



ADVOCACY WITH THE MICHIGAN LEGISLATURE NEEDED NOW

To: Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority Staff

From: Sandra M. Lindsey, CEO *Sandra M. Lindsey*

Re: Stop General Fund Cuts to SCCMHA for FY 2011

Date June 10, 2010

If you share my concerns for the continued existence of a public community mental health system in our state I need your help. In the next six weeks the leadership of the Michigan legislature will be determining the size of the General Fund reduction to the public community mental health system for FY 2011.

The Michigan Senate suggests that \$54 million GF reduction in FY 2011 is some how possible. It is not! This year the system is still reeling from a \$40 million GF reduction and access to care and treatment for uninsured and underinsured persons is being restricted due to lack of funds in 29 of the 46 CMHSPs across the state already.

Those of us in Saginaw have been without adequate funding for some time now. Our access to care for uninsured and underinsured persons has been more restricted than most other places in our state for years. Saginaw CMH is 3% of the GF budget line to the CMH System. The proposed reduction of \$54 million would result in another \$1.6 million in GF cuts to SCCMHA.

General Fund dollars are used for the following:

- **Payment for State Hospital Care (In Saginaw this is almost always payment for citizens with forensic status of not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI))**
- **Payment for local inpatient psychiatric care for underinsured or uninsured persons.**



- **Payment for the cost of care to cover deductibles for persons on Medicaid Spend Down**
- **Crisis Intervention Services 24 hrs/day, 7 days/week**
- **Medical, case management, and other specialty services like Community Living Supports and Skill Building to persons who are not Medicaid eligible**

- **Underinsured children and adults – these consumers may have private commercial insurance or Medicare but these insurances do not cover the specialty services offered by CMH and do not cover the complete cost. GF then covers the cost gap.**
- **Uninsured children and adults.**

If Saginaw CMH has to take a \$1.6 million in additional reductions, we would only be able to pay for hospital care for our uninsured citizens. We would not be able to serve the underinsured or uninsured persons with mental illness or developmental disabilities including those persons already in treatment or anyone new needing treatment next year. This cut would facilitate a 20% reduction in the number of board operated staff positions that provide direct professional services. The harm to our consumers, our workforce and our community would be severe if this cut occurs next year.

Please help us communicate to the Michigan legislature. Go to www.macmhb.org, click “MACMHB Advocacy” and help communicate the need to drastically reduce the size of the proposed GF cut for 2011.

These proposed reductions are immoral and pose the real threat of life and death to persons with mental illness and developmental disabilities and additionally pose a public safety risk.

Please make your voice of protest known.

MACMHB

Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards

MACMHB Advocacy Plan

If not us, Who? If not now, When?

Now more than ever before, voices need to be raised in support of services to persons with mental health and substance use disorders. Cuts in FY09 and FY10, coupled with those currently proposed by the Michigan Senate for FY11, will eliminate \$110M of general fund support, more than 30% of the non Medicaid community mental health budget and 12% of the substance use disorder budget. Based on the cuts to date, 29 CMH boards across the state are now limiting services or creating waiting lists for persons without Medicaid. If the Senate FY11 cuts are approved as proposed, the entire system of CMHs will begin shutting down its system of care and support for persons and families without Medicaid.

Please join us in this advocacy effort. For more information, contact Alan Bolter at the Board Association offices at abolter@macmhb.org.

To be added to MACMHB's Advocacy Database, please go to:
www.macmhb.org/Advocacy_Plan/Advocacy_Plan_Home.html

CMH/Affiliate/Provider Employees

On June 15 – 17 we are asking that you take 5-10 minutes out of your day between 9:00am – 5:00pm (on break/lunch time) to contact these key legislative offices and let them know how state budget cuts have impacted individuals and families in your community.

- If your community is NOT represented by one of these legislators we are asking you to contact the highlighted members.

Please note – When calling legislative offices to ask to speak with the legislator, if he or she is not available (in most cases they will not be available) then ask for a staff person that works on policy issues related to mental health.

Key Legislators to be Contacted

Senate Majority Leader Michael Bishop (R – Rochester)

- phone 517-373-2417
- fax 517-373-2694
- email mbishop@senate.michigan.gov

Senator Ron Jelinek (R – Three Oaks) – Approps Chair

- phone 517-373-6960
- fax 517-373-6960
- email senrjelinek@senate.michigan.gov

Senator Roger Kahn (R – Saginaw) – DCH Budget Chair

- phone 517-373-1760
- fax 517-373-3487
- email senrkahn@senate.michigan.gov

Senator Mark Jansen (R – Grand Rapids)

- phone 517-373-0797
- fax 517-373-5236
- email senmjansen@senate.michigan.gov

Senator Mike Nofs (R – Battle Creek)

- phone 517-373-2426
- fax 517-373-2964
- email senmnofs@senate.michigan.gov

Senator Randy Richardville (R – Monroe)

- phone 517-373-3543
- fax 517-373-0927
- email senrichardville@senate.michigan.gov

Speaker Andy Dillon (D – Redford)

- phone 517-373-0857
- fax 517-373-5976
- email andydillon@house.mi.gov

Rep. George Cushingberry (D – Detroit) – Approps Chair

- phone 517-373-2276
- fax 517-373-7186
- email georgecushingberry@house.mi.gov

Rep. Gary McDowell (D – Rudyard) – DCH Budget Chair

- phone 517-373-2629
- fax 517-373-8429
- email garymcdowell@house.mi.gov

Rep. Rick Hammel (D – Flushing)

- phone 517-373-7557
- fax 517-373-5953
- email richardhammel@house.mi.gov

Rep. Kate Segal (D – Battle Creek)

- phone 517-373-0555
- fax 517-373-5761
- email KateSegal@house.mi.gov

Rep. Jon Switalski (D – Warren)

- phone 517-373-1772
- fax 517-373-5906
- email JonSwitalski@house.mi.gov

- Note if you are not directly represented by one of these legislators we are asking that you contact Senate Majority Leader Bishop's and Speaker Dillon's Office.

Key Message for Phone Calls

- **CMH SERVICES HAVE BEEN DISPROPORTIONATELY CUT**
Cuts in FY09 and FY10, coupled with those currently proposed in the Senate budget for FY11, will eliminate \$110M of general fund support, more than 30% of the non Medicaid community mental health budget and 12% of the substance use disorder budget.
- **BUDGET CUTS HAVE LIMITED ACCESS TO GENERAL FUND (GF) SERVICES**
Based on the general fund cuts that the legislature approved for the FY '10 budget, 29 of the 46 boards in this state are now limiting access to care or cutting services for persons without Medicaid. If the Senate

passed budget is enacted virtually every CMH will be forced to limit access to care.

LIMITED ACCESS TO GF SERVICES WILL HAVE A HUMAN COST

- It is estimated that continued budget reductions mean thousands of individuals will never receive essential mental health services, and tragically PEOPLE ARE DYING.
- Individuals will be forced to become an imminent risk to him/herself or the community in order to receive services.

LIMITED ACCESS TO GF SERVICES WILL HAVE AN ECONOMIC COST

- The faltering economy and high unemployment have increased demand for services with more people struggling with mental illnesses and substance use disorders.
- Cutting funding for behavioral health services does not mean that the persons in need will just go away. Jails and hospitals see additional cases of those with mental illness and substance abuse, and are less prepared to adequately handle them. This ends up being more costly for the state.
- Michigan Department of Corrections will see an increase of cases from individuals needing some mental health and substance abuse services, which is considerably more costly to the state.

Advocates

For the months of May & June we are asking that you flood your local newspapers with letters to the editor on the impact state budget cuts have had on mental health and substance use disorder services.

- We are also asking that you send a copy of your letters to your state representative and senator
- **Also please send a copy of your letter to CEO Sandra Lindsey's office as well (slindsey@sccmha.org or fax 989-799-0206)**

Key Message for Letters to the Editor

Short Letter to the Editor Each paragraph = 1 or 2 sentences

The following template should be of assistance when writing a letter to the editor to your local paper regarding the negative impacts of state budget cuts. Remember that letters to the editor need to be limited to 100-200 words, depending on your paper's requirements. Check your local paper for their requirements before submitting your letter. Most newspapers accept letters online as well as hard copy.

The outline below is for your reference to use when putting together your story. Personal stories are the most effective and have the best chance of being published. The bullet points are just suggestions for key messages.

Dear Editor:

Paragraph 1: In two to three sentences tell your story, explain how CMH budget cuts have or will affect you and your family if reduced or eliminated (personal stories will be much more effective):

WHAT DOES THE REDUCTION IN CMH FUNDING MEAN TO ME.

- ▶ Give personal examples – impact on you and/or your family.
- ▶ Challenge to find services – if on waiting list must go elsewhere for services or go without.
- ▶ What would happen if you or your loved ones did not receive services.

Paragraph 2: Mental health and substance use disorder services have been disproportionately reduced by the legislature in the past two years. If the

recently passed Senate DCH budget is signed into law more than 30% of CMH general funds would be eliminated:

CMH SERVICES HAVE BEEN DISPROPORTIONATELY CUT

▶ Cuts in FY09 and FY10, coupled with those currently proposed for FY11, will eliminate \$110M of general fund support, more than 30% of the non Medicaid community mental health budget and 12% of the substance use disorder budget.

Paragraph 3: Recap, please end the drastic cuts to CMH services:

CMH SERVICES CANNOT AFFORD ADDITIONAL CUTS.

▶ Community Mental Health system has taken its fair share of state budget cuts and cannot afford further reductions.

▶ Additional cuts are penny wise and pound foolish. CMH services are community based services that save the state of Michigan money in long run.

▶ Please end the drastic cuts to CMH services.

Sincerely,

Name

Hometown

Phone number/email address

Contacts List for Letters to The Editor
Re: FY 2011 CMH General Fund Budget Cuts

Bay City Times

311 Fifth Street

Bay City, MI 48708

Phone: (989) 895-8551

Fax: (989) 893-0649

Editor: John Hiner

jhiner@bc-times.com

Metro Editor: Kelly Adrian Frick

kfrick@bc-times.com

Rob Clark: rclark@bc-times.com

To write to the editor on line:

<http://www.mlive.com/mailforms/bctimes/letters/index.ssf>

Birch Run/Bridgeport Herald

G-10098 N. Dort Highway

Clio, MI 48420

Phone: (810) 686-3840

(800) 352-1919

Fax: (810) 686-9181

Editor: Craig Nelson

E-mail: editor@myherald.net

To write to the editor by email:

editor@myherald.net

Frankenmuth News

527 N. Franklin, Suite A

P.O. Box 252

Frankenmuth, MI 48734

Phone: (989) 652-3246

Fax: (989) 652-3247 (editorial and advertising)

Pitch Preference: E-mail Vanessa

E-mail: vanessa@airadv.net

Publisher: Steven Grainger

frankenmuthnews@airadv.net

Editor: Scott Wenzel

swenzel@airadv.net

To write to the editor by email:

swenzel@airadv.net

Midland Daily News

124 S. McDonald St
Midland, MI 48640
Phone: (989) 835-7171
Fax: (989) 835-8591

Pitch Preference: E-mail

Editor: John "Jack" Telfer II – jtelferii@mdn.net

To write to the editor on line:

<http://www.ourmidland.com/submissions/?mode=letters>

Saginaw News

203 S. Washington
Saginaw, MI 48607-1283
Phone: (989) 752-7171
Fax: (989) 752-3115

Pitch Preference: E-mail

Reporter: Darryl Tucker - dtucker@thesaginawnews.com

Reporter: Barrie Barber – bbarber@thesaginawnews.com

To write to the editor on line:

<http://www.mlive.com/mailforms/sanews/letters/>

The Township Times

1668 Midland Rd
Saginaw, MI 48638
Phone: (989) 799-3200
Fax: (989) 799-7085

Pitch Preference: E-mail

Nicole Wagner – nicole@twptimes.com

To write to the editor by email:

nicole@twptimes.com

Tri-County Citizen

110 S. Chapman
Chesaning, MI 48616
Phone: (989) 845-7403
Fax: (989) 845-4397
E-mail: tccnews@lapeergroup.com

Pitch Preference: E-mail

To write to the editor by email:

tccnews@mihomepaper.com