



Ombudsman Thoughts, Trainings, Travels

The past three months' activities have been sporadic in the Ombudsman's Office. The phone has been ringing constantly or not ringing at all. Our number of clients is up but not as much as anticipated. It seems the issues and concerns of callers have either been a simple need for information, or a lengthy investigation with needed communication and calls to several agencies or persons. I don't know if this is a typical summer trend or a result of the current economic situation in our country. More individuals are identifying housing and substance abuse issues as part of their problems.

This quarter I have had time to visit more towns around the state. I made a lengthy trip around the Big Horn Basin in September. The directors of all four counseling centers—Hot Springs County Counseling Center, Cloud Peak Counseling, Big Horn County Counseling and Yellowstone Behavioral Health—were able to take time out of their busy schedules to visit with me. We discussed concerns they have and how I could possibly be of help to them and the individuals they serve.

The Public Health Nurses in each town were welcoming and eager to learn how I may be of assistance to them. Many times these nurses serve as a first contact for a person in need of assistance. Department of Family Services case workers were also receptive to learning about the Ombudsman Program.

At Cedar Mountain Center in Cody, I was able to visit with both the Director and the Clinical Director. We discussed Intensive Outpatient Treatment and the need for housing in the Cody area. They are interested in helping to start an Oxford House in Cody. At West Park Hospital, I met with a Case Manager and assisted her with a client discharge plan.

The one training session I attended this quarter was the ASI training. The discussion on the types of detox (medical detox, social detox and outpatient detox) was very informative. It also was enlightening to learn that 60% to 80% of the people with mental health-related diagnoses have a substance-abuse diagnosis.

Ombudsman Presentation Available for Public Programs

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Ombudsman has a new presentation available in a PowerPoint format. If your agency, or an organization you belong to, would like the Ombudsman to come and make a presentation on SAMHOP, please call or email the SAMHOP office. The presentation is approximately 30 minutes in length and explains the purpose of Wyoming's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Ombudsman, services available and who can use these services.



Ombudsman's Activities Third Quarter 2009

Presentations

- *July 13:*
Wyoming Self Advocates Advisory Group Conference, Lander
- *July 17:*
Laramie County DVR, Cheyenne
- *July 21:*
Retired Teachers Group, Cheyenne

Conferences & Training

- *July 11:*
Wyoming Victim Services Conference, Cheyenne
- *July 12-14:*
Wyoming SAAG Conference, Lander
- *August 31:*
Addiction Severity Index (ASI) Training, Casper

Visits

- *July 28:*
Albany County Drug Court, Behavioral Health Services, Peak Wellness Center, Laramie
- *September 14:*
Hot Springs County Counseling, Public Health, DFS, Thermopolis
- *September 14:*
Cloud Peak Counseling, Public Health, DFS, Worland
- *September 15:*
Big Horn County Counseling, Wyoming Retirement Center, Basin
- *September 15:*
Big Horn County Counseling, Public Health, DFS, Senior Center, Greybull
- *September 16:*
Big Horn County Counseling, Public Health, DFS, Senior Center, Lovell
- *September 16:*
180 Degree Difference, Public Health, DFS, Powell
- *September 17:*
Yellowstone Behavioral Health, Public Health, DFS, Cedar Mountain Center, West Park Hospital, Cody

Meetings

- July 7:* Veterans Hospital
- August 16:* APS
- August 17:* P & A Open House
- August 27:* SAMHOP Three-Year Planning Session, Dept. of Health
- September 8:* CASE
- September 10:* APS

“Oxford House” Program Offered in Wyoming



In July I received a call from a person regarding her daughter who was to be released from an inpatient treatment facility. The daughter would be moving to Cheyenne to live in an “Oxford House.” She wanted some background information about Oxford Houses—where they were located, how much it costs to live there, and what kind of support her daughter would receive in her recovery process.

I called Willy Ottosen, representative of Wyoming Outreach Services for Oxford House, Inc., and asked him to introduce me to the “Oxford House” Program. He was excited to tell me about the program, and he gave me a tour of the houses and introduced me to the residents who live in them. There are six houses in Cheyenne, four for men and two for women. The houses are in several areas of Cheyenne—all in nice neighborhoods. I was impressed with how well the houses were maintained and the homelike atmosphere of each facility. Each house had an average of six residents with each person having their own bedroom, and a shared living room, dining area, kitchen and bathrooms. Ottosen encouraged me to visit with the residents and ask their opinions of what it is like to live in an Oxford House. The residents were very open and willing to share their thoughts.

What is an Oxford House?

An Oxford House is a self-run, self-supported home for individuals recovering from alcohol or drug addiction. Unlike traditional halfway houses, there is no staff.

Who manages an Oxford House?

An Oxford House is democratically self-run by the residents who elect officers to serve for six-month terms. If a majority of residents believe any member has relapsed into using alcohol or drugs, that person is immediately expelled. There are no resident counselors.

How long can a person live in an Oxford House?

An individual may live in an Oxford House as long as they want, as long as they remain alcohol- and drug-free and pay their share of the house expenses.

What are the costs of living at Oxford?

All residents equally share the household expenses with costs per month varying depending on the house. The costs cover rent, utilities, unlimited long-distance telephone, internet, cable television, basic food staples, and house supplies.

Other Oxford House Information

There are seven Oxford Houses in Wyoming at the current time.

- Three Oxford Houses in Casper
- Two Oxford Houses in Laramie
- One Oxford House in Rock Springs
- One Oxford House in Sheridan

Nationally, Oxford Houses have an 80% success rate.

For more information, visit their Web site at:

www.oxfordhouse.org

—Martha Mullikin

Internet Site Offers Help With Translating Text or Web Pages



The Internet offers an easy to use Website that offers free, rapid translations where you can get the “gist” of foreign language text and Web pages. To use it, you paste a copy of the text you want translated and select the language you want for the translation. Go to: www.freetranslation.com

U.S. Government Sues a Trucking Company for Firing an Employee with a Mental Health Problem

The federal government is suing a company for discrimination against an employee with a mental health condition. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charges that Smith International Truck Center of North Carolina relied upon “myths, fears and stereotypes about mental impairments” when it unlawfully terminated an employee who took leave for a mental health problem. The employee had taken one week

off from work to obtain medical treatment and have medication adjusted for a mental health condition. He was fired shortly after returning to work with no restrictions. EEOC charged the firing violates the Americans with Disabilities Act and relied on a false stereotype to dismiss the individual. EEOC says discrimination against individuals with mental health conditions is a pervasive problem.

—From *The National Law Journal*, 9/23/09



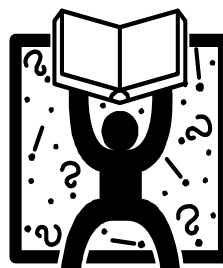
Wyoming Department of Health Sponsors Substance Abuse Training in Casper

The Center for the Application of Substance Abuse Technologies (CASAT) from the University of Nevada Reno under the sponsorship of the Wyoming Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division of the Department of Health offered training for administering the Addiction Severity Index (ASI). The ASI is a standardized assessment tool used to conduct a comprehensive drug evaluation as well as to match an offender's drug problems with appropriate treatment approaches.

Since the Wyoming Department of Corrections recognizes the ASI as an assessment tool to be used in their detention centers, the Ombudsman believes it is a valuable tool with which she should become familiar.

The training was a one-day session held at the Wyoming Medical Center in Casper. Topics covered in the training included:

- Introducing the Addiction Severity Index to the client
- Interviewer instructions
- Confidence rating
- Hollingshead categories or employment
- Utilizing ASI domains to provide a more detailed assessment
- American Society of Addiction Medicine patient placement criteria.



Wyoming Self Advocates Advisory Group Offers Statewide Membership

The Wyoming Self Advocates Advisory Group (WYSAAG) is an active statewide membership organization including Wyoming adults with mental health diagnoses—including those with co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses—and their families. The Wyoming Self-Advocates Advisory Group's mission is dedicated to advocacy for improving the systems of care.

The organization's immediate role includes:

- Advocating for policies and practices that benefit persons with mental illness including co-occurring substance abuse;
- Promoting prevention and public awareness of recovery models;
- Collaborating with other agencies and organizations that promote recovery;
- Increasing the advocacy expertise of WYSAAG members;
- Utilizing best practices to develop, educate, and involve WYSAAG members with consideration of cultural issues, differences among the membership, and special needs;
- Addressing the issues that relate to stigma for members.

Membership is open to Wyoming individuals with a mental illness or co-occurring diagnosis (including the many who are in recovery) who are willing to contribute to WYSAAG's mission.

"The Wyoming Self Advocates Advisory Group (WYSAAG) is open to Wyoming individuals with a mental illness or co-occurring diagnosis..."

The group is dedicated to advocacy for improving systems of care."

Clients Served by Diagnosis

from 6/25/2009 to 9/29/2009

<u>Diagnosis</u>	<u>Count</u>
Alcohol Abuse Disorder	14
Anxiety Disorder	2
Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity	3
Bipolar/Manic	6
Drug Abuse Disorder	6
Major Depression	4
Not Applicable	1
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	1
Paranoid or Delusional Disorder	1
Personality Disorder	3
PTSD	3
Schizophrenia (Includes Schizoaffective Disorder)	9
Other	10
Unknown	10



This quarterly data report includes all individuals for whom a formal intake was done during the quarter. This includes cases that may not yet be closed. We are continuing to use entry dates to determine case numbers. If some of the data seem not to total the appropriate number, this could be caused by cases not being closed at this time or information that is not available.

Clients Served by Services Provided <i>from 6/25/2009 to 9/29/2009</i>	
<u>Services Provided</u>	<u>Count</u>
Coaching/Information	42
Informal Assistance/ Mediation	10
Investigation	4
Referral	10

Clients Served by Ethnic Status <i>from 6/25/2009 to 9/29/2009</i>	
<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Count</u>
American Indian/Alaska Native	1
Non-Minority (White)	23
Spanish/Hispanic/Latino	3
Unknown	29

Clients Served by Education <i>from 6/25/2009 to 9/29/2009</i>	
<u>Education</u>	<u>Count</u>
Ninth Grade	1
High School	8
College Graduate	5
Unknown	41

Clients Served by Gender <i>from 6/25/2009 to 9/29/2009</i>	
<u>Gender</u>	<u>Count</u>
Female	25
Male	39

**Substance Abuse & Mental Health
Ombudsman Program**

Wyoming Guardianship
Corporation
P.O. Box 2778
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003



...promoting a better quality
of life for persons affected
by mental illness and/or
substance abuse issues.

Clients Served by Issue <i>from 6/25/2009 to 9/29/2009</i>	
<u>Issue</u>	<u>Count</u>
Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation	3
Access to Information	20
Access to Mental Health Services	8
Anxiety	3
Care/Treatment	13
Child & Family Services	1
Commitment to Mental Health Facility	4
Criminal Justice System	5
Discharge Planning	7
Discrimination/ADA	2
Emergency Detention Cost	1
Employment	4
Financial Exploitation	1
Financial Need	4
Guardianship/Conservator	3
Health Insurance	2
Housing	6
Legal	12
Locating Appropriate Placement	3
Marital Relationship	3
Medicaid/Medicare	1
Patient Rights	2
Prescription Drugs	4
Representative Payee	4
Social Security	2
Transfer	1
Transportation	1
Unknown	5

Clients Served by Living Arrangements <i>from 6/25/2009 to 9/29/2009</i>	
<u>Living Arrangements</u>	<u>Count</u>
Alone/Independent	14
Correctional Facility/Jail	4
Group Home	3
Homeless	6
Nursing Home/Assisted Living	4
Psychiatric Inpatient Hospital	7
Supervised Apartments	2
With Friends/Other Adults	4
With Other Family Members	4
With Spouse/Domestic Partner	4
Unknown	7

Clients Served by County <i>from 6/25/2009 to 9/29/2009</i>	
<u>County</u>	<u>Count</u>
Albany	2
Carbon	2
Converse	1
Fremont	1
Laramie	20
Lincoln	1
Natrona	5
Park	3
Sheridan	4
Uinta	10
Weston	2

Clients Served by Age <i>from 6/25/2009 to 9/29/2009</i>	
<u>Age Range</u>	<u>Count</u>
Under 18	1
18 to 24	4
25 to 44	17
45 to 64	19
65 to 84	3
85 and over	1
Not reported	19

Clients Served by Referral Source <i>from 6/25/2009 to 9/29/2009</i>	
<u>Referral Source</u>	<u>Count</u>
Faith-Based Organization	2
Friend/Family	14
LTC Ombudsman	2
Mental Health Center	9
NAMI	3
Nursing Home	1
P & A	1
Posters/Flyers	2
Presentations	2
Public Health	1
Social Worker	4
Wyoming Guardianship Corporation	2
Wyoming State Hospital	1
Unknown	10

Client Outcomes <i>from 6/25/2009 to 9/29/2009</i>	
<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Count</u>
Complaint Was Unsubstantiated	2
Corrective Action Taken	1
No Further Action Can Be Taken	2
Satisfactorily Resolved	43