



**Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Mental Health and Substance Abuse System-level Advocacy Update
July 1, 2009**

Grant Proposals

The Mental Health and Substance Abuse (MHSA) Implementation Team of the Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH) submitted a grant proposal to the Colorado Health Foundation (CHF) on April 15, 2009 and an application to the Statewide Strategic Use Fund (SSUF) with the Department of Human Services on May 29, 2009.

With the CHF proposal, the Implementation Team requested funding to complete the first two years of the action plan. The Implementation Team and their team of consultants, which includes consumer and family advocates, will concurrently develop:

- Standards,
- Technical assistance to implement the standards, and
- Capacity building in the deaf and hard of hearing advocacy community.

The SSUF application requested funding for coordination and provision of services to deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families, including:

- Early identification of mental health needs,
- Mental health and substance abuse services, and
- Other supportive services in health, child welfare, TANF, workforce, vocational rehabilitation, and related systems.

To develop these capacities, the Implementation Team will work with a project coordinator and key Colorado leaders to:

- Map the existing provider capacity in Colorado;
- Create a statewide network of providers with skills and interest in serving deaf and hard of hearing individuals;
- Identify standards for the provision of services in partnership with providers, consumers, families, state agencies, and policymakers;
- Build on current tele-medicine efforts in health and mental health systems to incorporate tele-medicine into the service delivery model for deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families; and
- Identify and provide training and technical assistance to providers in the statewide network.

This multi-faceted approach will only be successful with the authentic engagement of deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families as advocates for change. The consumer and family engagement approach that is core to this work will also ensure the services available within the Statewide Network have the capacity to meaningfully improve the lives of deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families.

Awarded grantees will for both CHF and SSUF will be announced this month. Cross your fingers!

New Member

The Implementation Team has invited a new member, Sonia Jackson of the Pikes Peak Mental Health Center, to serve as a representative of the Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council. This Council is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 membership organization that represents Colorado's statewide network of community behavioral healthcare providers inclusive of 17 community mental health centers (MHCs), 2 specialty clinics, and 5 behavioral health organizations (BHOs). CBHC member organizations contract with the State of Colorado and work together to provide comprehensive behavioral and psychiatric services to defined geographic areas of the state.

CBHC provides a network of skilled therapeutic and community resources to meet the mental health needs of all Colorado residents and their families so that all can have equal and full access to a improved quality of life. Throughout Colorado, thousands of individuals once isolated and disabled by mental illness, are now leading productive, satisfying lives.

Sonia Jackson is the Deputy Director of the Pikes Peak Mental Health Center. Welcome aboard, Sonia!

Work Groups

The Implementation Team has been assembling the Standards of Care Work Group and the Consumer Advocacy Work Group, however, they are still looking for additional representatives. Please contact Angelia Lawson at angelia.lawson@state.co.us for the Standards of Care Work Group and Rebecca Herr at rebeccaherr@gmail.com and Laura Douglas at ldouglas@csdb.org for the Consumer Advocacy Work Group.

Your input is welcome as well. As the Work Groups develop standards and empower consumers and family members, your input will be invaluable. The Implementation Team is striving to improve the quality of mental health and substance abuse treatment for all deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened and deaf-blind residents of Colorado, including children, adults and senior citizens.

Contact Information

Please note the CCDHH's new general e-mail address: email.ccdhh@state.co.us. The former general e-mail address: deaf.commission@state.co.us is no longer available.