

To: MH/MR Administrators
From: Michael D. Chambers
Date: January 10, 2008
Subject: Bullets

"It is good to have an END to journey toward, but it is the JOURNEY that matters in the end."- Ursula Le Guin

New Administrator: Claire Hornberger will become the new administrator of the Franklin-Fulton MH/MR Program on February 11, 2008. The Hanover resident holds an MSW from the University of Maryland and has worked in a variety of positions at Keystone Human Services, Catholic Charities and Northwestern Human Services. As you know, Rick Wynn, Franklin County's Human Services Director, has been filling in since the resignation of Kelly Goshen and he's looking forward to some relief. So are we.

Bureau of Autism: The Bureau of Autism has announced the availability of mini-grants to serve people with autism spectrum disorder. These are very small grants for small 501(c)(3) certificates or organizations that are connected with a non-profit partner organization. The applicant organization must be led by families and/or individuals with ASD and support families and/or individuals with ASD and have at least 15 parents/self-advocates as active participants. They also have to have a fairly low income of less than \$50,000. The application is due by February 8 and awards will be announced on or about February 29. That's right, it's a leap year. You can get the details at:

www.dpw.state.pa.us/ServicePrograms/Autism/News/CurrNewsAndAnnouncements/003677042.htm

Aversive Therapy? I know that you remember the controversy about the Judge Rotenburg Center in Massachusetts that has used Graduated Electronic Devices (GED) to change challenging behaviors in children that it serves. They even did the talk show circuit to justify the practice. Still, this device sounds a lot like a cattle prod to me.

Now, the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, which licenses residential schools, has released an investigative report on JRC that sounds like a good basis for a horror movie. Among other things, it turns out that a former student called the center in the middle of the night and posed as one of JRC's quality control monitors. He then instructed staff to wake up three residents and administer shocks. He repeated this several times over a period of a few hours. The staff actually did shock children repeatedly and, yes, it was harmful. The story gets worse. The report cites an unimaginable pattern of abuse. You can read about it at <http://www.arcmass.org/StateHousePolicy/RegulationandPolicyDebates/AversiveTherapy/DEECr eportonJRCprank/tabid/770/Default.aspx>

I don't really understand why JRC is still open for business.

COLA: We "hear" that Representative George Kenney (R-Montgomery/Philadelphia) plans to introduce a COLA bill that would help the MH/MR system maintain itself. This could be introduced as soon as January 14. We'll let you know.

County Awards: DPW has announced that they have made the decisions about the County Performance Awards. These awards range from \$7,960 up to \$84,602. We don't have the complete list yet, but we know that the Carbon/Monroe/Pike Joinder and Greene County were at the top of the list. Cumberland/Perry, Delaware, Clarion and Crawford did very well, too. We congratulate them.