



**National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging
Meeting Minutes
DRAFT
April 28, 2008**

Deborah DiGilio, Chair of the National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging and Director of the American Psychological Association Office on Aging called the meeting to order and reviewed the proposed agenda. There were 28 participants.

Update on Current Legislative and Regulatory Issues

Jim Finley of the National Association of Social Workers began with an update of the crisis in Medicare. He reported that at the end of June there will be Medicare Physician Fee cut of 10%. The Medicare Mental Health Copayment Equity Act of 2007 (S1715) is currently in the rewriting phase. We are in need of advocates to write to their Senators asking them to sign onto S1715 to light a fire under the Finance Committee. There are seven co-sponsors at the moment. However, the bill has support from all 50 governors and various grassroots groups. We have been seeing a variety of assaults on Medicaid including case management and rehabilitation cuts driven by regulatory changes at Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). A Medicaid Moratorium bill was recently signed onto by two-thirds of the Republicans and every Democrat (349-52) in a strong show of disapproval of the President's intentions to cut services.

Update on Caring for an Aging America Act (S2708) & Experiences of a Policy Fellow on Capitol Hill (Part I)

Lynn Friss Feinberg is the John Heinz Senate Fellow in Aging serving in the Office of Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA). She updated NCMHA on the Caring for an Aging America Act (S2708), introduced by Senator Boxer and cosponsored by Senator Susan Collins (R-ME). The purpose of the bill is to attract new and retain licensed health care professionals and direct care workers to provide quality care to the growing population of older Americans through providing loan forgiveness and career advancement opportunities. Its Geriatric and Gerontology Loan repayment program will utilize the loan repayment system under the National Health Service Corps (NHSC). The idea is to gerontologize the NHSC. The bill will also help create a Health and Long-Term Care Workforce Advisory Panel. The Advisory Panel will analyze the existing geriatric health and long-term care workforce data infrastructure because we lack both critical state-by-state and national data. Lynn will send out a 'Dear Colleague' letter to NCMHA members in the upcoming weeks asking for their support.

Older American Mental Health Week Planning

Laurie Young of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and formerly Director of The Voice of Midlife & Older Women (OWL), provided NCMHA with an update of plans for Older American's Mental Health Week on behalf of Ashley B. Carson, current Director of OWL. Based on the needs identified in last year's survey of allied mental health professionals, training modules were developed to expand their knowledge of mental health and aging. The first training will be in June, in Ohio, for certified nursing assistants (CNAs) including hands-on mental health training in nursing homes.

Congressional Briefing: Meeting the Mental Health Needs of an Aging America: Opportunities and Challenges for Federal Policy Makers

Diane Elmore, Senior Legislative and Federal Affairs Officer of the American Psychological Association (APA) provided an update on a Congressional Breakfast Briefing to be held May 15th. The event will be co-sponsored by APA, the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry (AAGP), the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), and OWL in cooperation with Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-MD) and Senator Olympia J. Snowe (R-ME). The briefing entitled, *Meeting the Mental Health Needs of an Aging America: Opportunities and Challenges for Federal Policy*, will include the following presenters: Charles F. Reynolds representing AAGP presenting on 'Addressing the Geriatric Mental Health Workforce Crisis'; Toni Antonucci representing APA presenting on 'Promoting Positive Aging through Integrated Health Care'; James Finley of NASW presenting on 'Mental Health Parity in Medicare'; and Ashley Carson, of OWL presenting on 'Older Americans' Mental Health Week: Educating Nursing Assistants about Mental Health'. Diane Elmore will send out a flyer on the briefing. If any NCMHA organizations are interested in becoming a partner in the briefing, please contact her at delmore@apa.org.

Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report on Building the Health Care Workforce

Stephanie Reed, Associate Director of Government Affairs, AAGP, described the IOM Report: *Retooling for an Aging America: Report on Building the Health Care Workforce*. The Senate had a hearing coordinated with its release on April 14. The Report focuses on growth of the aging population and the small and declining geriatric workforce. Recommendations include recruiting and retaining geriatric specialists, better training for generalists in all disciplines, increase retention of paraprofessionals, and implementing innovative models of care. Stephanie noted that the report is a start and to complement its recommendation, a subreport on credentialing will be needed. There will also be a need for new models of payment delivery including payment for interdisciplinary efforts. The mental health language in the report is good as far as it goes but unfortunately there are no specific mental health recommendations, so it is not an upfront priority. AAGP believes a complementary IOM report to address the geriatric mental health workforce as needed. It was noted by David Powers that psychologists were not mentioned as health care providers in the report. Stephanie concurred with his belief that all disciplines are critical to address this issue. Visit www.iom.edu/aging for more information.

2008 NCOA/ASA Aging in America Conference Report

Anita Rosen, American Society on Aging (ASA) and Willard Mays, National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) described the 2008 NCOA/ASA Aging in America Conference held here in Washington, DC. Over fifty attendees attended the Coalition track. NCMHA cosponsored Mental Health and Aging Coalitions Track, *Aging in America: Mental Health and Aging Coalitions Make a Difference!* The three track programs were: "National Perspectives, Policy and Current issues in Mental Health and Aging;" "How to Organize Advocacy for Older Adults with Mental or Substance Use Disorders;" and, "Mental

Health and Aging Coalitions: Building Effective Strategies.” These sessions highlighted states in different stages of mental health, substance abuse and aging coalition building. Carol Colleran, outstanding substance abuse practitioner, received ASA’s Mental Health and Aging Network award. Las Vegas will be the site of next year’s conference.

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors Older Persons Division & National Association of PASRR Professionals Conference

Willard Mays, NASMHPD, began his remarks noting that Pre-Admission Screen and Resident Review (PASRR) was enacted into law in 1989, yet rules were not published until three years after the law was enacted. This resulted in 50 different state programs being developed based on how each state interpreted the law. The key question is does it result in people receiving the mental health services they need? In Indiana a list of nursing home residents who have received PASRR Level II reviews and determined to be in need of mental health services is provided to state health department licensure surveyors and Medicaid auditors. When facilities are surveyed a sample of this population is reviewed to see if they are indeed receiving appropriate mental health services. A study found that 87% of these residents were in fact receiving services. The key to assuring that residents are benefiting from PASRR is some type of follow-up to hold nursing facilities accountable for complying with state and federal regulations to provide or arrange for the provision of services to meet the needs of their residents. The key to making the program work is follow-up to be sure people are getting services.

This October, the NASMHPD Older Persons Division & the National Association of PASRR Professionals will cosponsor a conference, *Mapping Successes: Innovative Solutions in Reforming Long Term Care and PASRR* in Baltimore. It will convene a range of long term care stakeholders to feature innovative and effective strategies to accommodate growing needs with shrinking resources, emphasizing novel financing approaches. They hope to create a community of problem solvers through networking to expand and improve solutions with particular focus on recipients with mental illness and developmental disabilities. The National Association of PASRR Professionals is a member of NCMHA. It was established in 2006 to encourage information sharing among the states. For more information, see: www.pasrr.org.

Integrated Health Care for an Aging Population & Experiences of a Policy Fellow on Capitol Hill: (Part II)

Gregory Hinrichsen is a American Psychological Association Congressional Fellow in the Office of Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR). He was also a member of the APA Integrated Health Care for an Aging Population (IHAP) Presidential Task Force. He informed the group that the IHAP report, *Blueprint for Change: Integrated Health Care for an Aging Population* has been released. It is available at <http://www.apa.org/pi/aging/blueprint.html>. Fact sheets are currently being developed for policymakers, graduate faculty and training directors, and older adults and their families by the APA Committee on Aging.

Senator Wyden has a long history of support for aging issues and currently serves on the Senate Finance Committee and the Senate Select Committee on Aging. As a fellow, Greg is involved with a multitude of aging issues including the Independence at Home Act, a Medicare demonstration project that focuses on the provision of coordinated care for those with chronic conditions, and the National Health Care Decisions Day that was held on April 16th to promote the use of advance directives. He also is looking at current hospice reimbursement methods, health care coverage issues including the Senator’s Universal Health Care Act, and financing mechanisms for long term care. Greg and Lynn Feinberg encouraged geriatric professionals with

an interest in policy efforts to consider policy fellowships. They both are enjoying their year on the Hill and believe it helps to make aging issues more visible to policy makers.

Member updates

American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry (AAGP) – Stephanie Reed reported that AAGP has been concerned about the workforce shortage in the area of late-life mental health care. AAGP promotes a number of legislative initiatives including loan forgiveness legislation and Medicare parity to help build a stronger geriatric mental health workforce.

American Bar Association – Ellen Klem discussed a project related to the Durable Power of Attorney Act, and how its provisions can help prevent abuse. They are also examining the issue of voting and age. *Facilitating Voting as People Age: Implications of Cognitive Impairment*, a voting rights and cognitive impairment policy was adopted last summer by its House of Delegates. http://www.abanet.org/aging/docs/Voting_Rec_FINAL_approved.doc. They are also working to gain support for the Elder Justice Act (H.R. 1783/S. 1070).

American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) – Beth Powell reminded NCMHA about AMHCA's first Mental Health Awareness Day to be held on May 7. Its purpose is to emphasize the importance of mental health and its distinction from mental illness. It is one of the activities organized during the month of May, nationally recognized as Mental Health Month such as Mental Health Week and the March for Mental Health.

American Psychological Association – Diane Elmore updated NCMHA on a number of APA efforts including the successful inclusion of provisions from the Positive Aging Act in the Senate draft bill to reauthorize SAMHSA, support for the new Caring for an Aging America Act of 2008, and collaborative efforts to secure appropriations for the Lifespan Respite Care Act. For the 2008 APA Convention, she will participate in a symposium entitled, *Disasters and Elders: Have our Response and Recovery Systems Improved?* David Powers added that the APA Committee on Aging and Office on Aging's 10th Anniversary will also be celebrated at Convention and an all-day continuing education workshop, *What Psychologists Should Know about Working with Older Adults*, will be offered for generalist psychologists.

American Society on Aging (ASA) – Anita Rosen described the success of the NCMHA Coalition track at the NCOA/ASA Aging in America Conference. In planning for next year, a survey will be sent to state and local coalitions to get their input on the focus of the 2009 program in Las Vegas.

Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) - Peggy Clark reported that Dennis Smith resigned from his position as the director of CMS Center for Medicaid and State Operations. Herb Kuhn is now the Acting Director and Bill Lasowski is the Deputy Director.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) - Dan Merek described plans for HRSA's Bureau of Health Professions' first All-Advisory Committee meeting on May 8. It is open to the public and is specifically focused on geriatric and graduate school training. The four committees attending the meeting are the Council on Graduate Medical Education, Advisory Committee on Training in Primary Care Medicine and Dentistry, Advisory Committee on Interdisciplinary Community-Based Linkages, and National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice. The agenda will include updates from HRSA, its Bureau of Health Professions (BHPr), and the four committees. Discussions on future interdisciplinary collaborations between the committees will be its primary focus.

Illinois Coalition on Mental Health and Aging - Eric Weakly reported via conference call on their Geriatric Psychiatry Initiative and the training manual they have developed. They are looking for additional funding to go state-wide. Their 8th annual Mental Health and Aging conference was a success with 300 participants. This year's theme was 'Mental Health for a Lifetime.' The sessions covered the latest mental health and aging research and practices, including treatment of dementia, pain management, depression, disabilities, personality disorders, eating disorders, crisis intervention, substance abuse and more.

Mental Health Association of Connecticut - Dominique Thornton, via conference call, informed NCMHA that they have formed a network of mental health providers, aging adult providers, individuals and policy makers in an effort to create a comprehensive services coalition to serve Connecticut's older adult population. They established their coalition two months ago. They have had a good response from various sites and are trying to cross pollinate between the state departments of aging and mental health. They are the recipient of a SAMHSA transformation grant and have sponsored train the trainer programs for public mental health education programs.

National Alliance for Caregiving – Gail Hunt informed the coalition that they will be having a Congressional briefing breakfast on May 14, *Technology to Support Family Caregiving*, in Rayburn 339. This event will be co-hosted by Rep. Earl Pomeroy (D-ND), co-chair of the Long Term Care Caucus and Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-RI), co-chair of the 21st Century Healthcare Caucus. The event will include two different panels: academic/nonprofit organizations, and for-profit technology firms. They are also conducting a Hispanic Caregiver Survey which will be presented at the National Hispanic Council on Aging annual meeting and at a briefing sponsored by the Hispanic Congressional Caucus. Another very well attended Senate hearing, *Caring for our seniors: How can we support those on the frontlines?* was held by the Senate Special Committee on Aging chaired by Senator Herb Kohl. Panelists included: John Rowe, Chairman of the IOM's Committee on the Future Health Care Workforce for Older Americans; Robyn Stone, Executive Director of Institute for the Future of Aging Services, American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging; Martha Stewart, of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia; Todd Semla, President of the American Geriatrics Society; Mary McDermott of the Wisconsin Quality Home Care Commission Board of Directors; and Sally Bowman, Associate Professor of Department of Human Development and Family Sciences at Oregon State University.

National Association of Social Workers – Chris Herman discussed their Social Work Reinvestment Act that addresses workforce needs. It is complementary to the Boxer bill discussed earlier. They also have a current focus on encouraging membership advocacy.

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors - Willard Mays reported that at a Block Grant Conference presentation last year, he asked the states to consider adding a seat or section on aging to their mental health planning councils. Minnesota did this and are now interested in establishing a state coalition on mental health and aging. Willard and Judy Stange from the National Association of Mental Health and Planning Advisory Councils have consulted with them to get one started.

NCCNHR: The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care – Jessica Brill announced the 33rd NCCNHR National Conference and Annual Meeting: *Advocacy Into Action, Action Into Care, Making it Happen* on October 15-17. This year's conference combines long-term care issues with skill-building to help the attendees translate issues into action and action into better care.

Northern Virginia Older Adults Mental Health Work Group – Anne Marie Hermann reported that on the Regional Older Adult Facilities Mental Health Support Team (RAFT), the new regional mental health support program designed to bring seniors out of state hospitals back to nursing homes or assisted living facilities in the community, or to avoid state hospitalization all together, will begin accepting patients soon.

Oklahoma Mental Health and Aging Coalition – Bob Rawlings was recently contacted by Missouri as they have a SAMHSA Mental Health Transformation grant and are interested in reestablishing their mental health and aging coalition. He will be working with them on this. He also mentioned Network of Care, an interactive website where consumers, community-based organizations and municipal government workers can easily access comprehensive information on state services including those for seniors, individuals with disabilities, mental health, developmental disabilities, domestic violence, public health, and probation. Nine states, including Oklahoma find this resource very helpful. A question was raised about the cost of the service (around \$35,000 per year). Bob feels it is well worth it. For more information see www.networkofcare.org. He also noted that the Older Americans Act monies are very limited and continuing to worsen. A 5.5% cut across the board may result in nutrition sites in his state closing.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration - Lisa Park told the group that *Older Americans 2008: Key Indicators of Well-Being* is now available at www.agingstats.gov. They have received a large number of proposals for this year's Older Adults Targeted Capacity Expansion (TCE) Grants Program. She will share specific information with NCMHA regarding the specific number of applicants when she receives it.

Suicide Prevention Action Network (SPAN) USA - Brian Altman discussed efforts on the Stop Senior Suicide Act (S.1854, H.R.4897). They recently received a grant from the Retirement Research Foundation to develop materials on senior suicide prevention and their first effort is a brochure which will be available very soon. On June 3rd they are having a briefing, *Senior Suicide: Understanding the Risk, Preventing the Tragedy* in Russell Room 188. Several leading suicide prevention researchers, educators and advocates will present on senior suicide risk, rates, and prevention; ways to create and implement a senior suicide prevention plan; perspectives of a suicide survivor; and public policy opportunities to reduce senior suicide.

West Virginia Mental Health and Aging Coalition - Sara Vanin, via conference call, reported on their planned annual conference. This year it is on dementia. Last year's conference was on suicide. The State's new FAIR (Family Alzheimer's In-Home Respite) program is available to offer relief to family members who are caring for individuals with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. The program provides up to 16 hours a week of respite care. Another program called Lighthouse In-Home Care is a non-Medicaid program that provides 60 hrs of in-home care through the senior centers in every county of the state. Their Behavioral Health Committee is focusing on geriatric issues, which are critical in their state, as many rural areas have no in-home assistance programs.

NCMHA Website Update

Brian Kaskie of the University of Iowa has graciously agreed to be the webmaster of the NCMHA website. Larry Dupree and the University of Florida were recognized for their past efforts in developing and maintaining the website. NCMHA is very grateful that Brian and the University of Iowa will now donate their time to this responsibility which is so important to NCMHA.

Next Meeting Date

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m. The next NCMHA meeting will be held on Monday October 6th, 2008 from 9:30 am until 12:30 pm at the offices of the American Psychological Association in its 6th Floor Board Room.