



Mental Health Center of Denver

Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

April 2011

Notes from the Daylight Project Coordinator, Mary Sterritt

Seven Early Adopter agencies were identified to participate in the Daylight Project's Learning Collaborative (LC). These are agencies that support consumer choice around communication preference and a strong desire to meet the needs of deaf and hard of hearing persons in their communities. We had our initial LC meeting on February 23rd. Seven agencies that form the Daylight Project Learning Collaborative are: Addiction and Recovery Treatment Services, Arapahoe House, Aspen Pointe, Centennial Mental Health Center, Larimer Mental Health Center, Northrange Behavioral Health and the Mental Health Center of Denver. Individual agency Learning Collaborative meetings occurred in January. The Learning Collaborative will meet monthly through the end of the grant.

We will offer trainings to all Learning Collaborative members with the goal of increasing their capacity to serve deaf and hard of hearing consumers at all levels. The trainings will be provided to three groups of staff: Support staff, Clinical staff and Administrative staff. These will be provided over the next four months.

The Daylight Project clinical training on "Working Effectively with Deaf and Hard of Hearing" was piloted at Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD) on January 21. We had twenty three MHCD staff from 12 different teams attend! On January 28th, MHCD front office staff participated in a pilot training designed to enhance their capacity to welcome and work with deaf and hard of hearing consumers. Twenty five staff MHCD attended this training, including pharmacy staff. This training focused on tools and information support staff can use in providing accessible services to deaf and hard of hearing persons.

The Evaluation group conducted Key Informant (KI)/ Stakeholder Interviews to assess providers' current capacity and needs from the perspective of individuals who are knowledgeable about the experiences (i.e., challenges as well as what works) of deaf and hard of hearing people with regard to their use of or attempts to use mental health or substance abuse services. They also conducted Consumer/Family Interviews to assess MH/SA providers' training and technology needs directly from the consumer/family perspective. Key informant and consumer/family interviews representing culturally diverse members of deaf and hard of hearing communities were conducted.

How the Daylight Project Got its Name

This project simply brings daylight, if not hope, in regards to advancement of access to mental health and substance abuse services for deaf and hard of hearing Coloradans.

Daylight Project is the name of the Statewide Strategic Use Funds grant project! The Mental Health Center of Denver in partnership with the Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing were funded \$520,000 for a 22-month project to implement the training and technical assistance center described in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Mental Health and Substance Abuse Action Plan, which will end on June 30, 2011.

Prior to the November 2009 retreat, the Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's Mental Health and Substance Abuse Implementation Team felt it needed to identify the project with a name that the community would embrace and for the community to be able to relate it to the Team's important statewide system advocacy. The Team narrowed it down to this most viable name.

Developing Standards

In the fall of 2010, the Daylight Project convened a Standards of Care Work Group to identify standards related to providing mental health and substance abuse services to deaf and hard of hearing consumers. To develop the standards, three types of information were used: expertise from the members of the work group; 39 research articles, reports, and documents with standards from other states; and expert input from national leaders. The 49 standards cover the following topics:

- General access issues
- Physical environment
- Provider qualifications and training
- Consent and rights
- Communication access through interpreters
- Healthcare records
- Communication during seclusion and restraint
- Screening, assessment, and evaluation
- Treatment and clinical best practices

The next step for the standards is to pilot them with mental health and substance abuse organizations. Arapahoe House, a Denver-based substance abuse treatment provider, is already beginning to use the standards. Other organizations will also participate in piloting them through the Daylight Learning Collaborative. The standards will be revised in response to the piloting efforts and guidelines for implementing them will be developed. To review a draft copy of the Standards of Care and for more information, please contact jewlya@csi-policy.org with the Center for Systems Integration.

Training Tidbit

The Daylight Project is developing and delivering the following types of training for Learning Collaborative Organizations:

1. Clinical Staff, 101 Class: This course is designed to help clinicians in a behavioral healthcare setting interact with deaf and hard of hearing clients in such a way that is culturally sensitive, effective, and therapeutically productive.
2. Clinical Staff, 201 Mental Health Class: This course is designed to help clinicians who have taken the 101 class to develop more in-depth, specialized skills for clinical delivery of services.
3. Clinical Staff 201 Substance Abuse Class: This course will be delivered by a national expert in substance abuse services to deaf and hard of hearing consumers and will focus on clinical delivery of substance abuse services.
4. Front-Desk 101 Class: This course is designed to help front desk employees in a mental health setting interact and communicate with deaf and hard of hearing clients in such a way that is welcoming, culturally sensitive, and effective.
5. Administrators Class: This course is designed for Administrators and covers topics related to best practices in providing services to deaf and hard of hearing persons. Research and consultation with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Mental Health and Substance Abuse national experts led to the development of Daylight Standards, which will be presented. The training will address ways to incorporate the deaf and hard of hearing standards into existing policies, operational plans, management, and monitoring activities.

The Daylight Project is also developing a two-day curriculum for inclusion as a Certified Addictions Counselor elective and a Diversity Endorsement class in partnership with the Division of Behavioral Health.

About Consumer & Family Advocacy Network Training

An innovative series of consumer advocacy training workshops were offered to encourage deaf people and people with hearing loss to become active in their communities to improve access to needed services. The Daylight Project, sponsor of the training series, seeks to improve access to mental health and substance abuse services for hard of hearing and deaf people and their families in Colorado. The goal of the Daylight Advocacy Network is to support the development of a network of trained consumer advocates who are willing to act to improve awareness among Colorado's mental health and addiction recovery treatment providers about the experiences of people who are deaf or hard of hearing. And so, the first workshop sessions are done!

The free series consists of three workshops held on Tuesday, March 8; Thursday, March 10; and Tuesday, March 15, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in Denver. Each part included a 4-hour interactive class taught by deaf and hard of hearing presenters, free dinner, and an Advocacy Notebook containing class materials, useful resources for advocacy, and other take-home guides for each participant. CART captioning, sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, project materials, and slide presentations make the materials accessible to people with

any level of hearing acuity as well as hearing family members. Classes were held at the Mental Health Center of Denver. Participants must be deaf or hard of hearing or be family members of deaf or hard of hearing people, and some exposure to mental health and substance abuse issues is preferred. Adults of all ages were welcome, and childcare was provided.

The first workshop covered how to present our experiences with being deaf or hearing loss to others, examine the common ground we share when doing advocacy work, and explore distinctive cultural features of the deaf and hard of hearing communities. The second workshop focused on how mental health and substance abuse services are provided in Colorado, what barriers consumers can face when seeking treatment, and where consumers have opportunities to give input to providers to improve access and understanding. The final workshop was on personal and community advocacy, giving a framework for advocates to use that connects how we stand up for ourselves (such as explaining our hearing loss or getting the accommodations we need) with how we work together in groups to be sure our perspectives are understood when and where decisions are made. We requested that participants attend all three trainings. People who completed the trainings will have opportunities to participate in other Daylight Project events, as well as further plans for grassroots action.

The Daylight Project is a statewide effort, guided by the Mental Health Center of Denver and Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, to create a network of mental health and substance abuse providers with the capacity to provide appropriate, effective services to deaf and hard of hearing clients. The project partners are the Center for Systems Integration and Focus Research and Evaluation.

For more information about the Daylight Project, please contact: Mary Sterritt, Daylight Project Coordinator at mary.sterritt@mhcd.org, or by phone at 720-949-7484 (VP) or 303-504-6521 (voice).

