

NorthCare News

Volume 2, Issue 1
February, 2004

Consumers of Mental Health Services in the Upper Peninsula Give High Satisfaction Rating

The local CMHSPs have been hard at work learning what their consumers think about the services they have received. The CMHSPs agreed to use seven identical questions in every customer satisfaction survey that was distributed last year. The questions were developed with input from the regional Quality Council and the local Member Services Committees. In this newsletter, you will find the regional results of the seven key questions.

Almost 1500 people completed the surveys from October 2002 through October 2003. The graph at the bottom of this page reports the overall satisfaction with Community Mental Health Agencies in the U.P. NorthCare proudly reports that of the 1,349 consumers or

guardians who responded to this question 1,292 indicated that they were satisfied with their experience at the local CMHSP. (See page 4 for additional results.)

CMHSPs may ask additional questions that are pertinent to their consumers and the local area. If you are interested in seeing satisfaction results specific to the CMH in your area, please feel free to contact the Customer Services Department as listed on page 2 of this Newsletter.

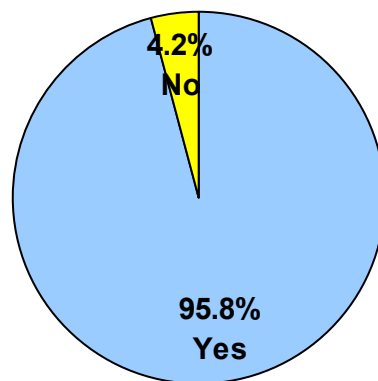
Consumer surveys are a critical way for CMHSPs to determine that they are truly meeting your needs. The results of these surveys are reported to the State Government and to the Federal Government. This is a direct way that you can impact the services you receive from your local CMHSP.

Check www.northcare-up.org for a full report of the regional Consumer Satisfaction Surveys. Your local CMHSP will be posting their results at their individual websites as well.

Inside this issue:

Chief Operating Officer	2
Respite Funding Question	2
Member Services	3
Quality Corner	3
Consumer Alert	3
Independent Facilitation	4
Consumer Satisfaction Cont.	4
Coordination of Care	5
Crisis and Safety Planning	5
M.H. Commission Update	6
U.P. Drop-In Centers	6

Overall, I am satisfied with my experience at Community Mental Health (CMH)



No
 Yes

Wellness Tip

Thinking positively in the aftermath of a crisis can help you avoid feeling depressed. To do that: Find some good that came of the situation. Remember some good things from the past. Concentrate on setting new goals.

Source: Shape Magazine

NorthCare's provider network has done an excellent job tracking Recipient Rights concerns and formal appeals. Now, NorthCare wants to ensure that we do just as well tracking informal complaints. NorthCare's Corporate Compliance Plan requires a process that is available to assist at the time an individual has a need for help, and is able to help on the first contact in most situations.

NorthCare's Member Services Specialist works to enhance the relationship between the individual and NorthCare. Each of the Community Mental Health Centers (CMHs) also have member services staff dedicated to improving the rela-

tionship between the individual and the local CMHSP.

The goal of Customer Services is to orient new individuals to the services and benefits available including how to access them, helping individuals with all problems and questions regarding benefits, handling individual complaints and grievances in an effective and efficient manner, and tracking and reporting patterns of prob-

"It is easier to go down a hill than up, but the view

is from the top."

~ Unknown ~

lem areas for the organization.

If you have a question, concern, or complaint, we encourage you to contact your local agency. Usually trying to fix a problem is best handled when and where it is happening. The following people listed are available at the local CMHs/Coordinating Agency to help you with any problems:

Copper Country CMH

Jim Foss

906-482-9400

1-800-526-5059

Gogebic CMH

Holly Michelli

906-229-6122

Hiawatha CMH

Stacy King

906-341-2144

1-800-839-9443

Northpointe CMH

Nance Pugh

906-779-0556

1-800-750-0522

Pathways CMH/CA

Dianna Seymour

906-233-1288/1-800-820-2999

As always, NorthCare is also available to help you get answers or resolve a problem. Simply call us 1-888-333-8030.

Consumer Question: What is going on with Respite Funding?

Consumer Question:

What is going on with Respite funding? Why am I being told that respite is no longer available?

NorthCare's Answer:

Actually, NorthCare is surprised that more questions have not been raised about this issue! For those of you wondering what respite is - it provides families/primary

"Sometimes it's nice to be important, but it's always

important to be nice."

~ K. Cronin, age 10 ~

unpaid caregivers with a break from care giving responsibilities. The CMHSPs provide respite for consumers on a Medicaid waiver program and for families who have a member who is either seriously mentally ill or developmentally disabled. Respite is a service that many families have relied on for years. One specific model of providing respite service is Family Friends, where the families can manage their own dollars and directly pay the workers they chose and hire. Medicaid cannot fund the Family Friends program. NorthCare recognizes that the lack of Medicaid funding for the

Family Friend model of respite service is a loss. Across the region the CMHSPs will be working with you to try to determine how to meet this need.

The community mental health centers do have options about the providers of respite services. For example, the CMHSP could hire the worker chosen by the family OR could subcontract with another agency to provide workers; OR could use a fiscal intermediary. YOU are encouraged to work WITH your local community mental health agency to figure out the best possible solution.

Some consumers have suggested that a grass root task force should look into other funding sources for the Family Friends model of providing respite; perhaps grant money could be located, or General Fund dollars (state money) could be used? NorthCare is working to help resolve this situation regionally and will keep you informed about our progress.

If you have more questions, contact your case manager or supports coordinator or you can call NorthCare at 1-888-333-8030.

Member Services Update



The Member Services Departments don't want to be like the old Maytag repairman commercial – we really do want and need to hear from you. We can only make improvements when we know that something needs to be changed.



Jim Foss, Copper Country Mental Health

NorthCare Network underwent Phase II of the Michigan Department of Community Health site review during first week of January 2004. The feedback from their exit interview was Member Services need to be more visible across the Upper Peninsula.

Member Service's staff can be of help to you in many different ways. If you have a problem and are not sure who to discuss it with, give Member Services a call. They are knowledgeable

about their entire Community Mental Health agency and can point you in the right direction. It is the responsibility of the Member Services Department to follow up and follow through with any type of questions, suggestions or complaints. If the complaint is of a recipient rights nature, then Member Services will refer you to the Recipient Rights Office.

So remember, the Member Services Department is here for you. Give us a call, and we will do our best to help.

You can find the name and phone number of your local Member Service staff member on page 2 of this newsletter.



Holly Michelli, Gogebic Community Mental Health

Consumer Alert Updates



You will be seeing this "Consumer Alert" logo on certain articles in the NorthCare Newsletters. This will indicate an article dedicated to keeping you informed about ongoing projects and

efforts needing your active involvement. In our last newsletter, we discussed three topics of consumer involvement 1) independent facilitation 2) crisis and safety planning and

3) coordination of your care with other health providers. Please be sure to read the updates on the advances that have been made in those and other areas.

"Have enough *courage* to trust *Love* one more time. And always one more time."
~ Maya Angelou ~

Quality Corner "Hi—I'm Diane Bennett"

By: Diane Bennett

I am the new Quality Improvement Coordinator at NorthCare and started my new adventure on February 2, 2004. I worked for Northpointe Community Mental Health for 17 years; the last 4 years as the Quality Improvement Coordinator there. We have an exciting year coming up with two quality improvement projects—the Coordination of Care Project and the Data Integrity Project. These two projects are requirements of the federal government in



order for NorthCare to receive the contract for Medicaid services. The government expects us to take seriously the ongoing improve-

ment of the services we are providing. For both projects, the project teams will be composed of consumers and staff from the five CMHSPs.

We have just finished gathering and reporting on regional consumer satisfaction results from fiscal year 2003 (October 2002 through September 2003), and completing the annual performance reports. The satisfaction survey summary is available

at the website, www.northcare-up.org

In order to meet these challenges and implement a stellar Quality Improvement Program for our region it is vital to have your involvement. I invite you to offer your suggestions and comments by contacting me at 906-226-0043 or at dbennett@up-pathways.org.



I.F. is AVAILABLE in the U.P.

By: Sally Olson

Independent Facilitation is available throughout the Upper Peninsula!

A consumer can invite anyone they wish to be part of the Person Centered Planning process as their champion. However, the choice to have an Independent Facilitator is based on whether you want a neutral third party to help negotiate your Person Centered Plan. It is your choice whether or not

you would like to utilize an Independent Facilitator.

Listed are some of the qualities that an Independent Facilitator brings to the Person Centered Planning process:

- A neutral 3rd party
- A non-stakeholder
- A guide for the group
- A guide through the process

- A bridge between issues and options
- A door opener to resolution
- A mirror to participants interests
- A promoter of a collaborative process

If you would like to get more information or have an Independent Facilitator involved with your next Person Centered Planning process, talk with your Case Manager or

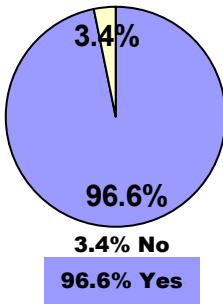
Supports Coordinator. There are over 20 individuals trained as Independent Facilitators and they are ready to help.

You are also welcome to contact NorthCare Network at 1-888-333-8030 for more information too. We are always happy to hear from the consumers.

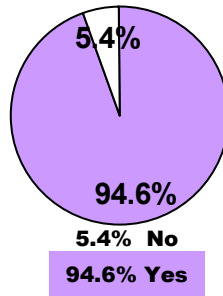


Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results (continued from page 1)

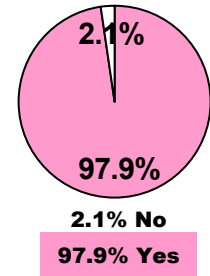
I receive clear explanations of treatment/support choices and options.



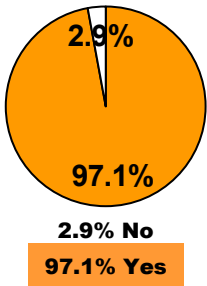
I feel free to complain when I am not satisfied.



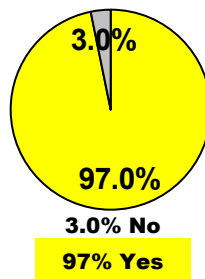
My rights as a consumer of mental health services are respected.



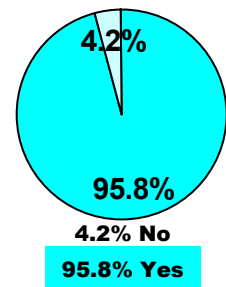
My cultural/ethnic values are respected.



The services/supports I receive are based on my needs and desires.



I would recommend this CMH to a friend.





Coordination of Care (A Quality Improvement Project)

By: Ginny Freeborn



NorthCare is beginning a new Quality Improvement Project about the Coordination of Care between your community mental health provider and your primary care doctor and medical health plan. What this means is that the providers in the NorthCare Network are trying to improve the way in which your mental health services “fit” with the physi-

cal health care you are receiving from your primary care doctor and other healthcare providers.

Benefits for long term and intensive mental health services and supports have been “carved out” from your general medical health plan and are managed by your local community mental health centers. But these services do not stand alone. Your emotional and mental health is very much related to how you are feeling physically, just as your physical health has a lot to do with your emotional and mental state. Because these are inter-related, federal and state regulations require that your community mental health providers make sure that any services they provide to you

are ‘coordinated’ with the physical health care you get from your doctor.

Here at NorthCare, we have formed a team of staff and consumers from all over the UP to help us make sure that we provide the coordinated care that Medicaid requires. This team has met once already and will be meeting periodically over the next few months to identify some common procedures at each CMH that should allow for good coordination of care efforts. We will also develop common measurements that will tell us how we are doing over the next two years. You should expect your mental health provider to be talking with you about what medical care you are receiving, and you will be

asked to sign an authorization for your mental health worker or psychiatrist to talk with your primary care doctor. Part of your person-centered plan should identify what kinds of information about your mental health services should be shared with your regular doctor and also identify how and when this should happen.

This project team will report to the Quality Improvement Council and to the NorthCare Member Services Committee. Stay tuned for more updates about this important project in future issues of the NorthCare News!



Each of the U.P. Community Mental Health Agencies has their own web site. Be sure to check it out. They also list employment opportunities. You can access the local CMH web sites by going to: www.northcare-up.org



Crisis and Safety Planning

By: Lucy Olson

Crisis and safety planning refers to the ability of consumers to write a plan that will guide their care when they experience an increase in their symptoms or problems in living. We are not talking about a current emergency situation requiring immediate assessment by a clinician. This optional plan is for consumers who are ready and want to participate in their recovery in this way. During this past fall, staff from the five Community Mental Health Service Providers (CMHSPs) and consumers reviewed various

documents to create a regional “Plan for Difficult Times” form. After numerous drafts, a form has been adopted by the five CMHSPs as one of the choices a consumer could use in writing his/her crisis plan. As the decision to write such a plan and follow it is strictly a consumer choice, no single form is mandatory. The regional form is offered to facilitate a careful conversation about what material is important to include in such a plan that might involve inpatient hospitalization.

In a related area, NorthCare wrote a draft policy for Advance Directives and submitted the draft to the Consumer Advocacy groups and key staff across the U.P. There is much to learn in this relatively new area of law where adult individuals of sound mind have the recognized authority to direct their medical care if they are incapacitated. After three revisions, this policy was adopted by the NorthCare Board of Directors. It is available at our website or you can call and we will mail you a copy. If during your

assessment and treatment the staff forget to bring this subject up, please advocate for yourself and ask for information regarding planning for difficult times and Advance Directives.

Remember, you may always add written comments at the bottom of your customer satisfaction survey.



Mental Health Commission Update

Governor Granholm's Mental Health Commission had its first meeting on February 2nd in Lansing. Pat Babcock, former DCH Director, has been appointed the chairperson. The meetings are open to the public. The first meeting was organizational in nature. Patrick Barrie the Deputy Director at MDCH gave a presentation on the history of Community Mental Health in Michigan.

Check out the Mental Health Commission's web site for additional information at:

www.michigan.gov/mentalhealth

Future meetings have been scheduled in Lansing as follows:

- March 1, 2004
- March 29, 2004
- April 26, 2004
- May 24, 2004
- June 28, 2004 (probably at Crystal Mountain)
- July 26, 2004
- September 20, 2004 (in Gaylord)
- October 25, 2004

All meetings are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Lansing.

U.P. Drop-In Centers

Did you know that there are thirteen (13) Drop-In Centers located across the Upper Peninsula? Did you know that Drop-In Centers are a great place to go to meet a friend, have a cup of coffee, take part in an activity or to just get out of the house for a while?

All of the Upper Peninsula Drop-In Centers are unique. Each of them plan different monthly activities that are either very inexpensive or free of charge.

Get Involved!

Your active participation is needed. Active participation leads to active recovery. You are encouraged to take charge and get involved with one or more of the numerous projects NorthCare is working on. Check out the different articles in this newsletter and let us know if any of the projects are of interest to you.

NorthCare's Mission:
To provide quality services to those we are uniquely entrusted to serve.

Funding for this publication was provided by the Michigan Department of Community Health.

