

**National Coalition of Mental Health Consumer/Survivor
Organizations**

Notes from the April 17, 2008 National Coalition Member Teleconference

The next teleconference meeting of the National Coalition will be Thursday, June 26, 2008 at 1pm E.S.T.

Participating: AK-Elizabeth Calhoon, DBSA-Peter Ashenden, MD-Mike Finkle, PA-Brian McLaughlin, PA-Rachel, TX-Mike Halligan, NEC-Dan Fisher, Staff: Lauren Spiro and Judene Shelley.

1. Membership: Iowa Advocates for Mental Health Recovery are the newest statewide organization.

We want to reach out to current members to be sure general meetings are meaningful to them.

We are trying to increase membership, bringing in other organizations from a state. This can work well when there is a collaboration between the state and national. (The state group could get a piece of the membership dollars.)

Peter suggested we need to come up with a list of our accomplishments and future plans as a marketing tool. Mike Finkle agreed to help the membership committee develop a plan for additional member organizations in states. Proposal about how the membership and voting could work, whether we would have individuals who can join also. Criteria regarding principles and insuring that it is consumer run are important.

2. What are we doing for the states?

If a state could write a draft letter or give us names and information on whom to call, we could all participate. We could set up a listserv. Rachel suggested that it might be important to get people from within the state to speak up; i.e. representatives want to hear from their constituents. It would be good to have regular updates about what is happening in the states. An e-newsletter could be good. And we could also post those on the website.

Tell us what is happening that has been effective? Has anyone else experienced a decrease in funding, fragmentation, etc. We can schedule a conference call just to discuss those who have experienced reduced funding and would like to do something.

We could reach out in as many ways as possible.

Two topics that come up often: Funding and Peer Support/Specialists

Announce a teleconference. Time was set for Thursday, May 15, 2008 at 1 p.m. EST. The next general meeting will be Thursday, June 26 1 p.m. EST.

3. Mental Health First Aid

Dan, Lauren and Jim McNulty (of NAMI STAR Center) met with Terry Cline and Kathryn Power about the MH First Aid. SAMHSA staff expressed that they would like to see the roll out be slowed down as it is moving too quickly. Lauren and Dan discussed with them the need for any lay person to be educated to assist any person who is experiencing emotional crisis just as CPR assists people in cardiac crisis. We expressed concerns about the content of MH First Aid and shared with them that we (consumer/survivors) may need to develop our own version if the process is not slowed sufficiently to include a diverse representation of people with the lived experience of recovery from emotional crisis.

The idea for Emotional CPR (eCPR) also grew out of writing our policies & realizing we need public education. Dan and Lauren have been discussing the idea of eCPR with a number of consumer/survivors around the U.S. who are very interested. Some people have already existing trainings that could be integrated into such a public education effort. We could include personal stories of people who have been helped by peers. These are transferable skills that the general public could use. We could convene an expert panel of c/s educators who focus on recovery based, trauma-informed services and include as core elements, peer support, disaster response and trauma. We don't need separate trainings on each piece. Last night at the Gala Dinner for the Campaign for MH Reform, Dan and Lauren discussed it with additional people. We have begun to draft an eCPR document.

4. AAPD is organizing and sponsoring a Presidential Candidate Forum in OHIO, July 26, 2008, the anniversary of the ADA. We have chosen to be a sponsor again with other national cross disability groups. People will have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates in advance again- as we did in New Hampshire in 2007.

5. Fundraising

Thanks to Mike Finkle for connecting us to the Blaustein Foundation. Dan had dinner with a representative of the foundation. Dan will get back in touch in June 2008 for their next funding cycle. They fund MH advocacy. We have about 1 year of funding left.

The CD Voices of Hope and Recovery: Our Stories, Our Lives have been going well. We plan to have (Fall/Winter 2008) tele-seminar hosted by www.everydayqi.com with a moderator and panel of people sharing their stories to promote the CD set sales and recovery.

7. Next week Lauren will be on the hill meeting with representatives from the offices of Chair Senate LHHS, Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), Ranking Arlen Specter (Pa), Chair House LHHS Obey (Wi), and Ranking James T. Walsh (NY) and others.