



Announcement

February 12, 2010

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Association for Behavioral Healthcare Wins National Award for Excellence in Community Grassroots Advocacy

Natick, MA – The Association for Behavioral Healthcare has been recognized by the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare as the winner of the 2010 Award of Excellence in Community Grassroots Advocacy. The Association for Behavioral Healthcare is being acknowledged for the establishment and success of their Campaign for Addiction Prevention, Treatment and Recovery to advocate for raising revenues to fund addiction treatment via repealing the state tax exemption on alcohol purchased in stores.

Massachusetts has a serious alcohol and drug problem and the state has struggled to keep pace with demand for services such as detoxification beds, jail diversion and underage drinking prevention programs, and counseling services for people dealing with addictions. Since the state budget crisis of 2003 forced the closure of many support programs, Massachusetts has never recovered the level of services that are needed to address this important public health problem. Research has shown that using taxes to raise prices on alcohol is among the most effective deterrents to drinking and underage binge drinking -- better than law enforcement, media campaigns or school programs. Consequently, taxing alcohol actually serves two purposes: it raises the revenue needed for treatment and it serves as a prevention measure to deter drinking and underage binge drinking.

In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2009, the Association for Behavioral Healthcare (formerly Mental Health and Substance Abuse Corporations of Massachusetts) convened a meeting of advocacy partners to establish the Massachusetts Coalition for Addiction Services (MCAS) who were instrumental in helping to move the agenda for addiction services forward in Massachusetts. MCAS then scheduled a series of meetings with Executive Branch officials to seek their support for the repeal of sales tax exemption as a means to raise revenues for addiction treatment. The administration accepted this concept and included the required language in the Governor's FY 2010 budget proposal. It soon became clear, however, that a larger coalition would be needed to move this agenda forward within the state legislature, so the Association for Behavioral Healthcare began to develop a statewide grassroots organization called the Campaign for Addiction Prevention, Treatment and Recovery, Repeal the Sales Tax Exemption on Alcohol.

"We commend the outstanding grassroots advocacy efforts of the Association for Behavioral Healthcare," said Linda Rosenberg, MSW, President and CEO of the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare. "Because of their hard work and perseverance, positive change will be felt by those individuals and families who need access to addictions treatment services."



2010 Award of Excellence Honorees

Excellence in Service Innovation

Supported by a grant from Mental Health Weekly

Burrell Behavioral Health

www.burrellcenter.com

Springfield, MO

Excellence in Health IT

Supported by a grant from Qualifacts Systems, Inc

Northern Arizona Regional Behavioral Health Authority

www.narbha.com

Flagstaff, AZ

Excellence in Risk Management

Supported by a grant from the Mental Health Risk Retention Group and Negley Associates

Institute for Community Living

www.iclinc.net

New York, NY

Excellence in Addictions Treatment & Prevention

Hartford Dispensary

Manchester, CT

Excellence in Consumer and Family Advocacy

Austin Travis County Integral Care

www.integralcare.org

Austin, TX

Excellence in Grassroots Advocacy (State)

Association for Behavioral Healthcare

www.abhmass.org

Natick, MA

(Local)

Colorado West Regional Mental Health

As a result of the campaign, the legislature repealed the sales tax exemption on alcohol purchased in stores and increased the state sales tax from 5% to 6.25% - which generated \$115 million in new revenue per year. Due to this victory, the legislature and administration were able to increase revenues for the state and thereby increased funding for addiction prevention, treatment and recovery services in the SFY 2010 budget, at a time when funding for almost every other health and human service program was reduced.

"Thanks to the hard work and commitment of many individuals and organizations from across the state who joined our campaign, and their willingness to contact their legislators and state officials at critical times throughout the legislative process, we were able to get this important piece of legislation passed to secure funding for addiction prevention, treatment and recovery support services," said Vic DiGravio, President and CEO of the Association for Behavioral Healthcare. "I can't thank our campaign partners enough for their advocacy efforts. This award belongs to all of us."

The Association for Behavioral Healthcare is a statewide association representing ninety-one community-based mental health and addiction services provider organizations. Its members are the primary providers of publicly-funded behavioral healthcare services in the Commonwealth, serving approximately 117,000 Massachusetts residents daily and employing 22,000 people. Its mission is to promote community-based mental health and addiction treatment services as the most appropriate, clinically effective and cost-sensitive method for providing care to individuals in need. Accordingly, the Association advocates for appropriate public policy and adequate funding and works with the administration and legislature at the state and national level to support this goal.

The National Council Awards of Excellence recognize mental health and addictions treatment providers, like the Association for Behavioral Healthcare, who are promoting constructive engagements between behavioral healthcare proponents and government leaders for the purpose of delivering high quality mental health and addictions treatment services to those most in need.

The Award of Excellence will be formally presented to Association for Behavioral Healthcare on March 16, 2010 during the Fabulous Forty Gala at the 40th annual conference of the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare in Orlando, Florida.

Members of the Campaign for Addiction Prevention, Treatment and Recovery include:

- AdCare Hospital of Worcester
- Advocates, Inc., Framingham
- Allston Brighton Substance Abuse Task Force
- Association for Behavioral Healthcare (formerly Mental Health and Substance Abuse Corporations of Massachusetts, Inc.)
- Bay Cove Human Services, Boston
- Baystate Medical Center
- Billerica Substance Abuse Prevention Committee
- Bridgewell, Lynnfield
- Brien Center for Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- Boston ASAP
- Boston Asian: Youth Essential Service
- Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program
- Boston Public Health Commission
- Burlington Drug & Alcohol Task Force
- CAB Health and Recovery Services, Danvers, Boston
- CASPAR, Cambridge, Somerville
- Children's Friend, Inc., Worcester
- Clinical and Support Options, Inc., Greenfield

Center
www.cwrmmhc.org
 Glenwood Springs, CO

Up & Coming Leadership Award

Rosa M. West, Vice President for
 Specialty Populations and New
 Initiatives
 Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.
 Maggie Labarta, CEO
www.mbhci.org
 Gainesville, FL

Visionary Leadership

Mary Anderson, Board Member,
 Newaygo County Mental Health, White
 Cloud MI

Howard Bracco, PhD, CBHE, President/
 CEO
 Seven Counties, Inc., Louisville KY

David Guth, CEO, Centerstone of
 America,
 Nashville TN

Dr. Jay Reeve, President & CEO
 Apalachee Center, Tallahassee FL

Richard Van Horn, President Emeritus,
 Mental Health America of Los Angeles,
 Los Angeles CA

Excellence in Public Service Award

Pamela Greenberg, President & CEO
 Association for Behavioral Health and
 Wellness
 &
 Carol McDaid, Principal
 Capitol Decisions, Inc.



Community Against Substance Abuse, Inc, Winthrop
 Community Care Services, Inc., Taunton
 Community Healthlink, Worcester
 Community Services Institute, Springfield
 Community Substance Abuse Centers, Chelsea, Chicopee, Greenfield, New Bedford,
 Northampton, Peabody, Westfield and Woburn
 Dorchester Substance Abuse Coalition
 Family Recovery Project, Holyoke
 FRESH Start -Family Recovery Engagement Support of Hampden County
 Gavin Foundation, Inc., South Boston
 Gosnold, Inc., Falmouth
 Henry Lee Willis Community Center, Inc., Worcester
 High Point Treatment Center, Brockton, New Bedford, Plymouth, Taunton
 Institute for Health and Recovery, Cambridge
 Jeremiah's Inn, Worcester
 Lowell House, Inc.
 Massachusetts Association for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors
 Massachusetts Association of Behavioral Health Systems
 Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling
 Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance
 Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery (MOAR)
 Massachusetts Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), Inc.
 Mental Health Association of Greater Lowell
 MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation
 New Bedford Council on Addiction
 NORCAP Lodge
 Northeast Center for Healthy Communities
 North Suffolk Mental Health Association
 Parents Support Group of Western Massachusetts
 Pine Street Inn, Boston
 Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction, Inc.
 Project COPE, Inc., Lynn
 Recovery Homes Collaborative of Massachusetts
 Riverside Community Care, Dedham
 Road to Recovery Community Substance Abuse Prevention Program, Lawrence
 Somerville Cares About Prevention
 Southeast Regional Network
 Stanley Street Treatment and Resources, Inc., Fall River
 Spectrum Health Systems, Worcester, Westborough
 Tenancy Preservation Program, Central Mass Housing Courts, Worcester
 The Addiction Referral Center, Marlborough
 The Guidance Center, Inc., Cambridge
 The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, Inc.
 The Massachusetts Psychiatric Society
 The Psychological Center, Lawrence
 Victory Programs, Boston
 Wayside Multi-Service Center Watertown Youth Coalition
 Western Massachusetts Center for Healthy Communities
 Western Massachusetts School Substance Abuse Counselors Association
 Western Massachusetts Substance Abuse Providers Association

*The **National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare** is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) association of 1,700 behavioral healthcare organizations that provide treatment and rehabilitation for mental illnesses and addictions disorders to nearly six million adults, children and families in communities across the country. The National Council and its members bear testimony to the fact that medical, social, psychological and rehabilitative services offered in community settings help people with mental illnesses and addiction disorders recover and lead productive lives.*

*For over 30 years, the **Association for Behavioral Healthcare (ABH)** has been the leading advocacy organization in Massachusetts' mental health and substance abuse arena. Fighting for high-quality, community-based care for families and individuals with mental illness, addiction and substance-use*

disorders, ABH provides leadership and statewide coordination on important public policy, financing, preferred clinical models and quality assurance issues. ABH is a membership organization representing nearly 100 community-based corporations that deliver critical services to people with mental health and substance-use disorders, and provide other important healthcare and social services to individuals and families in communities across the state. ABH's providers serve approximately 117,000 Massachusetts residents on any given day and employ close to 20,000 people. ABH represents its member providers to funding, legislative and regulatory agencies at the state and national levels and has become a powerful and compelling advocacy organization to ensure that citizens throughout the Commonwealth have access to quality, comprehensive community-based care.

National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
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