

Bulletin



news from the division of mental hygiene

Division of Mental Hygiene Reorganization

IN SEPTEMBER, THE NEW YORK CITY Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DOHMH) Division of Mental Hygiene (DMH) unveiled a plan for its redesign, with the goals of improving access to, and enhancing the quality and effectiveness of, mental hygiene services for New Yorkers. The reorganization, announced by Executive Deputy Commissioner Dr. Lloyd Sederer at a full staff meeting on September 30, 2003, became largely operational by December 29, 2003.

Highlights of the reorganization include:

- Consolidation of Program Services into a single Bureau, with a design that is oriented to varying populations (adults, children and adolescents, and forensics);
- The creation of an Office of Program Development to develop new projects;
- Maintenance of Early Intervention as a distinct Bureau;
- Linkage of the Chief Medical Officer and Medical Director to Program Services and other bureaus for clinical consultation and direction;
- Establishment of Community Liaisons for all three disability areas served by DMH; and
- Introduction of a Chief Administrative Officer.

"The reorganization will improve the way mental hygiene services are delivered to those who need them," said Dr. Sederer. "It will foster the integration of services across the three disability areas we serve, as well as offer simpler and more specific points of contact and accountability to provider agencies. We will be better equipped to respond to the needs of consumers—particularly those with co-occurring disorders—families, and providers."

Dr. Sederer added, "This redesign will also facilitate and promote a renewed focus on quality. With the launching of **Quality IMPACT** (Improving Mental Hygiene Programs and Communities Together), DMH affirms a

commitment to ensuring the best quality services to consumers and families through innovative, data-driven assessment, reporting, and quality improvement practices in community based organizations. We anticipate introducing the first of the quality objectives in July 2004, consistent with our contract cycle.

(Continued on back page)



Report Estimates Prevalence and Cost of Mental Disorders in New York City

IN AUGUST 2003, THE NYC DEPARTMENT OF Health and Mental Hygiene published "Prevalence and Cost Estimates of Psychiatric and Substance Use Disorders and Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities in NYC," a comprehensive report on the scope of mental disorders in New York City. A highly collaborative effort, the report was a joint project of the DOHMH Division of Mental Hygiene and the Division of Epidemiology. In October, DOHMH sent the report to hundreds of public officials, advocacy groups, consumers, families, and providers. The report also appears on the DOHMH website.

In line with a national trend towards population-based approaches to mental hygiene research, the report is based on estimates from the Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health and several other national studies applied to NYC's 2000 population figures. When available, New York City-specific data was utilized, including DOHMH's Community Health Survey and Vital Statistics Summary.

The report is divided into four sections and spans three age categories: youth, adults, and older adults. The first two sections outline the prevalence of psychiatric, substance use, and co-occurring

disorders in New York City. The focus of the third section is the prevalence of mental retardation and developmental disabilities, and the fourth estimates the direct, indirect, and related costs of mental hygiene disorders and disabilities in New York City. Highlights of the report include:

- An estimated 1.3 million adult New Yorkers have a psychiatric disorder (not including substance use disorders).
- An estimated 575,000 New Yorkers, including 19,000 youth, have a substance use disorder.
- Depression, a common and under diagnosed mental illness, affects an estimated 391,000 adult New York City residents.
- 381,000 New Yorkers over the age of 18 report symptoms consistent with serious mental illness.
- An estimated 119,000 New Yorkers are mentally retarded or have another developmental disability (e.g., mental retardation, cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy).
- There were an estimated 2,367 alcohol and drug-related deaths in NYC in 2001.
- Each year, it costs more than an estimated \$15 billion for the treatment and support of individuals with mental illness, substance abuse, and MR/DD in New York City. *(Continued on back page)*

Mental Hygiene Reorganization

(Continued from front page)

The new quality goals will start with adult mental health and mental retardation/developmental disabilities, and then extend to other populations and disability areas.”

DMH staff input played a central role in the planning process. In collaboration with an outside consultant, DMH surveyed management and staff throughout DOHMH and DMH. Eighteen senior DOHMH managers were interviewed; 23 senior DMH managers responded to an extensive survey; 110 DMH staff replied to a survey; and 35 additional individuals submitted anonymous comments. Results of this outreach effort indicated a strong desire for significant organizational change, including a more streamlined organization overall. Staff also called for increased effectiveness within management and greater transparency within the Division.

A 12-person DMH-staffed design team developed drafts for redesign. During the planning process, the team split into two groups that focused independently on a functional redesign and a population-based redesign. After numerous discussions and an extensive review process, Dr. Sederer worked with the design team to incorporate aspects of both perspectives into the reorganization plan that was announced. ■

Key Staff Changes

Name	New Position
Charles Browning	Associate Commissioner MRDD Community Liaison
Louis Josephson	Assistant Commissioner Child and Adolescent Services
Kathleen Kennedy	Deputy Director of Child and Adolescent Services
Trish Marsik	Transition Team Leader
Peter McGarry	Assistant Commissioner Adult Services
Joyce Moses	Chemical Dependency Community Liaison
Dimitra Risueño	Assistant Commissioner Program Development
Joshua Rubin	Chief Administrative Officer
Oscar Serrano	Mental Health Community Liaison
Martha Sullivan	Deputy Commissioner for Community Liaison and Training
Bonnie Chin Washburn	Administrative Director

Prevalence and Cost of Mental Disorders (Continued from front page)

Dr. Lloyd Sederer, Executive Deputy Commissioner for Mental Hygiene Services, said, “This report is the first step in a department-wide effort to build a reliable representation of the mental hygiene disorder prevalence in New York City. Mental illness, substance abuse, and mental retardation and developmental disability have a tremendous impact on the lives of individuals and their families. This epidemiologically-based report will enable us to better identify the mental hygiene needs and costs of the City at large. This information will help public officials, government agencies, policy makers,

planners, and advocates to improve the service system in the years to come.”

DOHMH Commissioner Dr. Thomas Frieden said, “This report provides much needed data on the prevalence and cost of mental hygiene disorders in New York City and will further our commitment to data-driven planning. This is also an example of the kind of work we’re able to accomplish as a result of our merger. The Division of Mental Hygiene and the Division of Epidemiology worked closely together to provide information about mental health services from a broad public health perspective.” ■

Bulletin from the Division of Mental Hygiene

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 Sandra Mullin, Associate Commissioner, Communications
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