



DMH News Bulletin



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*Timely news on events, services, people, funding and innovations at the
D.C. Department of Mental Health*

Mayor Williams Recognizes Transitional Receiver for Reform of Mental Health System . . . At his June 5 weekly press briefing, **Mayor Anthony A. Williams** announced the end of the mental health receivership and used this opportunity to recognize the outstanding work of **Transitional Receiver Dennis R. Jones**. Mayor Williams and **Peter Nickles**, counsel for the Dixon plaintiff class, jointly presented Mr. Jones with a Certificate of Appreciation for his vision of a consumer-driven, choice-driven, recovery-driven mental health system for the District of Columbia and the plan to transform that vision into reality. "This is a milestone that matters to the lives of mental health consumers, their families and friends." He said. US District Court Judge Norma Holloway Johnson terminated and vacated the receivership as of May 15, 2002.



Mayor Williams also acknowledged **Councilmember Sandy Allen**, Chair of the Committee on Human Services for her support; **DMH Director Martha B. Knisley** for her able leadership of the Department; **Grace Lopes, the Mayor's Acting General Counsel**, for deftly representing the District's interests; **Peter Nickles** and **Susan Burke**, counsels for the plaintiffs, for being tough and fair; and **Bob Duncan** and **Jenny Rubin**, the receiver's pro bono attorneys from Hogan & Hartson, for their dedication and legal direction. In his remarks, Mr. Jones said if ever creating a viable community-based mental health system would happen, this was the time.



New Crisis Beds Pilot Project in St. Elizabeths Hospital's Forensic Services . . . As part of St. Elizabeths Hospital's commitment to facilitating consumers' recovery, Forensic Services began a *Crisis Beds' Pilot Project* in January 2002. The goal of the project is to ensure continuity of care and reduce the length of stay of forensic consumers on court-ordered conditional release in the community who required rehospitalization because of psychiatric, medical or social problems. Consumers admitted to the project continue to receive intensive services from the forensic treatment team that worked with them in the community. Prior to the Pilot Project, consumers who had to be rehospitalized often remained in John Howard Pavilion for extended periods, sometimes in excess of a year. Since establishing the crisis beds, nine consumers have received this new service. Eight have recovered rapidly and successfully returned to the community with minimal disruption to their lives. The average length of stay was a mere 9.25 days!



Dr. Giorgis Receives "Welcome Back Award" . . . **Tedla Giorgis, Ph.D.**, Director, DMH Multicultural Services Division, recently received the "Welcome Back Award" in Primary Care, for his exceptional achievements in educating ethnic and linguistic minority communities about depression. This award, sponsored by Eli Lilly and Company, is part of a national program that fights the stigma associated with depression and helps the public understand that depression is treatable. Dr. Giorgis received his award in Philadelphia, Penn. and was joined there by his family and three DMH colleagues, **Ismail Korme** (Multicultural Services Division) **Michael Fain, Ph.D.** (Director's Office) and **Sara Lee** (Delivery Systems Services). Eli Lilly makes a \$5,000 donation to a not-for-profit organization of the honoree's choice. Dr. Giorgis is splitting his donation between the Ethiopian Community Center and Visions for Development.

HIPAA Summit . . . DMH representatives attended the May 29 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) DC Health Care Provider Summit at the University of the District of Columbia. HIPAA, which Congress enacted in 1996, includes far-ranging provisions regarding how healthcare providers, such as DMH, transmit, secure and maintain the confidentiality of individuals' identifiable health information. The summit addressed strategies for complying with these new rules, many of which become effective and the federal government will begin enforcing in October 2002 and April 2003. The summit began with welcoming remarks from **Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families and Elders Carolyn N. Graham** and **Councilmember Sandy Allen**. They emphasized the magnitude of achieving compliance with HIPAA. Other summit speakers included attorneys, consultants, and government officials, all of whom are nationally recognized as HIPAA experts.



Salute to the DMH Family Graduates . . . **Catrina Griggs** (DMH employee) graduate of Southeastern University with a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, June 23; **Priscilla Grow (daughter of Shirley Grow)** graduate of Towson University with a Bachelor of Science in Theatre Design, May 22; **Hunter Provyn (son of Susan Provyn)** graduate of the University of Virginia with a Bachelor of Science in Systems Engineering, May 19; **Janis Cherrell Sanders (daughter of Anna Sanders)** graduate of the University of Maryland with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering, May 23; **Robyn Wood (daughter of Theresa Wood)** graduate of Howard University with a Bachelor of Arts in Interior Design, May 11; **Susan Bliss Young (daughter of Stanley Bliss)** graduate of Lake-Sumpter Community College with an Associate Arts Degree, May 10; **Denise Lowe** graduate of Hahnemann School of Medicine in Pennsylvania with a Doctorate in Pediatrics on May 16; **Vanessa Lowe** (twin to Denise and **nieces of Daphne Chambers**) graduate of Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, NY with a Doctorate in Pediatrics on May 11; **Shanna Pitter (niece of Daphne Chambers)** graduate of Iowa State with a Bachelor of Science degree in Meteorology, May 18.

Extra special recognition to **Sadiqa R. Long (daughter of Eunice Long)** graduate of West Virginia State College with an Associate Degree in Biology/Health Science and a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, May 16. Sadiqa was honored with a first-time award named after her: the "Sadiqa R. Long Award," for exceptional fortitude and exemplary deportment representing high moral and ethical character.

We want to acknowledge all children of DMH employees who will graduate this year from college or professional school. Please send the following to any of the *DMH News Bulletin* contact people listed below: your name (DMH employee) and relationship to the graduate, the graduate's name, date of graduation, college or professional school and degree awarded.



DMH Welcomes . . . **Lynne Riggins**, Director of the Division of Licensure, Office of Accountability; **David Jones**, Director of Child and Youth Services, and **Kevin Elphick**, Director of Crisis and Emergency Services, both for the Community Services Administration (CSA); and **Irvin Dallas**, Director of Fiscal Policy in the Office of Fiscal and Administrative Services, and Mental Health Rehabilitation Services Project Implementation Manager.



DMH Compliance Line . . . You may report anonymously to the DMH Compliance Line (1-800-345-5564) any conduct by a DMH employee, or someone acting on DMH's behalf, that you think may be illegal or violate DMH policies and procedures. Call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Reminder . . . Please send your items to the editorial staff of the DMH News Bulletin. **Mental Health Authority:** Phyllis Blair, 673-1932, Phyllis.blair@dc.gov; Linda Grant, 673-1937, Linda.grant@dc.gov. **Community Services Agency:** John Graham, 442-4139, John.graham@dc.gov; Patricia O'Meally, 442-4108, Patricia.o'meally@dc.gov. **St. Elizabeths Hospital:** Jogues Prandoni, 645-8845, Jogues.prandoni@dc.gov; Margaret Rollison, 645-6911, Margaret.rollison@dc.gov.

For further information or additional copies of this News Bulletin, write or call Linda Foxx, Office of the Director, DMH, 77 P Street, N.E., Wash., DC 20002, Phone 673-1928, Email-dcdmh.info@dc.gov.

Government of the District of Columbia
Anthony A. Williams, Mayor



D.C. Department of Mental Health
Martha B. Knisley, Director