

Rapport

August 2011

The Mental Health Center
OF GREATER MANCHESTER
A Half Century of Caring

Our Connection to
the Community...



401 Cypress Street, Manchester, NH 03103 Tel: 603.668.4111 www.mhcgm.org

Annual Celebration for Mental Health

The Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester will host the 12th Annual Celebration for Mental Health on Monday, October 24, 2011. This annual dinner benefit supports The Center's efforts to provide charity care for community members in need. The free and subsidized services



offered by The Center, help to provide critical support to those who are experiencing behavioral health challenges in their lives.

John T. Broderick Jr., Dean and President of the University of New Hampshire School of Law and former Chief Justice of the New Hampshire Supreme

Court, will be the keynote speaker. The dinner celebration will be held at The Derryfield Country Club and the cost is \$80 per person. To register for the event go to: www.mhcgm.org and hit the Celebration for Mental Health link.

We would like to recognize and thank Stephen Eldridge & Company for their support as our Platinum Sponsor. Other sponsors include Elliot Health System and CGI Employee Benefits Group as Silver Sponsors and, Brady Sullivan Properties, Northeast Delta Dental, Central Paper Products and USI New England for the Bronze Sponsorship of our event. We invite friends and local businesses to join our list of supporters for this 12th annual event.

Annual Celebration for Mental Health

Monday, October 24, 2011

The Derryfield
Country Club

Cost: \$80 per person

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Mental Health link.

For more information please call the
Development Office at
(603) 668-4111 ext. 4180 or
email seneysan@mhcgm.org.

Lifestyle Changes Group: Supporting Weight Loss Surgery Success

Transformative!

If there is one word that describes the results for individuals who participate in The Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester's Lifestyle Changes group, that word is transformative. This innovative educational-skill building group is part of a collaboration with Catholic Medical Center's Obesity Treatment Center and is recognized as a critical component in promoting successful outcomes for weight loss surgery

Four years ago, Catholic Medical Center asked The Mental Health Center to develop a curriculum for a six-week class that would enhance the success of its weight loss surgery program. The class provides patients preparing for weight loss surgery with the skills they need to lose, and keep off problem

weight by adopting a healthier lifestyle prior to and following their surgery. First offered in 2007, more than 1,000 individuals have participated in the Lifestyle Changes classes.

Candidates for weight loss surgery must undergo physical and psychological assessments and take steps to lose a prescribed amount of weight prior to the procedure. They are also required to attend a six hour Lifestyle Changes group, typically conducted in one hour sessions over a six week period. Participants report a very positive response to the classes. As Janet, a recent attendee said, "I'm now much more mindful, not only of my eating, but of everything I do."

In the next edition of Rapport, we will explore the content of the Lifestyle Changes



classes and how it affects the people who take part. In a final article we will explore steps taken to assure that these attitudinal and behavioral transformations become a permanent part of participants' lives.

For more information about the Lifestyle Changes Group, contact Marc Guillemette at 603.668.4111, Ext. 4111 or email guillemm@mhcgm.org.

Healthcare for Minorities: Overcoming the Barriers

Historically Manchester has established itself as a “melting pot” community that is welcoming to diverse ethnic and cultural populations that come here to live and work. We have learned that they arrive with cultural norms, beliefs, traditions, and life



experiences that are unique. For some, those life experiences have been very negative, even traumatic. In addition, they often speak a different language.

All of these factors are potential barriers to their assimilation into the community. Healthcare providers and social service agencies have learned that it is imperative

that they understand these unique factors in order to be effective in meeting their needs. In other words they have to begin where the client is.

A woman we will call Joanna is a middle-aged, Native American woman, who was raised on a reservation in the Southwest. She was part of a very dysfunctional family with serious substance abuse problems as well as severe verbal and physical conflict, culminating in Joanna being a witness to the murder of one parent by the other. She began to abuse alcohol in her pre-teen years to insulate herself from the violence that surrounded her. Following the murder she spent the remainder of her childhood in a series of negative foster placements. At 18 she began a vagabond lifestyle moving about the country and through a series of dysfunctional personal relationships, continually abusing alcohol.

Two years ago she ended up homeless in Manchester and was seen by the Mobile Community Health Team, a healthcare service

for homeless persons. They informed her that she had severe liver disease that was potentially fatal. She became frightened at that prospect and stopped drinking “cold turkey”. David Carroll, the Homeless Outreach Worker for The Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester, began a patient process of attempting to engage her in an overall healthcare regimen. He found her to be depressed, with longstanding post-traumatic stress disorder, and serious medical issues related to her history of alcoholism. Her cultural experience had been so negative that she could not trust her ethnic peers. She had the impression that is just how life is. She was even more suspicious and mistrustful of other people, including those approaching her as caregivers.

David was eventually successful in getting her to admit herself to The Cypress Center, a 24-hour psychiatric crisis care unit followed by a medical admission to Catholic Medical Center. While in the Cypress Center she was assigned to one of The Center’s Assertive Case Management Teams that specializes in working with hard-to-reach persons with co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse. Her primary case manager, Mary Ellen Smith, reports, “When we met, Joanna was ambivalent about treatment, cynical and slow to trust. One of the key principles of Assertive Case Management, however, is to ‘roll with the resistance’.

Eventually she came around.”

Today Joanna has 18 months of sobriety, still sees her therapist and resides in a supervised housing unit. Her overall health status is regularly monitored and is more stable. The barriers to healthcare for minorities can be overcome if you are culturally competent and begin where the client is.

Lite Up the Nite 5K Benefits Mental Health

MHCGM held the second annual Lite Up the Nite for Mental Health 5K on June 23rd at Derryfield Park. A rainy race day didn’t deter the nearly 300 runners/walkers who turned out to support the benefit. Over \$7,500 was raised, which will help to support The Center’s mission and provision of charity care to community members in need.



The “Most Colorfully Dressed” team (left to right): Lisa Pope, Erik Roaf and Nicole Wentworth.



(Left to Right): Peter Janelle, MHCGM President & CEO, shared a laugh with Glenn Quinney, MHCGM Director of Child and Adolescent Services, while volunteering at the race.

MHCGM at African/Caribbean Celebration

The African/Caribbean Celebration is a festival highlighting cultural forms and activities based on African traditions from the African continent, the Caribbean and throughout the African diaspora. Music, dance, food, clothing and artifacts were all shared at the cultural event held on August 6. MHCGM was among the local organizations to have a booth to provide information about our programs and services with the community.



(Left to Right) Sandra Hicks and Lois Cote at the festival.

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