



# NorthCare News

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## *Moving Forward in Recovery/Healing*

The picture above is from the 2nd Annual Consumer Conference in September 2008 held at Bay Cliff Health Camp in Big Bay, Michigan. Members of the Conference Planning Team are holding the puzzle pieces of recovery. The ten pieces of recovery are considered the key ingredients to achieve a full life while living with chronic mental illness. The conference was a dynamic example of recovery. It was a hopeful, enjoyable experience for the participants and presenters. The feedback on the evaluations ([examples below](#)) gave us the green light for a third conference in 2009 and ideas on how to improve the experience.

*"This has been a beautiful gift to come here to learn so much & meet so many people like me! Thank you, thank you."*

*"Well run — delicious food — good site — friendly — interesting workshops."*

*"I'd heard a lot of comments over the years that Board members don't understand, etc., so a consumer board member could tell their story. I'd be willing."*

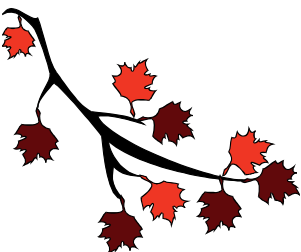
One hundred people joined the preconference September 17th. The evening activities included five different breakout sessions, good food and recovery stories. Later, folks chose between many activities to reconnect with old friends and make new ones: a bon-fire with s'mores; music and singing; hiking down to the Lake Superior beach; or karaoke. On the 18th, 130 participants had the opportunity to participate in two workshops of their choosing and hear Deb Parker, a Board Member of Network 180, who is active in a recovery program for her serious mental illness and substance abuse. Dr. Joe Cools was a return presenter and held an "Ask a Psychiatrist" session after lunch.

Actions speak louder than words, so we concluded the second conference by asking for conference participants to step up and help plan the third UP Consumer Conference. NorthCare is delighted that we will be adding 12 new members to our current Planning Team. If you didn't volunteer at the conference, or if you didn't attend but now you are thinking this is one way for you to get moving on your own recovery—just contact Sally at NorthCare (1-888-333-8030) and she will give you more information about the team.

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### Inside this issue:

Bulletin Board	2
Peer Specialists	2
WRAP	3
Seeking Your Input	4
Calories In/Out...	4
Social Security	5
Centralized Access	5



## Bulletin Board ~~ list your activities here!

### NAMI Connections Support Group

A weekly support group for people dealing with mental health issues.

Saturdays from 1PM til 3:30 PM at the Marquette Commons on Baraga Avenue. For more information contact Milt at (906) 226-1077 or (906) 251-1467.

Watch for a new drop-in — **the Serenity Center**— to open December 15, 2008. Contact Karin Andrus for more information (906) 229-6133.

### Upcoming WRAP Groups:

Marquette — Marquette Work Center

December 1 — 4 and 8 — 11 ~~ Call 226-1077 for more information.

Escanaba, January 20—23 and 27—30, 2009 Call 450-5985 for more information.

Gogebic, February 2—5 and 9—12, 2009 Call 450-5985 for more information.

## Peer Support Specialists ask for them by name!

NorthCare has been reporting to you about the growth of the Peer Support Specialist (PSS) services in the Upper Peninsula for a couple of years. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> Consumer Conference, six of the PSS, offered workshops about why and how they became employees of the community mental health system. We hope members are becoming more aware of the opportunity to have their treatment include a relationship with a peer who is well established on the road of recovery. Peer Support Specialists are ready to be part of the work force and give back to their communities. They have a personal understanding of mental illness and can help others understand the complex systems of a community mental health agency, along with providing a role model of encouragement and hope for a brighter future.

Currently, PSS are working as members of Assertive Community Action Teams (ACT), assisting individuals with activities in the community and working at Consumer Drop Ins. We are at the tip of the iceberg and many wonderful discoveries about how PSS can be of service are yet to come. Anyone struggling with feelings of isolation and doubt about their recovery journey may request to work with a

Peer Support Specialist. Here is a list of certified PSS staff and where they are located. Become your own advocate and ask to meet with a PSS.

Karin Andrus (906) 229-6133 (Wakefield)

Karl Korpela (906) 229-6147 (Wakefield)

Corki Brady (906) 635-5538 (Sault)

Darlene Holmes (906) 635-5538 (Sault)

Susan Mosca (906) 635-5538 (Sault)

Deb Wunsch (906) 341-2144 (Manistique)

Tracy Finn (906) 779-0515 (Kingsford)

Barbara Pancratz (906) 779-0642 (Kingsford)

Donna Kroupa (906) 863-1505 (Menominee)

Crystal Ash (906) 293-3284 (Newberry)

Bill Bruce (906) 233-1280 (Escanaba)

Nancy Deyo (906) 387-3611 (Munising)

Cory Irving (906) 786-9543 (Escanaba)

Norma Jean Flynn (906) 228-2827 (Marquette)

Christie Hernandez (906) 293-3284 (Newberry)

Natalie Schultz (906) 233-1244 (Escanaba)

Mike Wood (906) 225-7322 (Marquette)

# WRAP Becomes a Reality in the U.P.

This fall, consumers in the Copper Country, Iron Mountain, Munising and Newberry had the opportunity to create their personal Wellness Recovery Action Plan, make new friends, and develop a broader support network. Bob and Jeanne White are special people who have used their marriage and separate journeys in recovery to come up with a winning team for facilitating WRAP workshops. They will complete workshops in Marquette, Escanaba and Gogebic in the next two months. If you missed the first workshop in your area-- don't worry-- Bob and Jeanne hope to train WRAP facilitators across the region so consumers at every site will have the chance to move forward in their recovery. One of the participants in a WRAP workshop wrote the letter below after completing the workshop. Thank you, Amy, for allowing us to include it in our Newsletter:

Dear Bob & Jeanne:

When I heard about this class, called WRAP, I was so excited and curious because there are NOT many opportunities here in the U.P. to help ourselves. I personally have been waiting for something like this all my life, and I wasn't about to let it pass me by.

WRAP is a plan that you write about your triggers, early warning signs, when things are breaking down, crisis plan, and even an Advance Directive, plus

there is so much more. I think this is so useful, because it really makes you think about what you have been through, and what worked before, and what didn't. Now you just put it into your own words, so the next time you can see the signs more clearly, and get help. Plus you can help yourself by showing others how to help you. When you really can't think clearly, it helps you take control of your life, which is always a good thing. Plus you can always update your plan, because life has a way of being unpredictable. Expect the unexpected.

I am very grateful for this class, and I would recommend it for anyone who has a mental illness. I love the format and I think it is so helpful. I have learned a lot about myself that I wasn't able to see before. I am so thankful for this. It definitely put my life in the right direction, and I know it will make a difference in yours, if you let it. It's like soul searching, which I believe you can never stop learning, growing, or changing for the better.

The only one who can stop you from wanting to live a happier, healthier, better life is YOU. So please don't be afraid of wanting, and deserving more for yourself. Take charge of your own life, and take the class. It is a choice we personally have to make, and I chose forward, NOT backward. I want this for you too, because if I can do it, I know you can. You just have to want it more than life itself. This class is a great start,

with people who understand and care. We all know what it is like to be at the bottom. These little steps make such a huge difference with your everyday life. The power is ours. Please don't knock it, until you try it. Keep an open mind. It opens up a whole new world of possibilities, and it won't stop here. This has made me a more confident, stronger, hopeful person, which is why I am so passionate about this class. It has made me more self-reliant. No one does the work, but YOU. I am even more determined to take control of my life. My saying is don't get lost, take detours. Things happen for a reason. Whether good, or bad, they make us who we are truly meant to be. Now ask yourself, are you willing to make a change in your life? What else do you have to lose? The answer is nothing, but you do have everything to gain. Think positive. The material is easy and simple to understand. This is a plan to teach others how to help us, when we can't. But still have your say, when it means the most. Responsibility is ours, and no one else's. Remember you are not alone. The hardest part is taking that step, but when you do, I promise, you won't regret it.

**Remember:**  
You can re-do or update your Individualized Plan of Service (IPOS) at ANY time.

~~ Amy

## Seeking Your Input

NorthCare Network held five public forums for the purpose of educating and seeking input from interested citizens in regard to community mental health and substance abuse service operations and future goals.

The forums provided an avenue for citizens to offer immediate input for consideration in NorthCare's five year plan to be submitted to the Michigan Department of Community Health. Requirements for this five year plan are outlined in a

document titled, "**Application for Renewal and Recommitment to Quality and Community in the Michigan Public Mental Health System (ARR)**."

The many comments and suggestions provided by those in attendance are available on our website at: [www.up-northcare.org](http://www.up-northcare.org).

We will continue quality improvement opportunities for providing input into NorthCare policy, operations, and improvement

initiatives through a variety of ongoing committees and workgroups. Contact us at 1-888-333-8030 if you are interested in helping develop our five year plan.

If you would like a copy of the ARR document, if you have any questions regarding the ARR, or if you would like information regarding any NorthCare committee or workgroup, please contact Sally Olson at NorthCare.

## Calories in, Calories Out

by: Paula Poutu Glass, Customer Services Committee Member

The most interesting thing I have learned from Weight Wise Fridays is that there are 3,500 calories in a pound, so you have to burn 3,500 calories to lose a pound. That is a little depressing—but the upside is that I have lost 8 pounds in the last two months! How did I do it?

The first step was to get a notebook and mark down everything I ate in a day. Also, I wrote down everything I did in a day. I did this for one week. For example, I kept a measuring cup on the counter where I prepare my food. I did not measure my food, but eye-balled it. I estimated how much food I prepared — 1/2 cup of corn; two tablespoons of olive oil to cook one cup of fried zucchini, one glass of juice; 1/4 cup of mixed nuts, etc. You need seven days of information, but they do not need to be consecutive days.



Here is how this information can be used: I thought I was eating a healthy diet when I ate nuts and fruit and it was healthy. But it is also very high in calories. So I started drinking 1/4 cup orange juice and 1/2 cup of diet soda. Also, if you want food, drink a cup of water first, you may eat less, or maybe, nothing at all.

Exercise: In your notebook keep track of everything you do — sitting, walking, running, sleeping, lying down, etc. Then you figure out (on the computer) how many calories you have burned each day. If you burn more calories than you take in, you will lose weight. Especially interesting to me: you burn twice as many calories standing up as sitting. This is because the large leg muscles have to work to hold you up. Now I find myself standing to talk on the phone, and when I went swimming with my family, I stood up most of the time instead

of lying on my blanket. The little things add up.

I also learned that riding the exercise bike burns 2 1/2 times as many calories as walking. Ten minutes of walking burns 50 calories while ten minutes of biking burns 122 calories. This gives me the incentive to ride on the bike. My goal is to walk 60 minutes per day. Sometimes it is 45, sometimes it is 75; very seldom less than 30. I also found it interesting that we burn most of our calories for the day when we are sleeping. Your heart has to beat, you have to breathe, etc. Be honest when you mark down all your exercise. I was embarrassed to learn that I spent most of my time lying down, but I did mark it honestly and that helped me to learn what I need to do to lose weight.

# Social Security, Work & My Fears

By: Corki Bardy, Peer Support Specialist, Sault Ste Marie

At the Consumer Conference in September, I had the privilege of meeting Jack Anderson who was representing Social Security – especially with regard to SS and returning to work. At my request, we met a few weeks later hoping that he could clear up some of the confusion I had about attempting to return to work and how that would affect my Social Security and Medicare (especially Part D). Jack thoroughly explained the financial limits and what it will mean if I were to surpass those limits. With his explanation in hand, I realized that I could be earning quite a bit more than I thought without affecting my Social Security. Jack also pointed out that once a person is on Medicare, they are on it for life. He patiently replied to my repeated questions so that I was certain that what I hearing was, indeed, what he was saying. I cannot remember all that we talked about over a cup of coffee that day, but he left me quite comfortable with the situation I was in – working while collecting Social Security.

As we wound down, I facetiously asked Jack if he could write a letter to my supervisor about all that we had talked about. He offered to stage a workshop of sorts with managers and supervisors if we wanted him to do so. After he left, I began to wonder about his presenting in a videoconference meeting that would lessen his traveling while dispersing his information to as widely as possible. I am going to suggest that to the powers that be.

## Centralized Access is Complete

NorthCare has developed a centralized Access Unit for people in the fifteen counties of the Upper Peninsula. Dr. Joseph Cools, NorthCare Medical Director and Ms. Cyndi Shaffer, NorthCare Chief Operating Officer, have had a “hands on” approach in developing and directing this gateway to public mental health services. Their driving goal has been to create a positive experience for someone reaching out for help at a critical time. The Access Unit strives to be welcoming and helpful, whether a caller receives services from a community mental health agency or from another provider. The Access Unit grew slowly, one community mental health board at a time, until fully operational in September 2008.

Anyone seeking mental health services in the U.P. who does not have an open case at a community mental health agency, will be referred to the Access Unit. All calls are sent to the Access Unit; physically located in Marquette. The caller completes a 20 to 40 minute screen-

ing with a clinician. Their conversation explores the caller’s immediate concerns, the severity of their symptoms, and what types of services the caller is seeking. Access will ask whether or not there is insurance coverage.

If the caller is eligible for community mental health specialty services, then an appointment is given within the next 14 days, usually at the caller’s local CMH. If the caller is not eligible for services at the CMH, then the access clinician will refer the caller to a local community provider who will either accept the individual’s insurance or uses a sliding fee scale for those individuals who do not have insurance.

NorthCare also welcomes general inquiry calls about mental health services in the Upper Peninsula. To reach an access worker, please call **1-888-906-9060**. The NorthCare Access Unit is open from 8 AM to 5 PM Eastern Time, Monday – Friday.

Evidence-Based Programs: New Web Resource

SAMHSA recently developed a new Web page to help identify evidence-based programs and practices.

The new page — A Guide to Evidence-Based Practices on the Web — is a component of SAMHSA’s Science and Service initiative.

The page features direct links to more than 37 Web sites that contain information about specific evidence-based interventions or provide reviews of research findings.

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