



# CONNECTIONS

From the Executive Director...

## Mental Health Parity Bill Finally Approved As Part of Congressional Rescue Package

Tucked strategically under the wing of the financial markets several-billion-dollar bailout legislation is the long-sought bill requiring mental health and substance abuse insurance coverage to be in parity with that of primary health care. The battle for mental health parity has been long-fought by mental health advocates, groups such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and legislators such as former Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota, and current Senators Pete V. Domenici of New Mexico, Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, and Michael B. Enzi of West Virginia. They have fought the powerfully funded insurance and business lobbyists who strongly opposed the passage of this legislation, claiming costs would be prohibitive and employers could not afford to provide coverage.

On October 3, 2008, the Mental Health Parity Bill was signed into law by President George W. Bush. This act will now protect over 113 million people across the United States, including 82 million individuals enrolled in Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) group insurance plans who are not protected by state laws. This legislation will insure that:

- Those suffering with mental illness and substance abuse will no longer be treated as second class citizens by insurance companies.
- No longer will the mentally ill and substance abusers be denied treatment due to inadequate coverage.
- The parity bill requires health insurers to offer mental health benefits equal in costs and scope to primary care coverage.
- Now mental illness and substance abuse will be treated as a disease, just as cancer, diabetes or heart disease.
- No longer will insurance companies be able to impose unfair schemes that charge the mentally ill higher co-pays and offer lower reimbursement ceilings to treatment providers resulting in higher out-of-pocket costs to the consumer.

- No longer will families with loved ones affected by mental illness have to go bankrupt to secure care.
- Fewer people with mental illness will die early in life. (Denial of care may have attributed to the grim fact that the severely mentally ill die, on average, 25 years earlier than the rest of the U.S. population. Hopefully, this statistic will change dramatically after the implementation of the parity bill.)

In summary, this legislation will help end discrimination against people with mental and substance abuse disorders by requiring equal insurance coverage to that of general health insurance. Introduced after many years of advocacy, this legislation will bar all discriminatory financial arrangements and treatment limitations for both mental health and substance abuse disorders. The passage of this bill is the culmination of a long, hard-fought battle by Senators Wellstone, Domenici, Kennedy and Enzi. According to Senator Kennedy, "The passage of the parity bill represents a renewed hope for millions of Americans facing mental illness and substance abuse disorders."

This new legislation will ultimately be of great benefit to the citizens of Northern New Jersey, the population served by Comprehensive Behavioral Healthcare. And it is especially timely because of the economic crisis our country is currently facing. It will mean less of a burden on the consumers whom we serve and less of a hardship on their families. We look forward to the mental health parity legislation helping all of our consumers.

Peter Scerbo, LCSW  
Executive Director

### CBH Care Featured on NJN News

Valley Brook Center, CBH Care's Geriatric Partial Care Program in Lyndhurst, was featured on NJN News at 5:00 p.m. on October 6. It was spotlighted as an example of the kind of services the new mental health care parity legislation will affect. Gail Gloeckler, RNC, Coordinator of the Valley Brook Center, was filmed while talking with the consumers present that morning, and Peter Scerbo, CBH Care's Executive Director, was interviewed as well as Debbie Wentz, President of the New Jersey Association of Mental Health Agencies (NJAMHA).

# Continuing Education Workshop Focuses on Needs of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Population



On Friday, October 17, 2008, CBH Care presented a Continuing Education Workshop on “Understanding the Needs of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Community” at Bergen Community College in Paramus, NJ. Nearly 80 healthcare professionals, teachers and counselors from northern New Jersey came to learn how to respond to and help their clients and students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT).

As the visibility and activism of the LGBT community has grown, healthcare and education professionals have needed to increase their understanding of basic concerns related to the LGBT experience. The October 17 workshop was planned to give counselors, educators and other service providers (who are increasingly being confronted with LGBT issues) the latest clinical information and best practices to use in their work. The training session drew upon the experience of experts from Hudson Pride Connections, a social service agency in Jersey City, NJ, dedicated to serving the unmet needs of the LGBT community; and the New York/New Jersey AIDS Education and Training Center at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ).

## Workshop Speakers

First speaker at the all-day workshop was Nancy Caamano, Deputy Director, Hudson Pride Connections and the Pride Connection Center of New Jersey. She discussed the special needs of LGBT adolescents and how they relate to their families, friends, schools and religious communities. She explored the stresses, impairments and impacts of homophobia on all youth and explained the links between culture, power and privilege. She then suggested ways in which professionals working with LGBT adolescents can best meet their needs.

The second speaker was David Rosen, LCSW, Clinical Programs Director for Hudson Pride Connections (part-time) and Assistant Director, Division of AIDS Education at UMDNJ. He spoke on “LGBT Youth and Bio-Psycho-Social Health.” He first presented “National and Local Trends” and then discussed “Addressing HIV, Substance Use, Coming Out & Families.” He noted that the 2000 U.S. Census was the first time information was collected about gay and lesbian couples—but not individuals. (New Jersey ranked tenth among the states in the number of gay and lesbian couples.) He reported that the best estimates show three to five percent of the general population in the country are LGBT.

George Sheridan, LCSW, who is Clinical Director in HIV Case Management at Hoboken University Medical Center, was the third presenter. He spoke on “Conducting Clinical Assessments with LGBT Youth Clients.” He drew on some of his experiences during the 13 years he has been involved in HIV work, and as a psychiatric social worker in a county jail and as a screener in a psychiatric emergency room. He discussed the issues that grieve LGBT youths and how they respond to those issues, given their developmental stages (children, adolescents and young persons).

The fourth and last speaker of the day was Tyree Oredein, MPH, Project Manager of the School and Community Development Initiative at Hudson Pride Connections, where she delivers LGBT sensitivity programming to youth as well as youth-serving personnel. She presented “The Role of the Educator: Creating Safe Spaces” and shared some of her experiences working with national HIV awareness campaigns. To combat prejudice, discrimination, harassment, mistreatment and even violence against LGBT students, she suggested actions her audience could take to help LGBT youth feel more included and valued within their communities.

## Planning Committee

Planning the October 17 training workshop was CBH Care’s Continuing Education Committee composed of Chairperson Lara Zucker, IFSS Program Coordinator; Kristen Ambrosio, LCSW, Supervisor, Youth Case Management Services; Doreen Bobby, LCSW, Director of Counseling Services; Catherine Buchholz, LCSW, Division Director, Rehabilitation Services; Jan Damiano, Executive Secretary; Dale Goldberg, Senior Secretary. Hackensack; Amy Korsen, Access Worker; Lisa Nobile, Training and Orientation Administrator; and Karen Schmidt, Human Resources Coordinator.

CBH Care is a registered New Jersey professional development provider and has conducted successful continuing education workshops for behavioral healthcare professionals for many years. Attendees at the October 17 training session received 6 CEUs for participating in the full-day workshop.

For information about upcoming continuing education workshops or to be placed on the mailing list to receive fliers about the training sessions, contact Jan Damiano, Executive Secretary, at CBH Care’s Lyndhurst office at 201-935-3322 or join our E-List online at [www.cbhcare.com](http://www.cbhcare.com).



Speakers at the training session included: (left to right) Tyree Oredein, David Rosen, Nancy Caamano and George Sheridan.



Michael J. Tozzoli, Chief Executive Officer, West Bergen Mental Healthcare (at left) is welcomed by Peter Scerbo, Executive Director, CBH Care.



Speaker Nancy Caamano (at right) invited workshop participant Victoria Kaczowski, Substance Abuse Therapist in CBH Care's Counseling Service, to read a script written by an LGBT youth to the audience.



(Above) Workshop participants from Berkeley College campuses in New Jersey and New York: (Sitting) Alyson Pompeo, Katherine Wu and Sandra Coppola; (Standing) Amanda Frey and Melissa Lerner.



(Top photo) Participants Alexis Burke, East Orange School District and Carol Zeik, Bergen Regional Medical Center, discuss subject at coffee break.



(Lower photo) Participants John Dunderman and Donna Kunz from the Department of Children and Families, Regional School, Bergen Campus, Paramus, NJ.



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# September 22 Annual Golf Outing Again Successful for Foundation



“A perfect day for golf,” was the way Co-Chair Helen Kuruc described the CBH Care Foundation’s Ninth Annual Golf Outing held on September 22, 2008, at Wild Turkey Golf Club in Hardyston, NJ. Ms. Kuruc, who is President of the Foundation and is a Professor of Mathematics at Essex County College in Newark, stated, “The weather was absolutely perfect, everyone enjoyed themselves, the food was great...and we sold lots of raffle tickets! We are most grateful to the many friends who supported us. We particularly want to thank our tournament sponsors Anthony & Eileen Becker and Durante & Son Mason & Asphalt Contractors.”

Co-Chair Gabe Ambrosio, Lyndhurst attorney who is a CBH Care Honorary Trustee and former State Senator, said, “We especially appreciated the good turnout of golfers. We all had a great time.”

After a barbecue luncheon sponsored by Janet Czermak, a modified shotgun start took place at 1:00 p.m. with golfers motoring throughout the course in golf carts sponsored by the Bogle Insurance Agency. The practice greens were provided by Clarion Office Supplies, the Damiano family, and Inserra Supermarkets; and the practice range was sponsored by Arlington Plumbing & Heating, Bergen’s Promise, and Built Rite.

After an afternoon of golf, everyone returned to the clubhouse where they enjoyed a gourmet dinner. Then came the presentation of the golfing awards plus the raffle and door prizes. All golfers were eligible to win a variety of contests and prizes. The prizes offered by sponsors of the Hole-in-One contest included:

- A 2008 Chrysler 300C by Chrysler Motors
- A \$10,000 check courtesy of Mutual of America
- Airline tickets by Recruit Savvy
- Calloway Clubs by Essex Replacement Doors & Windows

Though no golfers made a hole-in-one, many were lucky enough to win prizes in the other contests:

- 1st Place Low Gross / Anton Becker
- 2nd Place Low Gross / Eric Summerville
- 1st Place Low Net / Harry Brechtbill
- 2nd Place Low Net / Michael Serluco
- Longest Drive / Philip Bogle
- Straightest Drive / Mike Erickson
- Closest to the Pin #2 / Eugene Macalino
- Closest to the Pin #10 / Tom Lindsay

The Becker family came out to support the CBH Care Foundation: (left to right) Eric, Anthony, Eileen and Anton Becker.



CBH Care’s Board President Philip Bogle’s foursome included: (left to right) Joe Cifune, Jim Gibbons, Philip Bogle and Sam Zamloot.



## Laura Amerman Joins CBH Care As New Development Specialist



Laura Amerman

Laura Amerman has been appointed to the new position of Development Specialist on the CBH Care Administrative staff, it was announced by Executive Director Peter Scerbo in late September. She will work closely with the CBH Care Foundation in its fundraising efforts as well as with the CBH Care Board of Trustees, Executive Director and staff. Her primary role will be to handle all aspects of CBH Care's Development

Program including planning, budgeting, proposal preparation, constituency outreach, marketing, media relations, community and public awareness and special events.

Ms. Amerman has had extensive experience in both corporate and non-profit marketing and communications as well as business and resource development. Her last position was Program Director of Stand & Deliver, a youth leadership program in the Greater Newark area which offers communication skills training to young people. Prior to that, she worked with Horizon BlueCross BlueShield of New Jersey for several years in marketing and sales positions and, before that, with advertising groups. She is a graduate of Drew University's College of Liberal Arts in Madison, NJ. Her extensive community volunteer work includes being the 2008-2010 President of the Washington School PTA in Rutherford, NJ, where her daughter is a second grade student. (Her son is a senior at St. Peter's Preparatory School.)

Mr. Scerbo stated, "We are pleased to have Ms. Amerman on staff. Her past experience in resource development will be of great assistance as we plan and implement a new Development Program here at CBH Care."

CBH Care Foundation President Helen Kuruc, who is Professor of Mathematics at Essex County College in Newark, NJ, said, "We welcome Ms. Amerman and anticipate working with her on Foundation events. This is a difficult time for us because of the economic crisis in our country, but we must intensify our fundraising efforts in order to maintain the high quality of services for which CBH Care has long been known."

Ms. Amerman, who joined the CBH Care staff in September, said, "Preparing and executing a new Marketing and Development Program for CBH Care will be challenging, but I look forward to working with the Administrative staff and the Foundation in broadening the sources of revenue to insure the continued improvement and expansion of the agency's services."

### Join the CBH Care E-Newsletter List!

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We promise NEVER to sell or disclose your e-mail address.

Contest sponsor for the Longest Drive was Otis Graphics; for the Straightest Drive was Kearny Federal Savings; and for the Closest to the Pin contests were Community Hope, Inc., Plaid Motors, Chem Tec, and Steinger Behavioral Care Services.

Prize and gift donors to the 2008 Golf Outing included: Gabe Ambrosio, Phil Bogle, Café at the Meadows, Chrysler Motor Corp., Jan Damiano, Helen Kuruc, Peter Scerbo, The Meadows Golf Course, and Valley National Bank.

Tee sponsors for the Golf Outing included:

American Painting Contractors  
Butler Woodcrafters  
Chem Tec  
R. DeLuca Assoc.  
Eastern Essential Cleaning Service  
Engle & Fricke, Inc.  
Essex County College  
Field Communications  
Frank's Truck Center  
Hing Tong & Mary Tong Foundation  
Hometown Inspections  
Hudson Tire Exchange  
In Memory of Marie Battista  
In Memory of Joseph & Jack Navatta  
Jackson, Lewis, LLPC  
John Sofia Jewelers  
Johnson's Service Center  
Lyndhurst Pastry Shop  
Lyndhurst Quality Alarms  
Mario Marghella  
Molly Maids  
North Jersey Friendship House  
Preferred Business Systems  
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SIKA Corporation  
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Sonia Stark Creative Services  
The Naval Air Station  
The Water Store by Bellaqua  
Vol Tech Electric  
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Golfers check in at the registration table before play begins.



The CBH Care Foundation is already planning its Tenth Annual Golf Outing to be held in September, 2009, and asks all its friends and supporters to watch their mail for more information.

## CBH Care Staff, Families Enjoy 'Appreciation Picnic 2008'

Over 200 employees of CBH Care and their families enjoyed the Annual Staff Picnic on July 11, 2008, held at Forest Lodge in Warren, NJ. Beautiful weather prevailed for all the activities which included softball, swimming and games for the children. Food and beverages, provided by Forest Lodge, were served continuously all day including grilled chicken, hamburgers and hotdogs.

The staff outing was planned by the CBH Care "Picnic 2008" Committee composed of Chairperson Ernie Cheng, Financial Assistant in the Finance Department; Kristen Ambrosio, Case Management Coordinator in the Adolescent Department; Dana Jaworski, Billing Supervisor in Administration; Zilly VanInderstine, Office Administrator; and Laura Weiger, Program Coordinator in the Emerson Group Home (a transitional residence). Their hard work and excellent organization made this fun-filled day possible for agency staff and their families.



# CBH Care Needs Your Year-End Contributions To Continue Vital Services and Programs

Donations to Comprehensive Behavioral Healthcare, Inc., one of northern New Jersey's leading community mental health centers, will help sustain the essential counseling and support services provided each day to the over 4,000 individuals served by CBH Care.

**Your contribution will make a difference in the lives of the people who rely on CBH Care for hope and recovery.**

These include:

■ Adolescents like Jackie, a 16-year-old resident at KARE (Kearny Adolescent Residential Experience). Jackie came to CBH Care after her second hospitalization. She was removed from her parents' care at age five and bounced around until taken in by relatives. Initially very mistrustful and angry, Jackie blossomed under the structure and care she received from the staff at KARE. She has now returned home and is receiving "A"s in school.

■ Seniors like Ann, an 87-year-old participant at the Valley Brook Center, CBH Care's Geriatric Partial Care Program. Ann is a widow and lives alone. Her only child, Donna, works full time and worries about her mother's safety during the day. The Valley Brook Center provides a nurturing place where Ann can socialize and remain active. CBH Care's geriatric psychiatrist monitors Ann's progress and nurses make sure she takes her medication. Ann no longer complains of loneliness and enjoys coming to the program every day.

Individuals, whether they have spent months or years in public institutions or hospitals, experience renewed hope and recovery as a result of programs at CBH Care. When making your donation, consider that your gift can provide the following this year:

- \$50 helps underwrite the cost of food for a senior citizen in the Valley Brook Center.
- \$100 helps underwrite gas for the transportation vans bringing consumers to CBH Care programs.
- \$250 helps underwrite housing for adolescents in KARE.
- \$500 helps underwrite licensed counselors serving in CBH Care's partial care, counseling and substance abuse programs in Hackensack, Lyndhurst and River Edge.
- \$1,000 helps underwrite the Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs) who care for CBH Care consumers.

Peter Scerbo, CBH Care's Executive Director, points out, *"Because we provide many services with minimal or no compensation, we rely on you—our friends and supporters—to keep these services available to those who cannot afford the care by themselves. We need your help now more than ever before. Please use the coupon below and the enclosed reply envelope to send us your donation. Whatever you give will be used wisely to help individuals and families in our northern New Jersey community cope with today's problems. We thank you for your continued support."*

CBH Care is a 501(c)(3) organization and donations are tax deductible. Information filed under the New Jersey Charitable Registrations Act concerning CBH Care may be obtained from the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs by calling 1-800-242-5846.

If you have questions or desire more information, please contact Laura Amerman, CBH Care Development Office, Annual Giving Program, at 201-935-3322 or lamerman@cbhcare.com.

Comprehensive Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.  
516 Valley Brook Avenue  
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To help further the work of CBH Care:

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of  \$25  \$50  \$100  \$250  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My employer will match this contribution.  Enclosed is the necessary matching gift form.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to:  
Comprehensive Behavioral Healthcare

**Thank you for your support!**

## Health Tip

### Is S.A.D. Affecting You at This Time of Year?

As we experience the fall season and the approach of winter, some people are subject to S.A.D.—Seasonal Affective Disorder—a form of depression. The daylight hours get shorter and this actually can influence how we think and feel.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), if you notice periods of oversleeping, daytime fatigue, carbohydrate craving, weight gain, lethargy, hopelessness or lack of interest in normal activities, you may be suffering from winter S.A.D.

The most common characteristic of people with S.A.D. is their reaction to changes in environmental light. As winter approaches, we have more overcast weather, fewer daylight hours, and indoor lighting tends to be decreased.

To offset this, bright white fluorescent light can be used to reverse the winter depressive symptoms of S.A.D. Special lights can be purchased for this purpose. The lamps are encased in a box with a diffusing lens, which also filters out ultraviolet radiation. The box sits on a table at eye level and the individual sits in front of this light for a daily session of 20 minutes or more. The antidepressant effect, investigators think, is mediated by light's action on the internal circadian rhythm clock in each individual. Most people with S.A.D. benefit by resetting this clock earlier which is achieved with morning light exposure. Since different people have different clock phases, the optimum time of light exposure can differ greatly. The Center for Environmental Therapeutics (a professional non-profit agency) offers an on-line questionnaire on its website ([www.cet.org](http://www.cet.org)) which can be used to calculate a recommended treatment time.

If your symptoms are mild and do not interfere very much with your daily living, you may want to try this light therapy or experiment with adjusting the light in your surroundings with bright lamps. You can also benefit from scheduling more time outdoors in late fall and winter (taking walks to view brilliant fall leaves or fresh clean snow can be exhilarating). If your depressive symptoms are significant and do effect your daily living, consult a mental health professional qualified to treat S.A.D., such as those at Comprehensive Behavioral Healthcare. To get help, call CBH Care's Access line at 201-646-0195.



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