



CONNECTIONS

'Gang Awareness and Prevention' Training Workshop Co-sponsored By CBH Care, Holy Name Hospital



An attentive audience of healthcare professionals listens to Ron Holvey of the New Jersey Department of Corrections as he describes the Gang Awareness and Prevention Program.

Seventh Annual
Golf Outing Set
For September 25
(page 4)

Youth Case
Management
Adds Staff
(page 3)

CHAMP Program
Renovates Three
More Houses
(page 3)

Nearly 100 healthcare professionals participated in the continuing education session on "Gang Awareness and Prevention" co-sponsored by CBH Care and Holy Name Hospital on March 17. Held at Bergen Community College in Paramus, the all-day workshop provided an overview of the history, beliefs, current trends, signs and symbols of the most commonly encountered street gangs. It also emphasized ways of keeping young people from being involved in gang activities.

The main speaker at the training session was Ron Holvey, Principal Investigator, Special Investigation Division, New Jersey Department of Corrections. He has been with the Department of Corrections for

25 years and has been working specifically with gangs and gang members for the past 12 years. In 2001, he started a program involving gang members who are in New Jersey prisons called the "Gang Awareness and Prevention" Program (GAPP).

Gang Awareness and Prevention Program

The program enlists identified gang member inmates (who have successfully completed the Security Threat Group Management Unit Program) to voluntarily participate in the program which takes these ex-gang members into schools to speak to youth about the negative effects of gang membership. GAPP brings individuals who are currently

(continued on page 2)

CBH Care Receives High Marks In Customer Satisfaction Survey

For the sixth time in seven years, CBH Care has outscored the national average in a customer satisfaction survey. In the survey, conducted in November 2005 by Mental Health Corporations of America (MHCA), confidential responses were collected from more than 350 CBH Care clients and forwarded to the National Data Center for Customer Satisfaction (NDCCS) in Tallahassee, FL.

NDCCS processed the raw data and prepared an analytical report comparing CBH Care's client responses to more than 47,000 responses from 135 mental health centers from across the United States.

"We are thrilled with the results," said James M. Cooney, Associate Executive Director for CBH Care. "Despite the tremendous pressure which the lack of adequate State funding has placed on all agency staff, clinical and administrative alike, our customers have validated our commitment to quality."

(continued on page 5)

'Gang Awareness and Prevention' Training Workshop

(continued from page 1)

Left to right: Sharad Wagle, MD, Chief of Psychiatry at Holy Name Hospital, who introduced the workshop's main speaker; Ron Holvey of the New Jersey Department of Corrections, who led the discussion on gangs; and Peter Scerbo, LCSW, CBH Care Executive Director, who welcomed everyone to the training session.



Left to right: Workshop leader Ron Holvey discusses the day's schedule with CBH Care Continuing Education Committee Co-chairs Catherine Buchholz, LCSW, and Nadine Venezia, LSW.



incarcerated and under the supervision of a uniformed Correction Officer directly into the classroom to speak to youth. This approach has had a dramatic effect on children: They can see and hear the consequences of gang membership. (Variations of the program are also available to community groups and organizations interested in keeping children from being involved in gang activities.)

Mr. Holvey pointed out that there are both economic and political reasons to *not* want to talk about gangs in our communities, but their presence is a very serious problem that can be devastating. He emphasized that, though crime rates are down, gang membership is up, especially in suburban areas. Unlike on the West coast, gangs on the East coast are no longer formed along racial lines, but are more involved with drugs and money. Most local gangs are affiliated with national organizations. There are two "nations" of gangs: People and Folk. Within each nation there are gangs that identify with them. Mr. Holvey then described to workshop attendees the gang activity involvement related to graffiti recognition, language, signs, colors and clothing.

New Jersey Gangs

Mr. Holvey stated that New Jersey gangs include the Netas (the largest, most organized, most violent and fastest growing), the Bloods, the Latin Kings, the Crips, the Five Percenters, the MS-13 and several Mexican gangs. He said the counties in New Jersey with the most gang problems now include Essex, Hudson, Passaic, Union, Middlesex, Mercer and Camden; but he emphasized that Bergen County also has a growing gang problem that needs to be addressed. Since 1994, 10,000 gang members have been identified in New Jersey (44% are currently incarcerated). Since the average prison sentence is five years or less, many are back on the streets in a short period of time. New Jersey has a new prison program for gang members which has helped to decrease the re-arrest rate to 33%.

Mr. Holvey encouraged his audience of healthcare

professionals to look for the following indications of gang activity among the youth in their communities:

- Gang graffiti
- Negative behavior changes
- Drop in grades in schools
- Changes in attitude toward authority
- Drug use or excessive alcohol use
- Photos of gang members on display
- Wearing gang colors
- Tattoos
- Flashing gang signs to others
- Appearances of gang names, slogans, insignias on personal belongings
- Freely admitting gang membership

The gang recruitment process plays out every day in both urban and suburban areas throughout New Jersey, Mr. Holvey said. Recruiters often look for kids who feel unloved, receive little or no parental supervision, have low self-esteem and want to feel a sense of belonging.

Presentation by Prison Inmates

Perhaps the highlight of the training session came in the afternoon when Mr. Holvey introduced two inmates from the Northern State Prison in Newark who are ex-gang members who have successfully completed the Security Threat Group Management Unit Phase Program at the prison. The inmates shared their personal experiences as gang members and as inmates, and explained how they are now talking with young people in schools and organizations to help prevent them from making the same mistakes they made.

Attendees at the training session on March 17 received 5.5 CEUs for participating in the workshop. CBH Care has conducted successful continuing education workshops for behavioral healthcare professionals for many years and is a registered New Jersey professional development provider.

Planning Committee

Planning the March 17 training workshop were CBH Care's Continuing Education Committee members: Co-chairs Nadine Venezia, LSW, Program Coordinator, Intensive Family Support Services, and Catherine Buchholz, LCSW, Program Coordinator, Adult Partial Care; Kristen Ambrosio, LCSW, Supervisor, Youth Case Management Program; Doreen Bobby, LCSW, Director of Counseling Services; Jan Damiano, Executive Secretary; Dale Goldberg, Senior Secretary, Hackensack; Beth Mazzarella, Social Worker, CHAMP Program; Melissa Middleman, LCSW, Program Coordinator, Adolescent Partial Care; Lisa Nobilione, Training and Orientation Administrator; and Karen Schmidt, Human Resources Coordinator. Working with the Committee was Sharad Wagle, MD, Chief of Psychiatry, Holy Name Hospital.

For information about upcoming workshops or to be placed on the mailing list to receive fliers about the workshops, phone Jan Damiano at 201-935-3322.

Youth Case Management Services Adds Staff, Increases Services

CBH Care's Youth Case Management Services has added another professional person to its staff, bringing the total now to eight full-time and one part-time staffers. This is part of the statewide expansion put in effect by the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Child Behavioral Health Care (which encompasses Mental Health and Child Welfare as well as Juvenile Justice).

Jamie Heller, Ph.D., LCSW, Director of CBH Care's Adolescent Services, explains, "CBH Care has provided Youth Case Management (YCM) Services for Bergen County since 1988. The goal of YCM is to identify children (ages 5-17) who have repetitive psychiatric hospitalizations and histories of out-of-home placements and multi-system needs, and to work with them to stabilize them in the community. YCM assesses their needs, provides advocacy and referral to needed services, and helps coordinate treatment planning."

Dr. Heller said, "The new staff person, who started March 1, is Spanish-speaking and will be able to communicate well with all of our clients, including those from the Hispanic community. Adding staff also will help us handle the increasing caseload work."

Kristen Ambrosio, LCSW, Supervisor of the YCM Program, points out that the program provides assessments, recommendations, linkages, interim services, advocacy, support for children and families and follow-up services. She says, "Service coordination by our staff can include recreational activities in the community, treatment team meetings with all involved parties, therapeutic linkages and partial care programs. Interim service can include individual counseling, family counseling and crisis management."

"We are very pleased with the additional staff," Dr. Heller says. "We will be better able to carry out our mission and ensure that the children are receiving what they need."

CHAMP Program Expansion Underway



Three additional houses are being renovated to expand the CHAMP Program originally developed in 2000 by CBH Care and Community Hope, a Morris County based agency. In the CHAMP (Care and Hope at Morris Plains) Program, clients discharged from Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital in Morris Plains go to live in group homes on the grounds of the hospital. The State-funded residency program is operated collaboratively by CBH Care and Community Hope. Its goal is to help stabilized patients gradually make a smooth transition back into the community.

The program began with three facilities on Ruth Davis Drive, one house for MICA (mentally ill chemical abuse) clients, one house for clients who were resistant to discharge from Greystone and a third house used for a day program and administrative offices. The program was very successful and plans were made for expansion.

In November 2004, Morris County Freeholders voted to lease three additional houses on Ruth Davis Drive to CBH Care and Community Hope to expand the CHAMP Program. The houses, however, had been abandoned, were in poor condition, and needed major renovations. An application for funds to renovate two houses was eventually approved by the Community Development Program in Morris County and the third house was renovated with funding from the Township of Parsippany. Subsequently, operational funds were secured through a new operations contract with the New Jersey Division of Mental Health. This includes the hiring of additional staff and start-up expenses for furniture, vehicles, office supplies, etc.

According to Susan Devlin, Director of Residential Services, the renovations are scheduled to be completed in early May (by General Contractor Durante Mason and Asphalt Paving) and the houses ready for the CHAMP Program expansion by late May. Ms. Devlin explains, "These three houses will provide for an additional 15 clients being discharged from Greystone and will increase the total number of clients being served at CHAMP to 25. Though it has taken a great amount of time and effort, we are pleased that we finally have the expansion completed and will be able to serve more clients."



The three additional houses in the CHAMP Program as they were being renovated.

SAVE THE DATE!

Foundation's Seventh Annual Golf Outing Set for September 25 at Wild Turkey



CBH Care Foundation President and Golf-Outing Co-chair Helen Kuruc announced last week that the Seventh Annual Golf Outing would return to Wild Turkey Golf Course in Hardyston, NJ, on Monday, September 25, 2006.

Named one of the top golf courses in the state by *New Jersey Monthly* magazine in 2004, Wild Turkey is the newest of several courses attached to the Crystal Springs Resort in Hamburg, NJ. Designed by Roger Rulewich, former protégé/partner of Robert Trent Jones, Sr., Wild Turkey was constructed in 2001 over a topography described as “basin and ridge.” The course combines the sheer expansiveness of the Ramapo Mountain basin with the rugged, multi-elevated nature of the mountain ridge. Wild Turkey is located at 1 Wild Turkey Way, Hardyston, NJ.

A tournament donation of \$225 for each participant will include a noon luncheon barbecue, golf carts, green fees, practice range, and a gourmet dinner at the clubhouse following the afternoon of golf. A modified shotgun start will take place at 1:00 p.m. All golfers will be eligible to win any of the special contests including Hole-in-One contests on each par three, longest drive, closest to the pin, straightest drive, as well as gross and net

prizes and raffle prizes.

Again, the Co-chairs of the benefit event are Ms. Kuruc, who is Professor of Mathematics at Essex County College, and Gabe Ambrosio, Lyndhurst attorney and former state senator. Ms. Kuruc urges golfers to mark the September 25 date on their calendars. She says, “You won’t want to miss this day of good golf, good food, and good friends—all for a good cause. You will be helping the Foundation support the many programs and services provided by Comprehensive Behavioral Healthcare for the citizens of northern New Jersey. Our goal for 2006 is to surpass last year’s records in the number of golfers participating and the amount of funds raised.”

Mr. Ambrosio emphasizes, “The Wild Turkey Golf Course is a great place to play with many challenging holes. I am pleased that we are going back there again this year. This is a great tradition. All golfers will enjoy playing this course, regardless of their handicap.”

The CBH Care Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization formed to support the non-profit charitable services provided by Comprehensive Behavioral Healthcare. All contributions to the Foundation are tax deductible. The Foundation is seeking

sponsors for all the special contests and prizes as well as a large turnout of golfers.

For further information about the Foundation’s Seventh Annual Golf Outing, registration and/or sponsorship, contact James M. Cooney, Associate Executive Director, or Jan Damiano, Executive Secretary, at 201-935-3322 or log on to the website at: www.cbhcare.com

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CONNECTIONS**

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Design: SHK/Stark Creative Services
Printing: Otis Graphics, Inc.

From the Executive Director...

Mental Healthcare: A Wise Investment

The New Jersey Association of Mental Health Agencies (NJAMHA) recently supported Governor Jon Corzine in calling for “wise investments” in New Jersey. Speaking on behalf of 125 member agencies, Debra Wentz, CEO of NJAMHA, said, “The cost of untreated mental illness in New Jersey is \$4 billion annually, with the toll found in non-psychiatric medical care, prisons, unemployment, substance abuse, disability shelters, lack of productivity, school interventions and broken families.” She presented the following statistics to emphasize the need for additional funds for mental health care:

- Over half of the children with severe mental health illness do not graduate from high school.
- Individuals with untreated anxiety and/or depression utilize three times as much in non-psychiatric medical treatment.
- At least 60% of long-term substance abusers have a mental illness.
- Four of the 10 leading causes of disability in the world are mental disorders.
- More than 90% of adults with severe mental illness end up unemployed.
- Approximately 15% of New Jersey’s inmate population has a diagnosable mental illness.
- The economic cost of untreated mental illness is more than \$100 billion annually in the United States.

Untreated mental illness can be exhibited in symptoms that lead physicians to refer patients for expensive, unnecessary tests and can exacerbate chronic conditions such as asthma

and diabetes. Untreated mental illness creates financial problems in the workplace through absenteeism and lack of productivity. Untreated children often do not graduate from school and may face a life of substance abuse, imprisonment and dysfunction.

Mental health professionals know that treatment works. There are proven interventions that promote recovery for people with mental illness. According to the *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, providing high quality mental health services reduces employers’ total healthcare costs. New Jersey’s non-profit mental healthcare providers are in all 21 counties providing quality treatment and support to thousands of individuals with mental illness and their families. These providers help the mentally ill to thrive in school, on the job and in the community.

NJAMHA has called upon the State to invest an additional \$317 million this year in mental and behavioral healthcare services, which can result in an annual savings to New Jersey of \$3.7 billion. As Governor Corzine and his team develop this year’s budget, let us all advocate to remind him that “Mental Healthcare is a Wise Investment.” We urge you to contact the Governor’s office in Trenton to request that the additional money for mental healthcare be included in this year’s budget for the State of New Jersey.



Peter Scerbo, L.C.S.W.
Executive Director

CBH Care Receives High Marks

(continued from page 1)

While 91.6% of the clients surveyed said they would recommend the CBH Care organization and its services to others, the highest marks came in the four survey dimensions of Personal Therapy (98%), the Physical Environment (97%), Client/Staff Interaction (99%), and Overall Outcome and Reputation (98%).

CBH Care also did extremely well in the Personal Therapy dimension which includes measures traditionally associated with program outcomes. Some of these outcome-related measures are:

- Opportunity to participate in decisions about your treatment.
- Extent to which your individual needs were addressed.
- Appropriate therapies and interventions offered.
- Ability of services to meet your needs.
- Availability of staff to talk with you.
- Length of time between making appointment and seeing the psychiatrist.
- Length of time between making appointment and seeing the therapist/counselor.

Mr. Cooney pointed out, “Although a difference of one tenth of a point may not seem like much most of the time, it can be statistically significant in a national survey of this size. It is not surprising that we did so well in the Client/Staff Interaction dimension, which includes measures such as professionalism, courtesy, attention to privacy, degree of confidentiality, etc., because we have a great staff team. They deserve all the credit.”

Dimension	Satisfaction Level	CBH Care Rating	MHCA National Average
Personal Therapy	98%	3.85	3.79
Physical Environment	97%	3.67	3.69
Client/Staff Interaction	99%	4.03	4.04
Overall Outcome & Reputation	98%	4.04	4.03
Grand Mean		3.85	3.83

Do You Get Enough Sleep?

Medical experts have told us for years that we need to get adequate sleep each night to help our bodies recover from the previous day's activities and to lead healthy lives free from illness and disease. Now, in addition to all the "health" reasons to get enough sleep, we learn that there are "safety" reasons too, especially if we drive cars.

According to a new research study reported by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, driver drowsiness is a leading cause of accidents (along with driver distraction which includes using cell phones, reaching for moving objects, etc.). Nearly 80% of highway accidents each year result from inattentive drivers and those who fall asleep at the wheel.

The new study found that people are losing control of their vehicles more frequently than previously thought. Given the long commutes many drivers now make, sleepiness while driving is on the increase.

How to get a good night's sleep? In addition to simply allocating enough time for sleep each night (which may mean rescheduling your activities and budgeting your time better), here are some suggestions to help you get a good night's sleep:

- Reduce intake of caffeine and alcohol.
- Avoid large, late evening meals.
- Exercise during the day (not just before bedtime).
- Take a warm bath.
- Listen to soothing music.
- Minimize stress, take deep breaths, try to relax.
- Read a chapter in a favorite book.
- Have a warm drink before going to bed.
- Sleep in a dark, quiet room (use a sleep mask and ear plugs if needed).

Though individual sleep requirements vary, the "average" person needs seven or eight hours of sleep in a usual day, according to recommendations from the American Medical Association.



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Permit No. 332



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