

FY0607-AA-26

October 20, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: PBH Management Staff

FROM: Dan Coughlin

SUBJECT: Enhancement of Consumer Voices in the PBH Management Structure

One of my goals in coming to PBH was to bring consumers to the table and to ensure that consumer voices are heard at the highest levels at PBH. I know that this goal is shared by our Board and many others at PBH. We began our efforts with the initiation of a Department of Consumer Affairs, and were fortunate to bring a nationally recognized consumer leader to PBH to head this effort. Having an experienced leader has been instrumental in advancing this important PBH initiative, and we have set an example for other North Carolina LME's through her leadership in local and state wide activities. An important goal that is represented in our 2006-07 Plan of Work is to extend this effort and develop a strategy that will more strategically include consumer perspectives in all PBH policy, planning, outreach, and program development activities. In evaluating the best way to accomplish this goal, we have come to realize that having a separate department represent this universe of interests has been unrealistic, and that we have not provided that department with adequate resources to effectively cover all the bases at PBH where consumer involvement would benefit outcomes. This has caused us to rethink how we have deployed our consumer resources and to develop a plan to realign these in ways that will more effectively further our agenda. Our goals include the following:

Goals:

- Increase our investment in consumer involvement at PBH and distribute consumer representation across a number of departments and cross functional teams.
- Provide catalyst support for the development of a MH consumer culture that serves to empower people with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness. (SPMI)
- Ensure representation of the consumer perspective across the agency, and work "from the inside out" and at the point where policies and practices are developed, to change the face of our system of care to be truly person centered.

At our last Round Table meeting, we approved the following strategy to address these goals.

Develop greater specificity of roles, responsibilities, and distribution of designated consumer (openly declared primary consumer) staff positions within the PBH management structure.

1. Office of Consumer Affairs:
 - a. Function as ombudsman and advocate for consumers; assist in problem resolution
 - b. Provide consumer perspective including advocacy and information at the executive level for policy development
 - c. Provide consultation on "best practices" in consumer support and treatment
 - d. Work with the Quality Management Department to
 - Assist in responding to complaints and grievances
 - Review of performance data such as incident information
 - Participate in the internal and external Quality Review functions such as satisfaction surveys, "Mystery Shopper" and monitoring
 - e. Support the development of consumer leadership.
 - f. Manage scholarship fund for consumer education and empowerment activities.
 - g. Future consideration for adding other disability specific representatives to this department.

This department would move to the Medical Director in order to increase collaborative activities with the Quality Management Department.

Representatives of the Consumer Affairs Department would participate in:

- CQI CFT
- Care Mgmt CFT
- Clinical Advisory committee
- Crisis Task Force
- Global CQI
- Peer Specialist training (through Care Management Team)
- Communications CFT
- Round Table but not Management Team

The Department would support Client Rights Committee. CFAC liaison role would be transitioned to the Community Relations Department.

2. Establish a media and education position within the Community Relations Department and establish requirements that include an experienced educator who is an openly declared consumer. The Community Relations Department would assume the following responsibilities:

- Maintain the Consumer Handbook and related materials
- Develop other educational materials and media for consumers and families
- Provide community training and education such as WRAP and Family to Family
- Participate in community forums as well as other outreach and public relations activities
- Liaison functions to the CFAC

- Support for the Consumer Conference

The position would be involved in Cross Functional Teams, as assigned, that require Community Relations or consumer representation. The Director of Community Relations would report to Round Table and not Management Team since the focus of this department is not operations, but public relations and political activities.

3. Establish a Project Manager for MH specific consumer start up activities that is led by a primary consumer:

- Organize and oversee a Self Direction pilot project for MH adults
- Explore setting up drop in centers and address related supports (transportation)
- Consult with network development as related to services and supports required by consumers

This position would participate on the following teams:

- Waiver Oversight
- Network Operations
- Management Team

This position will report to Brian Ingraham.

We will begin making these adjustments to our management structure in the near future, with the goal of full implementation by January 2007.

I also want to thank PBH management for their past support for these efforts to bring consumers to the table. This has provided a dimension to our work that has made us BETTER, and will continue to enhance the work we do for people with disabilities immeasurably.