

# Staying in Touch

November 2008

## Inside This Issue

- 1 Message from the Director
- 2 Saint Elizabeths Walk for the Cure
- 2 Help for Stressful Economic Times
- 3 Employee Spotlight:  
**Jacqueline Droddy**
- 3 News from Human Resources
- 4 Mayor Fenty officially Opens Urgent Care Clinic
- 4 Crisis Services Available for Children and Adults

---

**Mental Health Authority  
Quarterly Staff Meeting  
10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.  
Monday, November 17!**

---

## Message from the Director



Dear DMH Employee,

In the last newsletter, I talked about our plan to redesign the public mental health system and to stop providing direct services through the DC CSA. I want to emphasize again that this decision in no way reflects

on the many dedicated DC CSA employees. The redesign creates an opportunity for DMH to increase the number of people eligible to be served and to expand the range of services. The DMH Transition Team is now developing the plan to transition all consumers and to close the DC CSA and I want to update you on where we are.

Let me first acknowledge the involvement of DC CSA employees in the transition process. Their participation is invaluable. We have set two important dates in the transition. As of November 17, the DC CSA will be closed to new enrollments except for certain specialty populations and for SURE services. We are confident that the private provider network will be able to absorb any new enrollees and services will be provided.

On October 1, we imposed a hiring freeze on DC CSA positions except for temporary employees as needed during transition. A complete implementation plan is due to the Council on December 31, 2008.

The HR office has scheduled dates to meet with employees to review individual benefits. I remain committed to working with existing staff to minimize the impact of this change.

As always, please feel free to contact me at [steve.baron@dc.gov](mailto:steve.baron@dc.gov) with any comments or concerns. I hope to see Authority staff at the quarterly meeting at 10:30 a.m., November 17.

*Steve*

## Saint Elizabeths Employees Walk for the Cure for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year

In recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an energetic crowd of Saint Elizabeths Hospital employees wearing pink ribbons walked two miles around the scenic campus chanting "Walk for the Cure!...Walk for the Cure!"

Walkers wore tags with the names of loved ones who died from the disease or are breast cancer survivors survived the disease. Several employees walked in memory of Victoria "Vickie" Brannan Cowell, beloved chaplain and friend to the Saint Elizabeths family for almost 30 years, who died last July.

**Lolita Carter**, medical records technician, walked in honor of her mom, who is a survivor of breast cancer. She said, "It is important to raise awareness and find a cure for all cancers so that it won't affect me and my sisters."

The Walk was sponsored by the FISH! Committee—a group of employees who work to increase social awareness on issues affecting employees and their families, raise employee morale, and recognize employees who are doing extraordinary things.



Saint Elizabeths Employees Join in Walk for the Cure

**Susan Richardson**, training specialist, chairs the FISH! Committee. She said it's important to raise awareness of breast cancer because it affects the lives of employees and their families.

FISH! members gave oral pop quizzes on what steps can be taken to help prevent and detect breast cancer—self breast exams and regular exams by a physician, mammograms, regular exercise and a healthy diet.

## Help for Stressful Economic Times on DMH website

Depression and anxiety are normal reactions to abnormal times or stress. With increased concerns about losing jobs, homes and savings, more people are showing signs of psychological distress. DMH has added information to our website, [www.dmh.dc.gov](http://www.dmh.dc.gov) on guidelines that you can share with family and friends. We also added a quick screening tool to help us to recognize the [symptoms of depression](#).

**Dr. Steve Steury**, Chief Clinical Director offers five basic guidelines:

- **Talk to Family and Friends**

Talking to someone you trust can help relieve stress.

- **Keep Active**

Doing regular, physical exercise helps to relieve mental and muscular tension. Along with regular exercise, try to eat a healthy diet.

- **Pay Attention to your Physical Health**

Research shows that depression is a risk factor for coronary heart disease, is more common among people with coronary heart disease, and can increase the risk of further heart problems. And, living with a chronic illness like diabetes may increase the risk of depression.

- **Do Not Reduce or Stop Taking Your Medication Without your Doctor's Approval**

This is not the time to skip dosages or split pills. If you need help, contact Access Helpline on 1-888-793-4357.

- **Seek help**

If you think you need more than talking to family and friends, or the bad feelings don't go away, seek help. Getting the right type of help and getting it early is critical to getting back on track and learning new ways of dealing with depression.

## Employee Spotlight: Jacqueline Droddy

A native Washingtonian raised in Prince George's County, Maryland, **Jacqueline Droddy** is a self-described die hard Redskins fan. No surprise that Anna, her four year old daughter, dressed up as wide receiver Santana Moss on Halloween. Oh, and she was a cheerleader in high school and college and can whip up a frenzied Hail to the Redskins!

**Jacqueline**, preferring to be called "**Jackie**", is a supervisory social worker with the school mental health program (SMHP) where she provides clinical supervision to social workers and mental health specialists. She has more than 20 years of experience in the human services/mental health field specializing in mental health, substance abuse and adolescent sex offender treatment.

Before joining DMH in 2006, **Jackie** worked at First Home Care as a supervisor/diagnostician. She says she misses direct clinical practice, but loves working in the SMHP with outstanding clinicians and administrators who are committed to making a difference in the lives of children and their families.

Her first job in the profession was working with abused and neglected children in foster care, preadoptive and independent living programs with the Department of Social Services in St. Mary's County, Maryland. She credits that experience with motivating her to obtain a master degree in social work which she completed at the University of Maryland at Baltimore. Since then, she has



**Jacqueline Droddy**

worked in management and clinical positions in public and private agencies serving diverse populations in the District, Maryland and Virginia.

**Jackie** is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker in the District, and a Licensed Certified Social Worker-Clinical in Maryland. She lives in south Anne Arundel County with Anna and Amanda, her 17 year old niece, whose perseverance and ambition she says are inspirational.

## Human Resources News: Open Enrollment starts November 10 and the 2008 Annual Leave Year Ends January 4

**Open Enrollment:** It's open enrollment season again. Starting November 10 through December 8, you can change your benefits and/or enroll in new plans. To help with your selections, HR is holding a number of health fairs with healthcare and financial services providers. Dates and locations are listed on [www.dchr.dc.gov](http://www.dchr.dc.gov). And, this year, you can make your own changes by using employee self service.

**Annual Leave Usage:** All annual leave in excess of 240 hours must be used prior to January 4, 2009 to avoid loss of accrued leave. Employees are asked now to submit leave requests through

the end of the leave year. An employee who is unable to use scheduled, approved leave is responsible for rescheduling the leave before the end of the year to avoid forfeiture.

Under very defined circumstances, forfeited annual leave may be restored with the approval of the Director. All Requests for the restoration of leave must be sent through your supervisor by January 16, 2009. Requests after that date will not be considered.

Use or lose annual leave also may be donated to the Annual Leave Bank or Voluntary Leave Bank no later than November 22, 2008.

## DMH Officially Opens Urgent Care Clinic at Superior Court



Mayor Fenty, Councilmember Catania and Chief Justice Lee Satterfield join Director Baron in the ribbon cutting.

Mayor Fenty joined Director Baron and other DMH staff on October 2 to officially open the Urgent Care Clinic at Superior Court. Councilmember David Catania, Chief Judge Lee Satterfield, Judge Ann O'Regan Keary, and other judges, advocates and also attended.

DMH in partnership with the Court opened the urgent care clinic to assist people referred by the judges—primarily from misdemeanor and traffic court—who show signs of mental illness, or who show signs of both mental illness and substance abuse disorders. Walk-in patients also are treated.

In just four months since it opened in June, 146 people—the great majority of whom are homeless—have been treated. 60 people were linked or relinked to a community mental health provider. Eight were sent to CPEP.

## New Mobile Crisis Services Start for Children and Adults

DMH last week kicked off new services that significantly increase our ability to respond to people in crisis and link them to appropriate care.

The new children's mobile crisis service will provide a rapid, on the scene response to children facing an emotional or mental health crisis. The service called **ChAMPS**—Children and Adolescent Mobile Psychiatric Services—will stabilize the child, help families manage the crisis, and in the case of foster parents, seek to avoid placement disruption. According to **Denise Dunbar**, CFSA mental health program manager, ChAMPS also seeks to avoid the use of restrictive levels of care.

The crisis service is operated by Anchor Mental Health of Catholic Charities and is available 24/7 through the Access HelpLine.

Along with the mobile crisis service, we have set up crisis beds for youth ages 6 to 21 as an alternative to a psychiatric inpatient hospitalization. Beds are available for up to a 14 day stay with the goal to return the child to the family.

A similar mobile crisis services for adults now operates out of CPEP. The new mobile crisis teams will respond to adult throughout the District who

are experiencing a psychiatric crisis and are unable or unwilling to travel to receive mental health services.

In addition to onsite crisis stabilization including dispensing medication, the mobile crisis services team performs assessment for voluntary and involuntary hospitalizations and linkages to other services, such as crisis beds and substance abuse detoxification and treatment. The teams work with family members and the community based mental health provider, if appropriate, to help with follow up.

The team is available from 9 a.m. to 1 a.m. every day and also is reached through the Access HelpLine.

Directed by **Luis Vasquez**, Mobile Crisis Services is staffed by a multidisciplinary team of mental health workers including peer counselors, mental health counselors, mental health specialists, addiction treatment specialists, social workers, and psychiatrists.