

National Coalition of Consumer/Survivor Organizations Meeting Notes
June 9, 2006 Teleconference

Participating: Kathy Muscari, Dan Fisher, Judi Chamberlin and Judene Shelley from Consumer-Run National TA Centers. Sally Zinman and Michele Curran from California Network of Mental Health Clients, Doug DeVoe from Ohio Advocates for Mental Health, Mike Finkle and Emily Hoffman from On Our Own of Maryland, Chris Busby from Massachusetts M-POWER, Melinda Davis of Maine Advocacy Initiative Network, Kay Rote of Oklahoma Mental Health Consumer Council, Lauren Spiro and Cassandra Nudel of VOCAL (Virginia Organization of Consumers Asserting Leadership), Carole Glover and Debra LaVergne of Meaningful Minds of Louisiana, Doreen Mills of Kentucky Consumer Advocate Network, Jack Bucher of NJCSP, Ann Rider of Recovery Empowerment Network in Arizona, Darby Penney of NY Community Consortium, Jim Rye of NY Alliance for Empowerment, Provisional members also participating were: Wayne Vivian of NJ Coalition of Mental Health Consumers, Rhonda Ames of Indiana KEY Organization, Bonnie Pate of SC Share, Melissa Marshall of Advocacy Unlimited CT, Amy Smith of We CAN of Colorado, Rhonda Smith of Tennessee MH Consumer Association, and Clifford Thurston of WA New Century Consumer Coalition. Also participating were Andrew Phelps of NO List and Jim Dickson of the American Association of People with Disabilities.

1. **Membership** was discussed as including current statewide and emerging statewide groups that cover most of a state, have basic agreement with the draft mission statement, and are run by consumers. Additional groups were invited as provisional members to this teleconference while they are looking over the mission statement and speaking with their boards. Andrew Phelps and Dennis Budd were admitted as liaisons to the Coalition from the NO List. The need to increase diversity of the Coalition was discussed. We have been trying to contact consumer-survivors who have had diverse networks and will continue to do so.

The Coalition would like to look at different models of membership and organizational structure such as how the Independent Living Centers (ILC's) formed a national organization. Jim Dickson, of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) gave a short history of the ILC's coming together. People on the call were encouraged to join one of the committees, particularly Membership and Fundraising. The Mission and Activities and DC Representation Committees have many volunteers already.

2. The group discussed the **draft statement of Purpose**. It was suggested that the statement be shorter, positive, speak of recovery in terms of supporting our wholeness, that we are all right now, we are not broken. It was suggested that we need "services" and not "programs." The Mission and Activities committee will take all of the suggestions and come up with the next draft.

3. Possible **names of the organization** were discussed including: States of Mind: National Coalition of State Organizations of People in Mental Health Recovery, National Coalition of Consumer-Survivor Organizations, National Consumer Empowerment

Coalition, and National Coalition of US States of Mind. The committee will explore this further and report back to the group.

4. Jim Dickson spoke of the work that AAPD has done on **voter registration**. Judi Chamberlin pointed out that some states are enacting laws that are taking away the rights of some people to vote. It was suggested that organizations have voter registration at their statewide conferences. The Mission and Activities Committee could collect ideas on how voter registration and information has been done in the different states.

5. Dan said that Public Welfare Foundation has given a \$75,000 grant as seed money to the National Empowerment Center for this National Coalition. This would cover expenses such as teleconferences, mailings, staff time, representation in Washington, DC, transportation for people who need to go to meetings, and a hotel room for meeting in Portland, Oregon the end of October. This money would also be used to raise additional funds. A discussion followed about the possibility of organizations paying dues. The purpose is to have this new organization function, yet not to put a burden on organizations. Ideas for determining a dues structure included a percentage of the organization's revenue and/or a sliding scale were discussed and will be determined later. The Bazelon Center has offered a cubicle, a mailing address, and conference room meeting time.

6. The group discussed the possibility of Dan Fisher's participating as a core member of the Campaign for Mental Health Reform.. There has been some controversy over some of the positions they have taken such as MH screening, yet being on the core group would put consumer-survivors much closer to the decision making.

7. The Coalition having representation in DC with part time staff and per diem paying of people to go to meetings was discussed. A job description would need to be written. The desire to be as visible as we can with the time that we have was presented. Discussion followed about the importance of learning about the hill, being clear about our mission and policies, and being strategic about which meetings are chosen and prioritized.

8. The next teleconference was scheduled for July 6, 2006 at 3 p.m. EST.