



# NEW DIRECTIONS

*“By, for, and about consumers of behavioral health services.”*

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## Medicaid Enrollment Open-Time Sensitive

Are you disabled but do not have Medicaid coverage? You may want to check this out with your local Department of Human Services (DHS) office, or speak with your case manager.

\* \* \* \* \*

For people needing medical coverage from the state or who have State Disability Assistance with no medical:

The Adult Benefits Waiver (ABW) program will have an open enrollment period from September 1, 2006 through October 31, 2006. All ABW applications received by the Michigan Department of Human Services during that period will be processed.

## Peer Specialists Recognized

Northern Lakes CMH Peer Support Specialists were recognized at the Michigan Recovery Council meeting, Sept. 22 in East Lansing at the Kellogg Center.

The Presentation began with a song by Peer Specialist Carrie Cross. 54 Peer Specialist were Certified in the Inaugural Testing. Since this testing, the total has moved to 92 with an additional testing. There will be five more trainings before the end of 2007. Many CMHs are still working on getting their first peer hired. Peers taking the training must be employed and working at least 10 hours a week.

Patrick Barrie presented the certificates to Peers and was instrumental in development of the Medicaid code for peer services. He will be showing/presenting information on how this can be done in other states around the nation.



## “Straight Talk Off the Record” Consumer Forums Scheduled for October

What is a consumer forum? The forum is an opportunity for consumers to address concerns and/or comments about Northern Lakes CMH. Consumers from the CAC (Consumer Advocacy Council) organize and facilitate the forums. It is a time just for consumers. If you have attended the Consumer Conference in the past two years you may have attended a forum.

**Topics to be discussed:** Recipient Rights, Person Centered Planning, Peer Support, Stigma, and Recovery. Come share your thoughts, ideas, and opinions. **Because your voice matters!**

**When: October 5, 2006**

**Locations and Times listed below:**

Cadillac Office of NLCMH	10:00-11:30 am
Chat Room-Houghton Lake	1:00-2:30 pm
Club Cadillac	1:30- 3:00 pm
Kandu Island- Traverse City	1:00- 2:30 pm
R.O.O.C. Inc.- Roscommon	10:00- 11:30 am
Traverse House- Traverse City	1:00-2:30 pm

For Questions and Information contact Ernie at 989-422-4476 or email [chatroom02@core.com](mailto:chatroom02@core.com).



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### Email subscriptions!

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## Med Watch

### Prescription Medication – Preventing Errors

Did you know that most prescription drugs have **three** different names, including a chemical, generic (nonproprietary) and brand (proprietary) name? Governed by different rules and regulations, many of these names sound or appear the same, which has led to 1.5 million medication errors each year, according to a report

(<http://www.kintera.org/TR.asp?ID=M7189868014281370233176865>) released last month by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. It does not help that there are also abbreviations, acronyms, dosage designations and other symbols used in prescribing medications that make dangerous mistakes even more likely.

**To prevent a potentially fatal medication error, follow these four simple steps:**

1. Insist that the doctor print both brand and generic names along with the purpose of the medication on the prescription.
2. Read it over with your doctor and verbally confirm the name and strength of your prescription before leaving the doctor's office and verify the information with your pharmacist before taking your medication home. (You also might want to copy the information from the prescription so you can keep it on file after you give your pharmacist the script.)
3. Doublecheck your refills to make sure they are correct before leaving the store (if you need to, bring your old bottle to compare).
4. Share any medical history changes, including the names of all the medications you are taking, with each of your doctors and your pharmacist before filling any prescription.

**For more about preventing medication errors, read the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's "Drug Name Confusion"**

(<http://www.kintera.org/TR.asp?ID=M7189868114281370233176865>) or visit the **National Coordinating Council for Medication Error Reporting and Prevention (NCCMERP)** web site for a list of potentially dangerous abbreviations

(<http://www.kintera.org/TR.asp?ID=M7189868214281370233176865>).

Do you have a **Success or Recovery** story you would like to share with others? As consumers we all need to hear about others and their recovery journey. Knowing others have struggled, yet live full lives, offers encouragement to those beginning the journey. Peers offer so much to each other that no one else can provide. To share contact Leslie at Customer Service.

### DISABILITY STARTER KIT MAKES APPLYING FOR BENEFITS EASIER

By Bob Simpson  
Social Security District Manager in Traverse City

Albert Einstein once said, "Everything should be made as simple as possible ...." That wisdom is certainly something with which most of us non-geniuses would agree.

Applying for Social Security disability benefits involves both government regulations and medical evidence. In order to make the application process easier to understand and navigate, Social Security has created a "Disability Starter Kit" that will help people get ready for a disability interview or online application.

The starter kit provides information about the specific documents and the information that we will ask for. The kit also provides general information about the disability programs and our decision-making process that can help take some of the mystery out of applying for disability benefits.

**Each Disability Starter Kit contains:**

- A fact sheet that answers common questions about applying for disability benefits;
- A checklist of documents and information we will ask you for; and
- A worksheet to help you gather and organize the information you will need.

The fact sheet provides the legal definition of "disability" and explains how Social Security decides if a person's condition is severe enough to meet the eligibility criteria. It also gives tips on steps an individual can take to speed up the decision-making process.

The checklist provides a list of the information we need for most disability claims. That includes documents such as a birth certificate, latest W-2 form and military discharge papers, and information such as the names and addresses of all the doctors and other health professionals who have treated the applicant.

The worksheet gives examples of important questions we ask during the disability application interview, such as a description of impairment(s) and the date that the individual became disabled. It also asks for a list of the medications taken and the medical tests conducted, and requests information about jobs the applicant has held.

Whenever someone requests an appointment to file for Social Security disability benefits, we will send him or her a copy of the "Disability Starter Kit." Or website visitors can find the kit online at [www.socialsecurity.gov/disability/](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disability/), or call 1-800-772-1213 (TTY, 1-800-325-0778) and ask that a kit be mailed to them.

## SECOND ANNUAL VOICE AWARDS

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) honored television, film and radio writers and producers in August at the second annual Voice Awards. Winners were recognized for creating dignified, respectful and accurate portrayals of people with mental health problems.

"We are proud to recognize those in the entertainment field who are helping to change misunderstanding and misconceptions about people with mental health problems," said Assistant Surgeon General Eric Broderick, DDS, MPH, SAMHSA Acting Deputy Administrator. "Because the entertainment field has the capacity to influence how the public views important social issues, it is critical that we acknowledge those who portray issues related to mental health and mental illness accurately and encourage them to continue to do so."

Winners in the television category were the crime dramas Law & Order: SVU (NBC) for the episode "Ripped," and Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye (PAX) for the episode "Mind Games."

Proof and Jellysmoke won the in the film category. Documentary winners included Legacy of the Harp; the Emmy-nominated I Have Tourette's, But Tourette's Doesn't Have Me; and Shadow Voices: Finding Hope in Mental Illness\*.

In the radio category, winners were Morning Edition (National Public Radio) for "Katrina and Recovery" and One in Five (Radio New Zealand) for "Crazy for Life."

David Hoberman, co-creator and executive

producer of Monk (USA), received a Career Achievement Award for his years of mental health advocacy.

In addition, SAMHSA presented Special Recognition Awards to both Patty Duke and Ruta Lee for their long-standing commitment to mental health advocacy.

Mariel Hemingway, host of this year's Voice Awards, is an outspoken advocate for suicide prevention and mental health.

The Voice Awards bestowed its Consumer Leadership award on five mental health advocates for raising awareness of mental health and expanding understanding that mental health problems exist in every community and affect almost every family in the United States. A Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Carmen Lee, a mental health advocate, and founder and executive director of Stamp Out Stigma, a non-profit organization dedicated to changing public perception of people living with mental illnesses.

Voice Award program partners included: Ad Council; American Counseling Association; American Psychiatric Foundation; American Psychological Association; Anxiety Disorders Association of America; the Mental Health Media Partnership; NARSAD, the Mental Health Research Organization; National Association of Social Workers; National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors; United Behavioral Health; and Writers Guild of America, West.

The Voice Awards are part of the National Anti-Stigma Campaign, a program sponsored by SAMHSA with the Ad Council, to reduce the stigma and discrimination faced by people with mental health problems.

### Michigan Recovery Council

The Michigan recovery Council met on September 22, 2006. They hosted a Presentation and luncheon for the first group of Certified Peer Specialist. Michigan is proud to now have 92 peers trained and certified. With 5 additional trainings yet to come before the end of 2007 we will be near 300 certified peers specialists. With this pace we may pass beyond that of the Georgia Peer Specialists. Michigan is looked up to around the country due to our Self-Determination and Person Centered Planning process policies; we may be looked up to in the future for our availability of Peers in the Mental Health Field.

The Council worked on their mission statement and meeting guidelines. Presentations from Arnie Greenfield and Tom Renwick were received as well.

The meeting on Outcomes with Arnie became a bit uncomfortable for all in attendance as the council was not pleased with the outcome tool chosen. It lacked in recovery or wellness information, something of great importance to the council as it moves forward in the transformation of the Michigan Mental Health System. Arnie was also at a loss as he was the bearer of the information and didn't anticipate the council's response.

Tom presented the council with information on the MDCH site visits as they are in the midst of revisions and is seeking input from the council on the information thus far. Members will respond to Tom so revisions and additions may be considered.

The next Recovery Council Meeting will be in November 17, 2006, returning to their meeting location at Lansing Community College West Campus. These meetings are open to the public.

Members who you may know: Mary Beth Evans, Ernie Reynolds, Leslie Sladek and Greg Paffhouse.

## Regional Consumer Forum

The Northwest Regional Consumer Forum met in Ludington last August for their quarterly meeting. They were provided with updates on consumer happenings in their respective locations. Consumers on the Forum are from Northern Lakes and West Michigan CMHs. Information and feedback about the Consumer Conference was provided. A list of updated acronyms and definitions was provided as well as reports from Quality Oversight Committee, Managed Care, Customer Service and the Customer Service workgroup. One of the main topics ended up being on Self-Determination. Information was provided from many, but the true experience of one of the members assisted others in understanding the process of self-determination; the desire to learn more was evident to all. Although it was not a scheduled agenda item it proved to be the most interesting of topics that day. The meeting was rounded out with lunch and a viewing of part of the Recipient Rights DVD that was recently produced through a grant from MDCH. The group was asked to help determine a manner in which to provide information to consumers and families. Their next meeting will be in November at the Traverse City office. These meetings are open for all.



### Dear Marci

Marci recently informed you to get out and catch the last rays of summer sunshine to help improve your nighttime shuteye. Here's another reason: exposure to sunlight causes your body to produce Vitamin D, which not only helps maintain healthy bones but also plays a role in building muscle mass, according to a new study published in the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism (<http://www.kintera.org/TR.asp?ID=M7195334114281370234304265>).

The National Institutes of Health (<http://www.kintera.org/TR.asp?ID=M7195334214281370234304265>) suggests 10-15 minutes a day of unprotected sun exposure twice a week. You can't use sunscreen if you are trying to bone up on vitamin D...lotions with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 8 or greater block the UV rays that your body needs to produce it. But afterward, be sure to apply a sunscreen of at least 15 SPF to help prevent skin cancer! Dear Marci is a weekly news letter from the Medicare Rights Center. For other Medicare policy and news updates from the Medicare Rights Center visit: [www.medicarerights.org/subscribeframeset.html](http://www.medicarerights.org/subscribeframeset.html)

## Ongoing Events

If you know of other ongoing events that could help other consumers, please contact the Editor of New Directions.

- **NAMI Support** second Monday of the month at 6:00pm Munson Medical Center-Doctors Dining room.
- **DBSA** (Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance) meets every Tuesday 7-8:00pm Club Cadillac. Contact Betty Clark at 775-5638.
- **Bereavement Support Group**, available to the public through MMC's Hospice and Palliative Care program. Mondays at Hospice House 6:30pm or Tuesdays at the TC Senior Center 10:00am. For more information 935-8491.
- **Support Group for Teens (13-19)**, For Bipolar disorder and Depression. This peer-led group meets every **Thursday** from 3:15-5:00 pm., at the First Presbyterian Church, 221 East Harris St., Cadillac.
- **Healthy Choices**- This group meets to discuss and share diabetic friendly recipes. Meeting the **fourth Monday** of the month from 11:00 am – 12:00 noon at 3003 S. Garfield (Kandu Island). Information call Jeremy Wolf at 922-0903, or 645-4884.

## Upcoming Events

- **October**, Consumer Advocacy Council will once again be holding the Consumer Forums.
- **October 10-13 Recipient Rights Conference** in Grand Rapids. For additional information contact Nancy Bogart, ORR Training Division, at (248) 348-9961 or [bogartnk@michigan.gov](mailto:bogartnk@michigan.gov)
- **October 19**, NLCMH Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m. ROOC Inc. Roscommon Registration for Alternatives 2006 Available Online
- **October 21&22**, DBSA Conference – Living Well: Making Recovery Real. Chicago, IL. More information at [www.DBSAAlliance.org](http://www.DBSAAlliance.org)
- **October 25-29**, Alternatives, in Portland (Ore.) For registration and hotel reservations, visit <http://www.alternatives2006.org>
- **November 8**, Consumer Advocacy Council, 1:30-3:30pm. Traverse City, video to Houghton Lake.
- **November 16**, NLCMH Board Meeting, 6:00pm at NLCMH Cadillac Office
- **November 15-17 MARO Conference**, Grand Traverse Resort Traverse City. For additional information contact Harry Smith at (517) 484-5588 or [hsmith2@maro.org](mailto:hsmith2@maro.org)