improving video-conferencing capabilities between the different locations. The video-conferencing proposal was deferred until additional alternatives could be researched. As an alternative to the productivity training, Patty and Patrick have proposed doing a series of training labs which will focus on a different topic each month. This will give people a chance to hear an overview of some of the system features and to work through some samples with experts there to offer tips and help with questions.

Bottom line is that this is the start of some great ideas from all of you! I can't wait to see them implemented. ■

Centralized Scheduling

~ By Valerie Bellus

The BTT group tasked with Centralized Scheduling has completed most of the work necessary to bring Centralized Scheduling to our agency. The goal of Centralized Scheduling is to improve access to care, improve efficiencies, standardize procedures and maximize productivity.

During the next two weeks supervisors will meet with clinicians to design individualized templates outlining their desired structure for their work week. After clinicians have developed templates for their work week, this information will be entered into AZ and at that time clinicians and clients will begin to schedule all individual services and appointments through the front desk. This can be accomplished through several communication channels, including voicemail and paper slips (similar to what we do now with scheduling med management appointments.) The process will be evaluated along the way for efficiency and accuracy.

There will also be a number of trainings conducted during team meetings and individually to bring staff up-to-date and ensure that we are poised for a successful transition to Centralized Scheduling on December 01, 2010.

At this time those staff members who will be most affected by this change are clinicians serving in AOD and MHS disciplines. Other work groups including EASA, ICTS, Byrne and Supported Employment will be brought into discussions after this initial roll-out to see how Centralized Scheduling can be tailored for their programs.

If you have any questions or want to know more, please speak with one of the team members: Valerie Bellus (leader), Pepe Quintanilla, Elizabeth White, Molly Aguilar and Susan Sisko. ■

'TIS THE SEASON ... FOR COLDS AND FLU ...

BY SHALEEN JACOBSON, HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER



Yes, it's that time again. School is in full swing, the cold is starting to seep to the bones and the holidays bring more contact with friends and family. Here are some things you can do to help in prevent the spreading of germs that transmit cold and flu:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If you are not near water, use an alcohol-based (60-95%) hand cleanser.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Try not to touch your eyes or nose. Wash hand before and after touching your face.
- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze, but NOT with your hands! Cough or sneeze into your sleeve, shoulder, or elbow. Even a bare arm is better than your hands.
- If you use a tissue, throw the tissue away immediately after you use it and wash your hands or use alcohol-based cleaner.
- GET A FLU SHOT when available. Seasonal flu shots are available now. The current vaccines cover H1N1.

For those who are covered on our health insurance plan, you can get a no cost flu shot under our Blue Cross/Blue Shield coverage at your local Safeway pharmacy.

Please remember ... DO NOT COME TO WORK if you have the flu or flu-like symptoms. This is a courtesy to your clients and co-workers, and you should be taking care of yourself (this is why we have sick leave!). Please remember, if you come to work with the flu or flu-like symptoms, you may be sent home by your supervisor or a manager.

See "TIPS" on Page -7-

TIPS FOR TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF, OR YOUR FAMILY IF THE FLU STRIKES:

- Stay at home, avoiding work, school and social gatherings until the fever has been below 100° for 24-hours (*without needing fever-reducing medicine*).
- Get plenty of rest.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages.
- Drink at least 2 quarts each day of liquids such as water, non-diet sodas, ginger ale, broth, tea w/sugar.
- For runny or stuffy nose, try and over the counter decongestant.
- To reduce fever, take ibuprofen or acetaminophen as directed on the package. Avoid aspirin.
- For vomiting, don't eat or drink anything until you have not vomited for 4-hours, then sip on liquids (see above – avoid plain water as it can make vomiting worse) for 24-hours. If no further vomiting, begin eating mild foods like crackers, toast, mashed potatoes, rice, or apple sauce for 24-hours, then resume your regular diet.
- If you have to go out, wear a surgical mask or try to stay at least six feet from other people.
- If your symptoms get worse, seek medical care. Consider phoning your medical provider ahead to that you won't expose others to your illness. They can help by giving you a mask to wear or by having you wait in a separate area to avoid making others sick.

Community Happenings



Warming Shelters...

Hood River: The first warming shelter site will be Hood River Alliance Church at Rand and Montello, beginning the week of January 2, 2011. Other sites include Riverside United Church of Christ and St. Mark's Episcopal Church. The shelter beds open up when the temperature drops to 35 degrees or below. They will be able to house up to 16 individuals; the beds will be open from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. They are working out how to house families separately from individuals. It is preferred that people bring their own bedding, but other options are being explored to help those without. Two information and training sessions are already set for Dec. 16, to be held at the Alliance Church, 2650 Montello Ave. The first will be offered from 2 to 4 p.m. and the second from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. These are open to the public and interested persons are invited to attend. Tax-deductible donations may be made to the Hood River Warming Shelter in care of Linda Presley, co-pastor, Hood River Valley Christian Church, 975 Indian Creek Road, Hood River, OR 97031. More information or referrals may be obtained through Valley Christian Church at 541-386-2608.

The Dalles: All seems to be in place for opening of the Warming Place in The Dalles and weather will determine when it opens for the first time. The Warming Place will be located at 315 West Third Place, the building where St. Vincent DePaul has its community meal site. The site will open when the temperature goes below 28-degrees. The site will have a capacity of 58. Other factors, such as strong winds or heavy snow, would bring out the opening of the site, when the temperature is a few degrees higher than that. The site will be open from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. when needed. Potential volunteers need to contact Corliss March at (541) 296-8616. ♦

LaClinica del Cariño has been awarded a grant under the Affordable Health Care Act. The Tri-County Board unanimously agreed to MCCFL's purchase of approximately 50,000 square feet of land on the corner of 10th and Webber in The Dalles. The hope is to be two connected buildings with some common space that will bring to fruition our shared vision and commitment to integrated behavioral health, primary care and dental services!

A Peer-to-Peer Parenting Group. Collaborative Problem Solving: *The Explosive Child* Book Club - A weekly group for parents and other caregivers of children with challenging behaviors and/or mental health concerns: Understanding our children better (reading the book is not required, but recommended). What past participants have to

See "Community" on Page 8

- 7 -

say: “My home life is so much better! We have 80-90% less yelling.” “I went to get help for my grandson - it helps with my adult daughter, too!” “I was expecting it to be a bunch of bunk – and now I am a CPS disciple!” “I do not read well. I would never read that book. I learned enough in group to help my family - and I still [have] not read the book.” Where: Life in Christ Center, 3095 Cherry Heights Road, The Dalles, OR. Dates: Starts 11-15-10. Every Monday for 6 weeks. Time: 5:30 to 7:30. Register with Shannon Billings at (541) 300-9544 shannbillings@yahoo.com

Hood River County Commission Suicide Prevention Grant. The Hood River County Commission received a \$14,500.00 “Garrett Smith Memorial Suicide Prevention Grant” through the State DHs office. The Commission is partnering with Hood River County School District to have high school staff go through the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), the QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer), and RESPONSE programs. This spring the Hood River Valley High School Health Classes will receive peer-to-peer training in QPR.

Haystack offers helping hands to community. Haystack Broadcasting, the Salvation Army and St. Vincent de Paul are teaming up to make Christmas happy for local residents in need. Wednesday mornings between 7 and 9 a.m. Haystack is collecting food, toys and coats to fill the two helping organizations’ coffers in front of the Haystack offices at East Third and Madison Streets in The Dalles. Donors don’t even have to get out of their cars. The Haystack people will take donations and provide coffee and a doughnut in exchange.

The new “Be the Change” Sculpture at The Dalles Wahtonka High School!



Debby Jones reports the kids helped come up with idea and design which was taken to the sculptor. Solar lights will be put in place as soon as there is enough sunlight!



*This and That...
and some dates to remember!*

Health Savings Account (HSA) Reminders for January 1, 2011 Shaleen Jacobson, Human Resource Manager

As part of the passage of Health Care Reform, two HSA changes will take effect January 1, 2011. Here is a reminder of what to expect:

- Beginning 1/1/2011, expenses for over-the-counter (OTC) medications will no longer be eligible for payment or reimbursement from your HSA; however, the law still allows you to use your HSA funds for OTC medications when you have a doctor’s prescription. There are a few exceptions ...

See “This & That” on Page 9

OTC medications that will NOT require a doctor's prescription to be eligible for purchase with your HSA are:

- adhesive bandages
- braces and supports
- catheters
- contact lens supplies and solutions
- contraceptives
- denture adhesives
- diagnostic tests and monitors
- elastic bandages
- first aid supplies
- reading glasses
- wheelchairs, walkers, and canes
- insulin and diabetic supplies

- The second provision of the new law is the tax penalty for HSA withdrawals that are not used for qualified medical expenses.

The tax penalty for non-qualified HSA distributions will increase from 10% to 20% effective 1/1/2011.

In addition ... DON'T FORGET ... Please do not let your account drop to a zero or negative balance. If you have let your account lapse due to lack of funds, you will need to contact HSA Bank directly to re-open your account (there will be a fee for re-opening your account). If your account is not open on 1/1/2011 then we will not be able to deposit the full amount of funds into your account on 1/1/2011. **Tax regulations prohibit us from making retro payments!!** Please be sure to check your account status. If you have questions about this, please contact Shaleen at ext. 4140; or if you have questions about your account status or funds available, you will need to contact HSA Bank directly at 800-357-6246 Monday through Friday, 7am to 9pm CST; or go through internet banking if you have set this up. ■

Reminder about how we handle agency closings when Mother Nature throws too much snow and ice at us:



INCLEMENT WEATHER – EMERGENCY CLOSINGS:

Shaleen Jacobson, Human Resource Manager

Except for regularly scheduled holidays, MCCFL offices will be open for business Mondays through Fridays during normal business hours. We know that there may be circumstances beyond our control, such as inclement weather, national crises, or other emergencies that may affect our hours of operation.

On these occasions, at the discretion of the Executive Director or designee, MCCFL offices may close for all or part of a regularly scheduled workday. MCCFL generally follows the County's determination of closures. When the office is closed due to inclement weather or other emergency, employees will be paid for that day(s). NOTE: MCCFL wants staff to be safe and to make their own decisions regarding the safety of their commute in the face of inclement weather. On days that MCCFL remains open for business, employees may use accrued vacation, compensatory time, floating holiday, or personal leave time if available for days when they cannot reach the office due to road and weather conditions.

If the office is closed, MCCFL managers & supervisors will make every attempt to notify staff via phone of any office closure. If there is a question of whether the offices will be open in the case of inclement weather, you should contact your supervisor or listen to the local radio stations KIHHR (1340 AM); KCGB (105.5/96.9 FM); or KACI (1300 AM or 97.7 FM).

On days that MCCFL has been closed by order of the Executive Director or designee, some services critical to our clientele and the maintenance of the physical facilities may need to be delivered. The Program Managers and Office Manager will have the discretion of requesting limited service from employees during these times. Employees who voluntarily respond to these requests will be allowed to flex their schedules to allow time off, or receive personal leave time as they would for other non-clinic hour services. The plan for taking such time must be agreed upon with the manager who requests their assistance. It is stressed that such services must be requested by the managers and will be limited to selected activities they identify as essential. Other employees who appear at the office sites or perform services without permission during these events will not be compensated with flex or personal leave time. ■

The Mid-Columbia Center for Living will host a Winter Celebration for staff on January 12, 2011 in the Hood River Office from Noon to 1:30 P.M.

The Cottage will have a Christmas Lunch on Friday, December 17, 2010 at Spooky's in The Dalles from 12:30 to 2:00 P.M.

The Cottage is open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Please contact a Cottage Coordinator for an updated calendar of their activities!

- The Dalles Staff have adopted a Christmas Family through the Salvation Army. Please contact Amy Johnson for details!
- Colin Wood is looking for donations for the residents of the Enhanced Care Services Program. Any amount will be appreciated! Please contact Colin for details!

The Mid-Columbia Center for Living's Food Drive (December 13 - 24, 2010)



Donation boxes will be available in The Dalles (Annex A and the Lincoln Annex) and the Hood River from December 13 - December 24!

The Mid-Columbia Center for Living Wishes you a Safe and Happy Holiday Season and a Healthy and Happy 2011!