



# NORTHCARE NEWS

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## Inside this issue:

5th Annual U.P. Conference	2
Meditation Group	2
Newest Peer Support Specialists	2
This is What I Do	3
A Lot to Know, A Lot to Remember	4
Access	5
Annual Report	5
Walk-A-Mile	5
Disability Benefits	6
SAIL & Recovery Coordinators	6
Your Presence	7
Important for You	7

## Health Education Answers

Health Education Answers is a program dedicated to providing education on thirteen different health topics. This exciting new addition to the NorthCare website will help you learn about health topics that are of interest to you. Health Education Answers allows a person to learn at their own speed in the privacy of their own home. If you don't feel like reading, let Health Education Answers read the information to you. If you would like to know more about Diabetes, Bipolar Disorder or Depression, it is all there. The thirteen different topics that are covered on Health Education Answers are:

1. Attention Deficit Hyper-Activity Disorder
2. Bipolar Disorder
3. Depression
4. Diabetes
5. Diabetes Complications
6. Heart Health
7. Manage Your Weight
8. Medication Safety
9. Men's Health
10. Schizophrenia
11. Smoking & Addictions

12. Wellness

13. Women's Health

Just go to NorthCare's website at [www.northcare-up.org](http://www.northcare-up.org) and click on Health Education Answers to get started!

If this sounds interesting but you are not comfortable at surfing the net (or don't have a computer) contact your local Drop-In Center or your local Peer Support Specialist. They have been trained on Health Education Answers and can help you find a computer to use, help with basic internet skills, and help you explore Health Education Answers at your own speed and skill level.

## 2012 Recovery Conference

Mark your calendar! **The 2012 Recovery Conference will be held on May 22nd at the Holiday Inn of Marquette.** The Planning Team has already started putting together the agenda with fun, educational workshops. Don't forget about the Social Get-together on the evening before the conference too. There will be time for meeting old and new friends along with karaoke!



## 2011 – 5th Annual U.P. Consumer Conference Recovery: Finding Your Pot of Gold Update



The 5th Annual U.P. Consumer Conference-Recovery: Finding Your Pot of Gold, was held at the Holiday Inn of Marquette on May 17, 2011. Over 165 people attended the day filled with lively and educational workshops.

Some of the workshops that people enjoyed the most were Pet Therapy, Art Therapy and Music Therapy. The Pet Therapy workshop presenter brought along his dog, Jesse, who was the hit of the conference. In the Music Therapy

workshop, everyone was encouraged to play an instrument whether it was “spoons”, “clickers” or tambourines. Fun was had by all. The best part was no one had to have any experience with singing or playing an instrument prior to attending the workshop.

## Meditation Group at Northern Lights Clubhouse in Hancock

Recently we started a group which meets each week to introduce club members to the practice of meditation. I teach the class from my personal experience, including readings from highly respected teachers, such as Thich Nhat Hanh. I encourage members to try to develop a regular meditation practice. Our meditation is in the Buddhist monastic tradition, which focuses our attention on being mindful, which is living in the here and now and mastering our breathing to obtain that mindfulness. Breath unites your body to your thoughts. Meditation has many positive

benefits on the body and chief among these are total rest and relaxation, reduced stress and anxiety and increased concentration. We listen to music as we get comfortable and spend a few minutes concentrating on our breathing, relaxing all of our muscles and letting go of everything else. After 15 minutes of doing this it is possible to reach a deep quiet, filled with inner peace and joy. Thus far I have received much positive feedback as we continue to practice our meditation together. — by Bob F.



## Newest Peer Support Specialists

At the Peer Support Conference, the State of Michigan made Bob and Jeanne White's dog, Chance, an honorary Peer Support specialist. It was a very emotional ceremony. There were about 250 people in attendance and there was not a dry eye in the house. Chance has attended all the Peer Support Specialist certification trainings and provided extensive

hugs during the sometimes stressful program.

On a more serious note, two Peer Support Specialists have also been hired at Copper Country CMH. NorthCare is excited that Carl Evers and Amy Juntunen are both working and are available to share their recovery journeys to help others. Welcome to both Amy & Carl and best of luck!

## THIS IS WHAT I DO- BY, TRACY A. FINN

My job as a peer support specialist not only pays me money, but also it is rewarding in my life. It is taking an active role in my own recovery that means so much. I would like to share with everyone just what a peer support specialist does in general and then a more detailed description of what I do on my job.

Going to the training downstate to get certified as a peer specialist is probably the most important thing a peer support does starting one's career as a peer support. It consists of one week of hard work, but meeting other peer supports is the best thing that ever happened to me. The last I heard there were over 700 peer support specialists in the State of Michigan.

### Peer Support Specialists can help you.

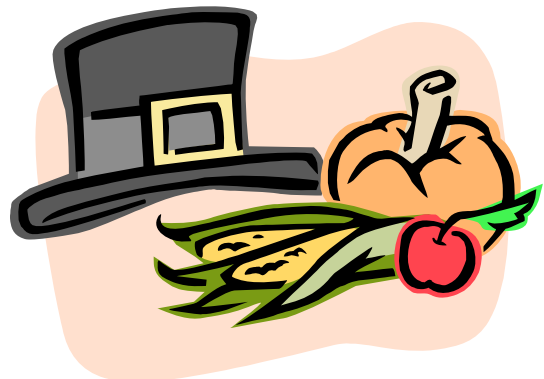
- Identify your strengths.
- Find resources in the community.
- Build skills.
- Work through difficult times.
- Expand your personal centered plan.
- Find a job/help with vocational assistance.
- Overcome obstacles.
- Learn about recovery.
- Develop a wellness recovery action plan.
- Develop a crisis plan.
- Develop an advance directive.
- Assist in completing applications for benefits and entitlements.

In my job I wear a few different hats and I think this makes me a well rounded individual. I work full time and started in June of this year, but before that I was part time for over three years. I work approximately two days a week with the ACT which stands for Assertive Community Treatment where I work with the more seriously mentally ill consumers. I work hard at getting folks out in the community. Isolation is a big problem, so I try to think of ways to get the consumers out as much as possible. I sometimes just take them for a ride around Lake Antoine or going fishing to more serious things like taking them to the Doctor or to the Dentist. We also have a coping skills group once a week and cover such topics as hope,

different mental illnesses and recently the topic was on weight loss and how to maintain your weight. Anything to do with coping from day to day can be covered.

Since I started full time, I work three days a week at the Northern Menominee Health Center in Powers, MI where I get referrals from the Doctor or Physician's Assistant for people that need mental health care or counseling. Sometimes it is just a few phone contacts the person needs or it could be doing a screening with them through NorthCare for services somewhere in the UP. I think I can relate well with people because I have a mental illness too and sharing my own recovery story seems to help. This is being done at the clinic because of a grant that pays for me while I'm there and is quite new and we are pioneers in this area. When I'm at the clinic, I also make outreach calls to people just recently out of the hospital and do a questionnaire and ask if I could be of assistance to them in any way. I ask such questions such as are they taking their medicine as prescribed and if they have a follow- up appointment with their doctor for mental health care. I also sometimes ask if they want the number of a crisis worker.

I also have been filling in at night time activities at the Phoenix Center where we do things in the community, like bowling going to a restaurant or just staying at the center to play cards and games. We recently went to the theatre and watched Rise of the Planet of the Apes which everyone enjoyed.



## A Lot to Know, A Lot to Remember

There are many different topics that you and your case manager will discuss during your Individual Plan of Service meetings. So much information and so little time. Below are a few topics that are covered each year, but you might like a little reminder...

**Independent Facilitator:** This is a person that will help with the Person Centered Planning Process. They do not work for the Community Mental Health Agency, they are there to help keep the meetings moving.

**Self Determination:** Self Determination describes a range of options you can choose to determine the people who will help you and the resources you can use to be an active participant in your community. It gives a person freedom to plan the life that they want and to have the supports to attain it. Self Determination gives a person the choice to control a set amount of money in order to purchase services they need. A person may use public funds wisely for getting what is medically necessary.

**Psychiatric Advanced Directives:** Have you ever heard of an Advance Directive? These are legal documents that instruct people what treatment you want when you are not able to make the decisions for yourself. A Psychiatric Advance Directive can include who would take care of your pet if you are hospitalized or what medications have or have not worked in the past.

If you would like more information on any of these topics, you can:

- Ask your case manager
- Call NorthCare at 1-888-333-8030 and they can explain and/or send you a brochure

- Go to the NorthCare website at: [www.northcare-up.org](http://www.northcare-up.org)

Also, did you know that there are now Peer Support Specialists at all five Community Mental Health Agencies across the Upper Peninsula? If you would like a Peer Support Specialist to work with you, talk with your case manager. The Peer Support Specialist service needs to be included in your Individual Plan of Service. You can update your plan of service at any time of the year, not just on your annual anniversary.

If you have questions about any of these topics be sure to ask your case manager or supports coordinator. As always, if you have a complaint, you can contact your local Customer Service representative. Below is a list of the U.P. Customer Service Representatives along with their phone number.

Copper Country CMH — Jim Foss  
1-800-526-5059 or (906) 482-9400

Gogebic CMH — Stephanie Paralero  
(906) 229-6120

Hiawatha CMH — Bonnie Kaunisto  
1-800-839-9443 or (906) 632-2805

Northpointe CMH — Nance Benson  
1-800-750-0522 or (906) 779-0556

Pathways — Mary Swift  
1-888-728-4929 or (906) 225-7357

NorthCare Network — Sally Olson  
1-888-333-8030 or (906) 225-4411



*Peer Support Specialists are now available at all five Community Mental Health Agencies. Ask your Case Manager more about Peer Support Specialists.*



## Access Article

NorthCare is home to the NorthCare Access Unit. The Access Unit is the first “voice” that a person hears when they are trying to “access” their local Community Mental Health Agency.

The primary responsibility of the Access staff is to figure out during a brief phone interview, if a person should be scheduled for an assessment appointment at their local Community Mental Health agency. It is important for the person calling to be as specific as

possible about what types of issues or problems there are experiencing. The Access staff work hard to help each and every caller. At the very least, a person will be sent a list of resources in their local area if they are not scheduled for an appointment at their local CMH.

As always, honesty is the best policy. Be sure to explain exactly what type of symptoms you may be experiencing.

**NorthCare Network was the recipient of a National Council Grant to continue to provide Mental Health First Aid in the Upper Peninsula. Mental Health First Aid is a 12 hour program that teaches participants about mental health and provides a five step approach to helping an individual experiencing a mental health crisis.**

## 2010 NorthCare Annual Report Available

The 2010 Annual Report was published in the spring of 2011 and is still available. This yearly report includes a message from the Chief Operating Office of NorthCare (Bill Slavin); has 2010 highlights; provides a performance report card for mental health services, includes financial data and more. We would be happy to send you a copy of the 2010 Annual Report. Just call NorthCare at 1-888-333-8030. You can also view the report at the NorthCare website at: [www.northcare-up.org](http://www.northcare-up.org). Each Community Mental Health Agency also completes an annual report and it is available on their website. You can access from [www.northcare-up.org](http://www.northcare-up.org)

## Walk-A-Mile in My Shoes Rally

May is Mental Health Awareness month. To help raise awareness, the Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards organized the seventh annual Walk-A-Mile in My Shoes Rally at the state capitol. With the support of Copper Country Mental Health, the Baraga County Regional Interagency Coordinating Council (RICC) was able to use a large van to make the trip. A participant reported that “prior to the official start of the rally, the group had the opportunity to meet with Matt Huuki, our state representative. While he is VERY busy in Lansing, Mr. Huuki generously gave us the opportunity to discuss our concerns about the frightening potential of cuts to Medicaid and funding for Community Mental Health programs.” The president and vice president of the Baraga



County RICC carried the banner this year. Hannah Misegan and Patty Putala proudly carried the Baraga County flag and made the call to end the budget cuts to vital services and issued the walk-a-mile challenge. It is difficult to describe the electricity, the camaraderie and the atmosphere of support evident at the rally. It is unmistakable to people in attendance and speaks to the power of organizing a group around a common cause.

## Disability Benefits 101 Online Calculator Important for YOU!

To assist persons with disabilities on Medicaid with re-entering the work force, MDCH has supported development of a Michigan specific website to enable persons to calculate the impact of wage earnings on their medical insurance benefits. This on-line benefits calculator/estimator allows an individual to project how accepting a job, more hours, or more wages may impact their medical benefits. These are estimations based on the information entered. This new tool is at [www.mi.db101.org](http://www.mi.db101.org) or a link at the NorthCare website: [www.northcare-up.org](http://www.northcare-up.org)

The online calculator is available 24/7/365 and the

information is confidential – it only requires month/year of birth and zip code to calculate benefits. There are direct links to supporting information and/or contacts. The web site can assist persons to become more self-determined and empowered by:

- Saving sessions to discuss with agencies
- Recalling on-line with your chosen password
- Printing out details (up to 60 month projection)

This calculator is not intended to replace full benefits planning provided by Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) projects. WIPA contacts are shown at <http://www.arcmi.org/new/wipa.contact.htm>

## SAIL & Recovery Coordinators

NorthCare and Superior Alliance for Independent Living (SAIL) announce a partnership to provide outreach services to individuals without insurance. Grant funding for one year from Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) will allow NorthCare to contract with SAIL to hire up to five Recovery Coordinators across the Upper Peninsula. Recovery Coordinators will work with Community Mental Health and NorthCare staff to:

- Develop an outreach program designed to reach individuals experiencing symptoms of serious mental illness who have no insurance or other means of supports.
- Meet with individuals and provide information and assistance regarding local resources that might be available.
- Work with local partners, (i.e. Drop-In Centers, Law Enforcement, Peer Support Specialists, the Salvation Army and homeless and Domestic Violence shelters) regarding referrals and resources.

The minimum qualifications for a Recovery Coordinator Positions are:

- Education: High School Diploma or GED.
- Must be able to work a flexible work schedule including days, nights, and weekends.
- Must have reliable transportation.
- Seeking individuals who have lived with the experience of mental illness and who have been in recovery for at least a year.



This is a voluntary program and an individual may be referred to SAIL by NorthCare Access, community agencies, or self referred to SAIL. After learning about the program, if an individual wants to work with the Recovery Coordinator, an Independent Living Plan will be completed by the Recovery Coordinator and the individual. The plan will identify the goals of the individual and outline specific steps to achieve those goals. Assistance in completing Medicaid applications and connecting with the local Drop In Center are just two examples of the type of assistance SAIL and the Recovery Coordinators could provide.

The success of the program will depend on several factors. First SAIL will need to find qualified individuals to hire for the program. Next, the community and community providers will need to know about the availability of the program. And finally, individuals will need to request assistance. Sometimes it is hard to reach out again after many disappointments but hopefully the Recovery Coordinators will offer a hand to create common ground and begin building a new life. We invite the readers of the NorthCare News to help us spread the word about this new outreach program. For more information, call SAIL at 906-228-5794 and ask to speak with Amy Maes or call NorthCare at 1-888-333-8030.

## Poem & article from Amy J.

I read this poem from time to time as a reminder, that good things are possible. I got it from my mother, when I was going through the worst time in my life. This poem made me look at myself as a person, cause somewhere I forgot that. It gave me hope. It makes me remember who I really am, A PERSON, just like anyone else & that I am worth fighting for. So are you! These words speak volumes, not only in my life, but I hope it will with yours, everyday! But especially in the worst of times.

### **Your presence is a present to the world**

**You're unique and one of a kind.**

**Your life can be what you want it to be.**

**Take the days, just one at a time.**

**Count your blessings, NOT your troubles.**

**You'll make it through whatever comes along.**

**Within you are so many answers,**

**Understand, have courage, be strong.**

**Don't put limits on yourself.**

**So many dreams are waiting to be realized.**

**Decisions are too important to leave to chance.  
Reach for your peak, your goal, and your prize.**

**Nothing wastes more energy than worrying.  
The longer one carries a problem, the heavier it gets.**

**Don't take things too seriously.**

**Live a life of serenity, NOT a life of regrets.**

**Remember, that a little LOVE goes a long way.**

**Remember, that a lot...goes forever.**

**Remember, that friendship is a wise investment.**

**Life's treasures are people...together.**

**Realize that it's Never too Late.**

**Do ordinary things, in an extraordinary way.**

**Have health, hope, and happiness.**

**Take the time to wish upon a star.**

**And don't ever forget...**

**For even a day...**

**How very special you are!**



## Important for YOU!

Individuals that receive services from a Community Mental Health Agency have the right to the following information. The Federal government requires its Medicaid providers to provide this list of information to consumers on a yearly basis. At NorthCare, we call it the "A to L" list.

- A. Providers that offer Non-English language services.
- B. List of service provider restrictions on freedom of choice. (None in the Upper Peninsula.)
- C. Information on grievance, appeals & fair hearing procedures.
- D. Explanation of benefits available through your service provider.
- E. Procedures for obtaining benefits & authorization requirements.

- F. How to obtain benefits from out-of-network providers.
- G. Information on after-hours and emergency coverage.
- H. You may request policies on referrals for specialty care and other benefits not provided by your primary care provider.
- I. Cost sharing. (None in the Upper Peninsula.)
- J. Benefits that are available under the State plan but are not covered under contract.
- K. Written information on Advance Directives.
- L. Additional information on the structure and operation of NorthCare.

NorthCare also wants you to know that no physician incentive plans are in use by NorthCare Network or their providers.