

The Bell Ringer

Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis

Phone: 317.251.0005
Crisis Line: 317.251.7575

Issue 2, Fall 2011
www.mhaindy.net

Letter from the CEO

Dear Friends of MHAGI,

As we head into the holiday season and take account of all that we are thankful for, I want to express thanks to our volunteers and financial supporters. Without you, we would not be able to provide essential services for those with mental illness or the public education regarding mental health. Reflecting back on this year, together we have accomplished many things.

Our **Adult Guardianship Service** provides protective care for adults who are mentally incapable to meet their own needs. The guardian ensures that the protected individual resides in safe, suitable housing; receives adequate nutrition and medical care; receives benefits for which he/she qualifies; and is cared for in the least restrictive manner and in accordance with his/her stated wishes to the extent possible. This year we began working together with the Wishard Health Advocates program, CICOA, Center for Elder Law, Adult Protection and Advocacy, LaRue Carter Hospital, and Families First to address the shortage of this service in Marion County. We have formed a coalition known as the Adult Guardianship Coalition of Central Indiana with a goal to work together to provide guardianship services to unbefriended adults and seniors in the Indianapolis Metropolitan area, using a combination of professional and volunteer guardianship resources.

Our **Crisis and Suicide Intervention Service** provides a 24-hour Hotline for people who are contemplating suicide, are in mental distress, or are concerned about substance abuse, relationships, stress, depression or other issues. We were able to increase our outreach and marketing efforts this year to get the word out about this valuable community resource, in turn increasing the number of calls to the line. More people were able to reach out for help rather than suffering alone. We are exploring the use of new technology to make this service even more accessible to vulnerable populations.

The **Psychiatric Assertive Identification & Referral (PAIR)** program helps ensure that arrested defendants with a mental illness receive treatment for their illness and are



appropriately integrated back into the community. Through our advocacy efforts, we were able to reverse a decision made in 2010 by the Prosecutor to disallow any PAIR referrals with a felony charge. Felonies that have a similar misdemeanor charge are still appropriate referrals for consideration for PAIR placement.

Our **Community Education** program provides outreach about good mental health habits, symptoms of mental disorders, how to cope with mental illness, as well as treatment strategies; all promoted through workshops, health fairs, and literature distribution. Awareness campaigns, such as National Depression Screening Day, help draw attention to the symptoms and seriousness of this illness and provide hope for a more satisfying life with treatment. This awareness day on October 6 helped 119 individuals screen themselves for possible symptoms of depression and led 58% of those screened to say they are very likely to seek further evaluation from a medical professional.

It was recently announced by the CDC that 50% of Americans would experience some form of mental disorder during their lifetime. While that may be true, recovery is possible. Our vision is a community where mental health is the cornerstone of public health, stigma is eliminated, and that people with mental illness have their unique needs met through quality service, culturally competent care, stable housing, and employment opportunities resulting in self-sufficiency. With your help, this is achievable. We have the skills and partners in place to enhance the quality of life for vulnerable neighbors for many years to come. We thank you for your partnership in our continued leadership and development

Yours in Health,

Mental Illness is a Disease just like Diabetes and Cancer.

These people would agree:

Abraham Lincoln, Brooke Shields, Ashley Judd, Billy Joel, Harrison Ford, J.K. Rowling, Terry Bradshaw, Winston Churchill...

Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis Success Stories

24-Hour Crisis Line

Hannah, 17, called the crisis line and told the Clinical Associate (CA) that she was raped two days ago by a family friend. She said that overall, her family has been supportive of her and told her that it wasn't her fault. The problem is that they are also supporting his family. Hannah's mother has said that the guy who did this is a "good boy" and they still love him. This is causing conflict for Hannah because she doesn't always know whose side her family is on.

The police were called, he admitted what he did and he was arrested. Hannah's parents have gotten her the necessary care, etc. She has an appointment for counseling. Additionally, she has been under the treatment of a therapist for depression and suicidal ideation. Hannah has started to feel suicidal with all the trauma she has experienced. Her mom is now looking into more intense therapy for the time being.

The CA assessed the lethality of the call and was very affirmative with Hannah that this was not her fault and she did nothing to deserve this. He told her that she was very strong and brave to come forward as she did. Although the CA was disappointed to hear some of her parent's behaviors, he did not want to put them down. He told Hannah that she deserves 100% support. Her parents may be so shocked by the situation that they aren't sure how to respond. After the shock wears off, the family may realize that they need to side with her. The CA is encouraged by her appointments for therapy, an important step in her recovery process.

Adult Guardianship

Kim is a young adult with an intellectual disability and severe behavioral disorders. Her past home environment was violent and abusive, and several years ago she was hospitalized for 6 months due to abuse. Adult Protective Services became involved and decided that Kim could not return to her family's home. During the hearing for MHAGI to obtain guardianship, the court awarded the family the right of reasonable visitation and contact. Kim was placed in a waiver apartment in the community away from her family. Due to highly expressed emotion during contacts with her family, Kim frequently exhibited aggressive verbal and physical outbursts, false allegations, destruction of property, stealing, elopements, taking off her clothing in public, walking in a street with heavy traffic, and self-injurious behaviors requiring medical treatment, all occurring immediately after family contacts. She was also arrested for theft and entered the PAIR mental health diversion program (another one of MHAGI's programs in the community).

Kim's treatment team was overwhelmed with fear of the abusive family, and not knowing how to subdue Kim during her behavioral outbursts after family contact. Her Guardianship Coordinator was concerned that Kim would be dropped from the mental health diversion program and end up in prison if she continued to act out with violent behaviors in the community. So the Guardianship Coordinator decided that it was necessary to restrict phone calls and visits with family for a limited time immediately after Kim had any severe behaviors. Kim and her family were informed that whenever she was having appropriate behaviors, she could have the contacts; if her behaviors became violent, phone calls and visits would not be permitted for a period of time. Since Kim very much wanted to have contacts with her family, her behaviors improved greatly.

Three years ago Kim had a dozen state reportable incidents within a 9 month period. She has not had a single reportable incident in the past two years, has few inappropriate behaviors, and is a pleasure for her staff to work with. Due to severe state cut backs in funding for the residential programs for persons with disabilities, her Guardian realized that after two years with no incidents, the state would want to save money by requiring that Kim once again share her apartment with a roommate. Many of the team members were quite hesitant to make this change and felt that Kim's inappropriate behaviors would increase. Even Kim's doctor called the Guardian to advocate that she not have a roommate. The Guardian assured the team that this would be a good change for Kim and that she and her staff were ready for this opportunity which would also be a challenge. The move went well and Kim is having better behaviors than she did before getting a roommate. She likes her new roommate and her new, larger apartment. Because she has a Guardian to advocate for her, Kim continues to enjoy a better quality of life in the community.

Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis Grants and Sponsorships

MHA of Greater Indianapolis is the Recent Recipient of:

- \$500 Business of the Month Sponsorship from Greenwalt CPAs
- \$500 Business of the Month Sponsorship from Valle Vista Health Systems
- \$500 Business of the Month Sponsorship from Taft Law
- \$1,000 Crisis Line Sponsorship from Fifth Third Bank
- \$1,000 Hook Drug Foundation Grant
- \$1,000 The Brave Heart Foundation Grant
- \$2,500 Education Sponsorship from The National Bank of Indianapolis
- \$5,000 Education Sponsorship from Lilly USA, LLC
- \$10,000 Crisis Line Sponsorship from Lilly USA, LLC

Join us for the 61st Annual Gift Lift and Give-A-Wrap

Mental Health America's Gift Lift has been a tradition since 1950. Hundreds of gifts are donated and then wrapped for those in mental health residential programs, state hospitals, inpatient units and others in the Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis Adult Guardianship program.

GIVE-A-GIFT

Please email Mark Rozales at mrozales@mhaindy.net to be matched with a client for gift giving. Once you are assigned a gift, you can drop off your donation to the MHAGI office at 301 E. 38th St., Indianapolis, IN 46205. All donations are due December 8th.

GIVE-A-WRAP

Join us for a day of holiday fun and help wrap all of the donated gifts on Wednesday, December 14th from 10 am to Noon at 301 E. 38th St., Indianapolis, IN 46205.

RSVP to Mark Rozales at mrozales@mhaindy.net

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