

# Healthy Minds. Strong Communities.

The National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare has been a respected voice and trusted source for the nation's behavioral healthcare community for nearly four decades. Together with our 1,700 member organizations, we serve our nation's most vulnerable citizens — more than 6 million adults and children with mental illnesses and addiction disorders. Our members employ more than 250,000 individuals.

The National Council supports and highlights members' work with information, education, and initiatives directed at improving clinical and business practices. Our initiatives are designed to complement our public policy and advocacy efforts to build a behavioral healthcare system that supports recovery and ensures a meaningful life in the community for all those with mental illness and addiction disorders. The National Council and its members continue to bring real world experience, practical ideas, and innovation to today's complex challenges.

## *Public Policy and Advocacy*

### **Policy Action Center**

The Policy Action Center monitors developments occurring at the state and federal level concerning Medicaid, Medicare, and general state funding and payment decisions that affect the delivery of mental health and addictions treatment. The Center's primary goal is to inform and engage National Council members — our network of state associations and provider organizations — in a coordinated effort at the state and national levels to preserve mental health and addictions funding for critical treatment and support services. The National Council's proactive public policy agenda has led to the recent introduction of several bills such as the Health Information Technology Extension for Behavioral Health Services Act, which currently has 69 Republican and Democratic cosponsors in the House. The bill would extend federal incentive payments for the adoption of health IT to previously ineligible behavioral health providers and facilities. The Community Mental Health and Addiction Safety Net Equity Act, which was introduced in the House during the National Council's 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Hill Day by Reps. Doris Matsui and Eliot Engel, would create a new definition of and standards for Federally Qualified Behavioral Health Centers and would ensure Medicaid coverage of and payment for services provided by FQBHCs.

The National Council also succeeded in advocating for inclusion of several key provisions in the healthcare reform bill, including the state option to provide health homes for enrollees with chronic conditions, which creates a pilot project for the integration of care for individuals with chronic conditions including mental illnesses and substance use disorders. This program

specifically identifies community mental health centers as entities that are eligible to participate. In addition, the National Council successfully advocated for a \$50 authorization of the SAMHSA co-location grant program, which supports projects for the integration and coordination of primary and behavioral healthcare in community behavioral health centers.

## **Healthcare Reform Implementation**

The National Council's Healthcare Reform Implementation work represents a systematic approach to make the vision of meaningful healthcare reform a reality through the dissemination of knowledge about the "building blocks" of reform and the establishment of learning collaboratives to help provider organizations, state associations, advocates and policymakers understand, prepare for, and influence the implementation of healthcare reform.

## **Annual Hill Day**

In less than five years, the National Council's Annual Hill Day has grown from 50 to just under 500 behavioral healthcare providers, consumers, and community leaders coming to Washington D.C. to learn more about federal mental health and addiction policy. Hill Day is also an opportunity for participants to become involved in learning how to advance the funding and operation of community-based service systems and to improving community behavioral health for all Americans. As a result of growing engagement in federal public policy, the National Council has launched a Key Contacts Network, a coalition of addiction and mental health providers, consumers, and family members who have meaningful relationships with their elected officials and use these relationships to advocate for community mental health and addiction services. In addition, the National Council supports a Federal and state online advocacy and legislative affairs tool that continue to increase our capacity to link members to their Members of Congress; to provide up-to-date contact information on all federal and state legislators, committees, and staff; and to track meetings, phone calls and other interactions with members of Congress and their staff.

## ***Performance Improvement***

### **Access Redesign Quality Improvement Initiative**

The National Council's Access Redesign Quality Improvement Initiative is a multi-state initiative involving community behavioral health organizations in three states chosen through a competitive application process. Organizations are provided with the tools to make access to care more timely, and to learn performance improvement technology that can be applied to other problem areas within their organizations. Through our work with over 60 community-based behavioral healthcare organizations around the country, the Access and Retention project has demonstrated that you can increase engagement in treatment by shortening the amount of time it takes to enter care. Individual organizations have recognized 20 percent reductions in client no-show behavior. This transformative process has demonstrated that quicker access to care improves continuity and engagement of consumers

## *Integration and Wellness*

The National Council has fostered bidirectional integration of primary care and behavioral health for more than 10 years by developing and implementing practice models, readiness assessment tools, and training opportunities at the community level throughout the US. Our Learning Communities serve as a powerful forum for dialogue, and sharing of tools and best practices among healthcare provider organizations seeking to extend the impact of existing collaboration between the safety-net providers of primary care services and mental healthcare services. To date, more than 150 pairs of organizations (Behavioral health and Community Health at the table as partners) have participated in our Learning Communities. The value Learning Community participants have from their participation in the project including the multiple opportunities to create shared experiences about the organizational, cultural, and financial obstacles they faced; translation of abstract integration concepts into meaningful action and mutual understanding among primary and behavioral health providers; access to expert technical assistance; and the availability of practical resources for use with staff within the participating organizations.

### **Team Solutions**

As part of the National Council's integrated health and wellness promotion activities, we are proud to make available a limited number of FREE half and full day trainings in Team Solutions and Solutions for Wellness; well-known psycho-educational tools that are enhancing clinical programs and empowering clients to successfully manage their mental and physical health. *Team Solutions* is a recovery-based illness and life skill management program designed to be used by mental healthcare professionals to educate clients and their families. *Solutions for Wellness* address physical health and wellness by encouraging clients to live a healthier lifestyle.

## *Leadership and Management Development*

### **Psychiatric Leadership**

Community treatment organizations want to create a culture conducive to psychiatric leadership, but lack of access to training, mentoring, or financial resources to make such an investment difficult. With support from the Center for Mental Health Services, the National Council is working with nationally recognized leaders to lead year-long learning communities using a comprehensive curriculum designed to develop and enhance effectiveness of community psychiatrists in public sector policy and service settings. The Psychiatric Leadership Development Program is enhancing psychiatric leadership and professional development in community-based mental health agencies. Participants from previously cohort continue to be engaged in the project and are providing additional support to the current 2009 class. The program has led to improved engagement and retention of psychiatrists, and ultimately improved care for people with mental illness.

### **CEO University**

Leadership is essential to managing change and improving outcomes for mental health consumers and caregivers. The fiscal, technological, and clinical changes that are impacting consumers, care givers, and mental health providers in the 21st century demand active

leadership. Chief Executive Officers in community mental health must understand and embrace changing practice patterns and perceptions of mental health and addiction disorders. With support from the Center for Mental Health Services, the CEO University will advance the effectiveness of community mental health executives in public sector policy and service settings through Learning Communities that give CEOs the tools to move the trajectory of mental illness and recovery.

## **Emerging Leaders**

The National Council's long-term goal is to ensure that our membership, our volunteer leadership and our staff represent a strong, vibrant, and evolving model of diversity and inclusion. Our goal is consistent with the Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health and other federal initiatives to reduce health disparities— to increase the pool of talented, culturally competent individuals dedicated to serving individuals with mental illness and/or addiction disorders. Recognizing the lack of a multi-ethnic representation within the leadership of behavioral health service organizations, we propose to develop and implement an Emerging Leaders Program committed to identifying staff representing under-served racial and ethnic groups and help prepare and assist the select group of individuals in their long-term professional growth and advancement. The National Council has a long tradition of management and leadership development including the highly successful Middle Management Academy, Psychiatric Leadership Program, annual conference, webinars, and learning communities. We intend to build upon these experiences to design and deliver a year long program for individuals currently serving in middle management positions, with the goal of preparing and guiding them into the “C” Suite.

## **Middle Management Academy**

The National Council's successful Middle Management Academies (MMA) provides new managers with detailed assessment of personal leadership skills as well as immersion training on core management competencies such as building effective teams and workgroups, managing budgets and financial resources, and handling common human resource challenges such as dealing with conflict, employee coaching and performance appraisal. More than 1,200 participants have benefited from the National Council's Middle Management Academies and are now more prepared to meet the expectations of their management role and to gain more influence in the management and direction of their organizations.

## ***Public Education and Outreach***

### **Mental Health First Aid**

More than 10,000 people have now been trained in Mental Health First Aid across the USA. The National Council launched the program in 2008 to help community members learn how to assess a situation, select and implement appropriate interventions, and help a person in crisis or developing the signs and symptoms of mental illness. The National Council has certified more than 800 instructors in 40 states to offer the program in their communities - building mental health literacy among police officers, faith leaders, educators, front line behavioral health staff, primary care workers, families and the general public nationwide. MHFA is a groundbreaking

public education program which introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, builds understanding of their impact and provides an overview of common treatments. The program is auspiced at the University of Melbourne and is now taught in 15 countries.

## ***Educational and Informational Resources***

### **Mental Health and Addictions Conference & Expo**

Nearly 2,500 mental health and addictions leaders, key decision makers and stakeholders from across the nation attend the National Council's Annual Conference — the field's premier training, networking and capacity-building event. The 2011 National Council Conference takes place May 2-4 at the Manchester Grand Hyatt in San Diego, CA. Participants will learn about the newest science and latest treatment innovations, explore practical business and service strategies, and engage in meaningful, sustainable transformation. Tracks are offered for everyone in a provider organization — from CEO to board members, from clinical directors to consumer advocates, and from policy makers to researchers.

### **National Council LIVE**

National Council LIVE webinars enjoy an unparalleled reputation in the health and social services industry. The webinars are acclaimed for their practical content, top-notch speakers, and high level of audience interactivity. Our webinars are offered free and promoted to more than 25,000 healthcare stakeholders. In 2009, we hosted 34 webinars, drawing a total participation of nearly 23,000 sites, many hosting multiple attendees. Topics include mental health and criminal justice collaboration, open scheduling to improve consumer access and retention, supported employment, medication assisted treatment for opioid addiction, working with FQHCs, and more. National Council LIVE webinars are free and archived on the National Council's website.

### **National Council Magazine**

National Council Magazine is published three-four times a year in print and on the web. Each issue focuses on a current and relevant mental health/addictions topic and is designed to educate a broad audience on evidenced-based and emerging practices. The magazine also features articles by thought leaders, practical tips and tools, and real life stories from the behavioral health field. In 2010, National Council Magazine features included: Housing for Mental and Addiction Disorders, Prevention and Early Intervention for Mental and Addiction Disorders, and Behavioral Health and Primary Care Collaboration.

### **E-Learning**

E-Learning offers a convenient option for continuing education, career development, and staff training. Through a partnership with Essential Learning, the National Council offers discounted individual online courses as well as comprehensive web-based learning management systems customized to an organization's needs. The organizational learning management system offers unlimited access to more than 400 courses on clinical, recovery, and compliance topics; provides CE credits; and gives management the ability to track, assign, and report on all employee trainings.

### **Publications**

The National Council's quarterly *Compliance Watch e-newsletter* helps subscribers keep up with regulatory changes and best practices in corporate compliance. This newsletter includes analysis of

government audits, rules development, enforcement and oversight activities, and articles by experts who share successes in reducing audit and investigatory risk while maintaining high clinical standards. In addition, the National Council's bi-weekly *Electronic Technical Assistance Update* is an electronic newsletter updating over 4000 subscribers on the latest news, resources, and changes to federal and state regulations. Lastly, *Addictions News Now* is a monthly overview of federal addiction policies, groundbreaking research, and issues and events attracting attention and making headlines.

## **Books**

The National Council Store features the latest works authored by leading experts whose perceptive insights and practical how-to guidelines can help behavioral health providers navigate complex business and clinical issues. Current titles include:

David Lloyd's How to Deliver Accountable Care  
Using Data to Drive Your Service Delivery Strategies  
David Lloyd DVDs on Collaborative Concurrent Documentation  
Treatment Planning for Person-Centered Care  
The Team Approach to Contract Management  
Realizing Your Viability — The Tenets of a Successful Agency  
How to Get and Keep the Best Employees  
Consumers in the Mental Health Workforce  
Building Management in Healthcare by the Numbers  
Raising the Bar: Moving Toward Integration of Healthcare  
Implementing Evidence-Based Practices in Mental Health  
Veterans on the Road Home

## ***Special Populations***

### **Veterans**

As increasing numbers of soldiers return home from Iraq and Afghanistan bearing the scars of battle in the form of mental illnesses and addiction disorders, the need for treatment far exceeds the capacity of the Veterans Administration. Across our nation, more than 2,000 community-based mental health and addictions organizations are ideally equipped to treat our troops for disabling mental and substance use disorders and help them reintegrate into civilian life. The National Council is equipping providers with information and tools to deliver critical mental health and addictions services to Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and their families.

### **Transition Age Youth Initiative**

The National Council's Transition Age Youth Initiative is working with a community behavioral health organization to help them initiate a sustainable model to help transitional age youth achieve educational success, independent skilled work and financial independence, illness and wellness self management skills, and social skills, confidence and peer relationships. The goal of the program is to test the feasibility of developing a sustainable intervention using Medicaid.

### **Criminal Justice Initiative**

The National Council is involved in several key areas related to expanding treatment services for court involved individuals with mental health and addiction disorders. Efforts include a focus on policy and practice initiatives to divert people from the criminal justice system to appropriate

community based care and to connect people to necessary services upon transition into the community after incarceration. In collaboration with the CMHS National GAINS Center, stakeholder meetings across the country are facilitating discussions and the development of an agenda that will support implementation of essential elements of a system of care that will divert individuals with mental illness and co-occurring addiction disorders from the criminal justice system.

**To learn more about any of the initiatives mentioned above,  
visit the National Council's website at [www.TheNationalCouncil.org](http://www.TheNationalCouncil.org).**