



**National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging  
Meeting Minutes  
DRAFT  
October 6, 2008**

Willard Mays, Past Chair of the National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging (NCMHA) and National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors representative called the meeting to order and reviewed the proposed agenda. There were 20 members in attendance.

**ABA/APA Assessment of Older Adults with Diminished Capacity Project**

David Powers of the American Psychological Association and a member of the Assessment of Capacity in Older Adults Project Working Group described the history of the project which is a collaborative effort of the ABA Commission on Law and Aging and the American Psychological Association initiated in 2002. The third Working Group product, *Assessment of Older Adults with Diminished Capacity: A Handbook for Psychologists* has just been completed. Earlier handbooks targeted lawyers and judges. The current volume discusses the evaluation of the civil capacities of older adults. Six civil capacities of particular importance to older adults are discussed - medical consent capacity, sexual consent capacity, financial capacity, testamentary capacity, capacity to drive, and capacity to live independently. The handbook also addresses the topic of undue influence and introduces emerging areas of interest, such as the capacity to mediate, the capacity to participate in research, and the capacity to vote. Relevant literature, suggestions for assessment tools and case examples are provided throughout the handbook. The Handbooks were distributed at the meeting and are available online at <http://www.apa.org/pi/aging/>.

**Legislative and Regulatory Issues Update**

Jim Finley of the National Association of Social Workers began with an update on Medicare's revised flex grants. He noted that \$50 million will be made available by CMS to states for mental health services in 2009 and 2010. These competitive grant funds are being directed toward rural areas through state health departments. The focus of the new grants is now much broader than on veterans as originally written. Other provisions in the new Medicare act promote telehealth, and CMS has proposed that more telehealth sites be opened up, including in community health centers and skilled nursing facilities. He also noted the enormous victory on Medicare parity and described the new copayment provisions and their phase in schedule. Lastly, he mentioned the enormous victory of passage of the mental health parity legislation. More information on the shape of the new law will be coming forward soon.

**National Alliance to Care for an Aging America**

Stephanie Reed, Associate Director of Government Affairs at American Association of Geriatric Psychiatry, reported that a new coalition, the National Alliance to Care for an Aging America has

been formed. Earlier this year the Institute of Medicine (IOM) released a study titled *Retooling for an Aging America: Building the Health Care Workforce*. The Atlantic Philanthropies and The John A. Hartford Foundation contracted with the Meridian Institute to convene a national alliance to develop and implement solutions to the challenges identified in the IOM report. A diverse group has expressed interest in participating in an action-oriented, time-limited effort to develop a competent geriatric workforce. The group is in the process of creating a structure to execute its work to include the formation of a leadership group and working groups. Priority areas for action in the legislative and policy arenas have been identified. They include geriatric workforce recruitment, training and retention, loan forgiveness, promotion of effective models of care, and geriatric competency across health care professions. [Ed. Note: This Alliance has been renamed the Eldercare Workforce Alliance.]

### **SAMHSA Targeted Capacity Expansion Grants for Older Adults**

Willard Mays of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors and Robyn L. Golden of American Society on Aging reported on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Mental Health Services' Targeted Capacity Expansion (TCE) Grants for Older Adults. The grants were very competitive evidenced by over 160 grant applications being submitted and only ten were funded. Hopefully this level of response will encourage future grant opportunities. The TCE grant program is one of SAMHSA's services grant programs to help communities implement evidence-based practices to provide direct services and build the necessary infrastructure to support expanded services for meeting the diverse mental health needs of older persons. The target population for this program is defined as persons 60 years and older who are at risk for or are experiencing mental health problems. As one of the recipients of the grant, Robyn noted that Rush University Medical Center in Chicago was awarded \$413,478 to expand the mental health services of underserved populations of older adults living near the west side of Chicago. Willard mentioned that the Adult and Child Mental Health Center in Indianapolis and the State Mental Health Agency in Oklahoma were also awarded grants. He also shared that the NASMHPD Technical Assistance Center (NTAC) had been awarded the CMHS contract to provide technical assistance to the ten grant recipients. For more information about TCE grants and awardees, visit:

<http://www.samhsa.gov/Grants/2008/fy2008.aspx>.

### **Community Alternatives to Nursing Home Placements Legal Victory**

Robert Bernstein, Executive Director of the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law updated the coalition on the *Chambers v. San Francisco* case which yielded an agreement between the city and five advocacy groups representing recipients of California's Medicaid benefits to create new housing and community services for older adults and people with disabilities. The lack of housing in San Francisco for people with disabilities has kept people in a 1,000-bed nursing home. Now, for the first time, the city has agreed to lease scattered-site units and provide the services their occupants will need for an independent life in the community.

Over the next five years, San Francisco will move several hundred of these residents to independent apartments linked to the supportive services they need, according to the settlement approved by the federal court on September 18<sup>th</sup>. The agreement calls for creation of a new program called "Success at Home," described as a single door to independent living. It will coordinate residents' transition through an individualized plan to match each one to federally subsidized medical services, community supports and subsidized housing, with linkage as needed to attendant and nursing care, vocational rehabilitation, substance abuse treatment, mental health services and assistance with meals.

## **NCMHA Business**

The Minnesota State Advisory Council on Mental Health had requested membership in NCMHA and its request was approved. An At-large NCMHA Executive Board position is currently vacant due to the retirement of Bob Tiller of NCOA. Also, a nominating committee to prepare slates for 2009-2011 Executive Board needs to be seated. Contact Deborah DiGilio if interested in either of these positions. Brian Kaskie of the University of Iowa has graciously agreed to serve as the NCMHA webmaster and is in the process of transferring information from University of South Florida where the web had previously been managed by Larry Dupree.

## **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 feels that with the current need and future challenges of late life mental disorders, we need to spend at least \$3.1 billion on mental health care.

*American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy* – Melissa Stamps reported that AAMFT is actively involved in efforts related to mental health parity, and meeting the demand for services for rural seniors.

*American Psychological Association* – Diane Elmore updated NCMHA on a number of issues including Integrated Care/SAMHSA Reauthorization, Caring for an Aging America Act of 2008 (S. 2708), Lifespan Respite Care Act (P.L. 109-442), and Kinship Caregiver Support Act (S. 661/H.R. 2188). APA is also a member of the Eldercare Workforce Alliance.

*American Society on Aging (ASA)* – Anita Rosen stated that the 2009 NCOA/ASA Aging in America Conference March 15-19 in Las Vegas should be excellent with quality contents. NCMHA will present a 90 minute workshop at the Conference. For more information visit: [www.asaging.org](http://www.asaging.org). The American Society on Aging has a new CEO, Robert Stein, and they are reevaluating their goals and their existing relationships with groups such as NCMHA. They have also begun to track their members' accomplishments such as products and publications for the new administration.

*American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)* – Laurel Radley reported that the International Council on Active Aging (ICAA) is joining forces with AOTA to advance health and wellness services offered to older adults. ICAA is an association that supports professionals who develop wellness and fitness facilities and services for the older-adult market. They will share their knowledge about older-adult wellness among AOTA members, while AOTA will help to educate ICAA members about the discipline of occupational therapy and its contributions to older-adults. AOTA and ICAA will meet in December for a strategy session.

*Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)* - Dan Merek updated the group on the Bureau of Health Professions' first All-Advisory Committee meeting held in May. It was specifically focused on geriatric and graduate school training. The four committees who met were the Council on Graduate Medical Education, the Advisory Committee on Training in Primary Care Medicine and Dentistry, the Advisory Committee on Interdisciplinary Community-Based Linkages, and the National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice. Discussion included issues that affect rural America, general health disparities and the implications on recruitment and retention of a healthcare workforce, geriatric healthcare workforce training issues, and the growth of the allied health professions.

*Maryland Coalition on Mental Health and Aging* – Kim Burton informed NCMHA about the recent publication *Guide to Mental Health Care in Maryland*. The Guidebook highlights key information regarding mental health conditions, where to get help, types of treatments and mental health care providers, and how to pay for care. Also, available on their website, <http://www.mhamd.org/aging/linksresources/publications.htm> is: *Mental Health in Later Life: A Guidebook for Older Marylanders and the People Who Care for Them*.

*National Alliance for Caregiving* – Gail Hunt announced that their Hispanic Caregiver Survey, which was presented at the National Hispanic Council on Aging annual meeting and at a briefing sponsored by the Hispanic Congressional Caucus, will be released in November. The study done jointly by Evercare and the National Alliance for Caregiving will be the largest comprehensive look at Hispanic caregivers. The study will help to reveal how caregiving affects Hispanics and how the emotional and physical tolls of caregiving impacts the local and national economies. Many working caregivers are at risk of quitting their jobs to care for their loved ones. Unfortunately resources and services for minority caregivers are not readily available. Look for survey's release on <http://www.caregiving.org/>

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

*National Council on Aging* – NCOA is hosting a series of webinars, *Adoption of Evidence-based Depression Interventions for Older Adults* that was made possible through a grant from the Retirement Research Foundation. Please visit [www.ncoa.org](http://www.ncoa.org) for the archived webinars.

*Oklahoma Mental Health and Aging Coalition* – Bob Rawlings was contacted by the state of Missouri as they have a SAMHSA Mental Health Transformation grant and are interested in reestablishing their mental health and aging coalition. He is working with them on it.

*Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration* – SAMHSA is offering a Suicide Prevention webinar this fall. They also have a Conference Grant program is to disseminate knowledge about mental health services and substance abuse prevention and treatment and to integrate that knowledge into real-world practice as effectively and efficiently as possible.

*Suicide Prevention Action Network (SPAN) USA* - Brian Altman discussed efforts on the Stop Senior Suicide Act (S.1854, H.R.4897). They also recently developed another new brochure, *Suicide Prevention for Military Families: What You Need to Know about Warning Signs and Getting Help*. It is available at <http://www.spanusa.org/>.

### **Next Meeting Date**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m. The next NCMHA meeting will be held on February 9<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 am until 12:30 pm in the American Psychological Association's 6th Floor Board Room.