

To: MH/MR Administrators
From: Michael D. Chambers
Date: August 20, 2009
Subject: Bullets

"I've got top priorities. I am going to stick to those priorities. And if you don't like those priorities...I have others." Groucho Marx

State Budget: The Governor and the Legislature are now 52 days late in adopting a budget for Fiscal Year 2009-2010. We have been through uncounted proposals, and meetings and spreadsheets. Virtually every organization in Harrisburg is lobbying on a non-stop basis. We have sent you information as it has become available to try to keep you informed. I wish that I could say that we are close to a final resolution to the budget impasse. I see no signs of that. I hope that it doesn't take a tragedy to stimulate the process. We can all take pride in the way that counties have responded to try and hold their human services systems together during this crisis. Pennsylvania is one of only two states who have not adopted their budgets. The other is Connecticut.

Now CCAP has revised its Commonwealth Budget page to make it more useful and it is updated daily. Please use it and share what you see with others in your county. Here is a link:

<http://www.pacounties.org/Pages/CommonwealthBudgetUpdates.aspx>

Remember, we also need to know what is happening in your county, so send us any news that you have and keep plugging away with your legislators and the media. Thanks.

Network of Care: Thanks to all of you who have placed all of your local information into the Network of Care. OMHSAS has been in direct contact with Network of Care and both are concerned that some local sites are not completely developed. Those programs can expect that OMHSAS will contact them soon. Joan Erney has indicated a strong interest in this project being completed as OMHSAS is funding these efforts to support consumers in their journey in recovery. Our sites are expected to be more prominent as Trilogy develops the sites for returning veterans of the Middle East conflicts in accordance with their nationwide agreement with the National Association of Counties (NACo). I expect to be meeting with Trilogy and OMHSAS within a month.

Your Network of Care is a recovery oriented website designed to provide information about each county program, respective providers and various links to abundant mental health resources for consumers and families. This site has been praised as a model in the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health and available in numerous states. The site supports recovery and provides consumers information to support their journey in recovery.

If you haven't done so, please contact Kathy Sterbenc at ksterbvenc@trilogyir.com with your local provider and advocacy information.

South Mountain Restoration Center: I send you a lot of news clips and other stories but one in particular jumped off the screen at me. I'm referring to one headed "**Congratulations to the staff at South Mountain Restoration Center on their continued Five Star Quality Rating and Honor Roll Status!**" As you all know I am not a fan of institutional life if there is any alternative, but I think that it is wonderful for a state-run nursing facility that serves people with history of mental illness as well nursing care needs receives recognition this kind. I suppose that I am especially impressed by the apparent improvement in the facility since I last visited over 20 years ago. Then, I wouldn't have recommended any awards for South Mountain. That award means that a lot of effort and a focus on quality care have paid off for the residents of the facility.

Here is the complete report, just to refresh your memory.

The following report was prepared by Sandra Knoble, CEO of South Mountain Restoration Center:

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services released their new Five-Star Quality Rating System on December 18, 2008. The system was created to help consumers, their families, and caregivers compare nursing homes more easily and help identify areas about which they may want to ask questions. Nursing homes are given a rating between 1 and 5 stars. Nursing homes with 5 stars are considered to have above average quality. **In Pennsylvania, 82 of the 713 (11.5%) nursing homes in the state have now achieved a 5-Star rating.** When the system was initially introduced, South Mountain Restoration Center received a 5-star rating. **I am very pleased to report that the Center maintained our 5- Star rating in all categories following the 2009 Certification Survey.**

Additionally, **South Mountain Restoration Center again merited Honor Roll Status in the U.S. News July, 2009 update of "[America's Best Nursing Homes](#)."** Of the 15,000-plus nursing homes ranked by *U.S. News*, only 41 merited [Honor Roll](#) status. The Honor Roll is updated every three months.