CSP is Back in Bucks County  

By: Nancy Scheible

After several years of struggling to figure out how to get Community Support Program meetings reinstated in Bucks County, all the efforts have finally paid off. **CSP is back in Bucks.**

Bucks is a very diverse county, especially when you take into account the geographic differences. In the southern end of the county we have some almost urban areas that border the city of Philadelphia and then as you go all the way north you see wide open spaces and get an agricultural feel with farms and cows. In addition to the unique challenges of delivering services to those with mental health challenges in these very different services areas within Bucks County, there is the added barrier of transportation. Many folks receiving services in our community mental health system do not have their own cars. Thus, for a large portion of folks in recovery transportation was a large obstacle to being able to get to and participate in CSP meetings.

So, CSP is being done a little differently in Bucks County than in the rest of PA. Where the usual structure is one monthly CSP meeting in a county, we are having three meetings, one in Upper Bucks, one in Central Bucks and one in Lower Bucks. That way wherever folks live in the county, there is a CSP meeting that is not too far away. Our 3 meeting structure will also have the added benefit of engaging more people in the CSP process. Rather than having one meeting that has approximately 20 people attending, we will have three times that number, or more.

One challenge with the 3 meeting structure, however, is in making sure each of the meetings has knowledge of what the other meetings are working on, that each meeting has access to information related to issues and events that impact the lives of persons with mental illness and ensuring that the feedback for systems change that each meet-

Notes from the Advancing In Recovery Conference

The Advancing In Recovery conference was held on Oct 18, 2013 at Del Val College in Doylestown PA. The theme of the day was Contributions, Citizenship and Paths to Employment. The featured speaker was Carol Blessing, LMSW. Carol is director for the Recovery Oriented Outpatient Transformation Project for the NY State Office of Mental Health and also works as a project director for the Citizen-Centered Leadership Development Community of Practice at Cornell University. Carol was quite a dynamic speaker and was clearly passionate about the projects she works on and the themes she presented at the conference.

One of the major points that she spoke about was the need for those with labels of disability to move from the sense of being a “consumer” of services to being a citizen within their communities. Citizenship comes with the assumption that you have something to offer, a respon-
What can you do with 5 minutes a week?

Five minutes isn’t very much time at all. And most of us might say there really isn’t much we can accomplish in five minutes. For me the things I think about trying to get done are the laundry, grocery shopping (ugh), making dinner (double ugh), cleaning the bathroom (yuk!) and when can I sneak in a shower. But no matter hard try, I would never get any of those things done in a 5 minute span of time (bummer)!

Believe it or not though, with those same 5 minutes you could make a radical difference in the legislative advocacy efforts of the Mental Health Association of Southeastern PA.

Earlier this year the Mental Health Association of Southeastern PA launched a new program called “Take 5”. It is aptly named as they ask you to make a commitment to spend just five minutes each week doing an advocacy effort. Essentially you sign up with your email address and the advocacy team at MHASP sends you an email once a week with the information about an issue that needs advocacy. They provide you with some background information about the issue. Tell you why it is important to the mental health community. They tell you who you need to contact including either giving you the direct phone number / email address or giving you a link to the PA Legislature website where you can look up your individual representative or senator’s contact information. And even after all that, if you still feel at a loss, the advocacy team at MHASP is right there for you providing a sample of what you can say when you call or write.

It really is very simple as the MHASP does most of the work for you. What they can’t do is make the phone call or send the letter for you. We need your voice in the advocacy efforts. If your saying to yourself “My effort won’t make a difference”, then think about this: Last year there was a 10% funding cut in the human services budget in PA. Originally it was going to be a 20% funding cut but there was an advocacy effort to get rid of the idea of cuts all together. Just think of what we could have accomplished if you had added your efforts, and the person reading this newsletter next added theirs and so on. It’s like the ripples in water that happens after a pebble is thrown in. Your call, your email, your letter can have a far reaching impact.

If you want to sign up to be part of the Take 5 program go to www.mhasp.org click on advocacy at the top of the page and then go down the page till you see the Take 5 click article. Click “more” to see the full description of the take 5 campaign and on the page there is a subscribe button at the bottom—click on that and then enter your contact info.

CSP is Back . . .

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“A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual doom.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

ing generates flows to the right individuals or organizations.

That’s where the second unique aspect of Bucks CSP comes into play. Here in Bucks we have a part time staff person to help coordinate the CSP effort and provide support and technical assistance to the three CSP committee meetings. Some other counties do provide some funding to an agency to provide some basic supports to the CSP, but Bucks is unique in that we have a dedicated individual to help foster the spirit of consumer voice and participation.

If you’d like to know something about the CSP Coordinator please see page 3 for a brief profile.

To learn more about what CSP is and see a listing of the meetings each month go to the back page of this newsletter.

We hope to see you at a meeting soon!
CSP Profiles: CSP Coordinator - Nancy Scheible

Some basic facts about me:

I have a bachelor's degree in Sociology & Psychology and a Master's Degree in Counseling, both from The College of NJ. My first job in the MH field was at Penndel MH Center in the Partial Hospital Program. I worked there for 8 years and still considered it the best job I have ever had. I have also worked in Mercer County NJ in residential programs and taught counseling classes at the College of NJ. I took a break from working for about 13 years to raise my three kids and now I am back working in Bucks and I am very excited to be in the position to support the CSP in Bucks County. CSP is very close to my heart. In the fall of 1991, I attended the first CSP planning / training session about bringing CSP to Bucks County which was organized by the BC Department of MH. I was hooked. The philosophy embodied in the CSP principals (which you can see on the back page of this newsletter) and the idea of the power of having all stakeholders involved in the decision making about the direction of services spoke to me. I went back to the next meeting and found myself excitedly expressing ideas which promptly landed me in a position as a co-chair for the CSP meetings. I consistently remained a co-chair for CSP for over 11 years. When I look back on those years I am amazed that a small group of volunteers could accomplish so much. But my hope is that we all can take CSP farther than ever before. And I think we are off to a good start as you hold in your hands the first ever newsletter for Bucks CSP. I am also working on developing a website so that we can share information with a much wider audience than those who come out to meetings. Here’s to new beginnings!

Advancing in Recovery Conference

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Possibility to contribute to your community and the that accepting and carrying out the role of citizen results in a shift in how you see yourself and how others view you. Employment was advocated as a crucial pathway to creating social equity and thus social inclusion. She also provided examples of ways work has a positive impact on mental health. One of her presentation slides had the question to ponder “If work makes people with mental illness sick, what do unemployment, poverty and social isolation cause?”

The last part of the conference focused on a process called “Person Centered Planning,” which Ms. Blessing strongly believed is an important vehicle to cross the gap between disability status and citizen status. And is essential as a path to employment that fits the person and their unique gifts. Person Centered Planning is a process of exploration and discovery that focuses on strengths and the capacities of an individual which allows natural talents, gift and interests to surface. Part of the process is also exploring available resources to promote contribution and community inclusion. One of the ideas that intrigued me most was the creation of an “Employment Proposal” which would outline what you can contribute to an organization as opposed to a resume which would highlight gaps in employment.

There was a speakers panel which highlighted the use of person centered planning and how it work for a specific individual. All in all the person centered Planning process and goals seemed to me to be an echo of the goals & principles of CSP. Many times, as I try to explain what CSP is to people there is a disconnect as people have a hard time taking the CSP principals, which outline a great philosophy, and figuring out how that would be applied in the real world. To me, the Person Centered Planning process took the ideals of CSP and operationalized them into a way of not just doing a traditional “intake” or “assessment,” as those are very disability focused, but exploring all the possibilities and potentials a person has to help them develop a life plan. As I write I am thinking who wouldn’t thrive when there is a focus on capacity, gifts and possibilities. Maybe all citizens should participate in a Person Centered Plan!

“Do you believe in possibilities that others can’t yet imagine?”

Beth Mount
Inspiration

Inaction breeds doubt and fear.

Action breeds confidence and courage.

If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it, get out and get busy.

Dale Carnegie
Southeast Regional CSP

Representatives from the CSP committees from the five southeastern counties of PA (Bucks, Montgomery, Delaware, Philadelphia, and Chester) come together once a month to exchange ideas, and develop CSP goals/projects for the five county region.

All are encouraged and welcome to come:

First Monday of each month from 3 PM - 5 PM
(on the second Monday when the first Monday is a holiday)
Hopeworx, Inc.
1210 Stanbridge Street, Suite 600, Norristown, PA 19401

Resource Highlight

www.mentalhealthrecovery.com

The Mental Health Recovery website is based on the works of Dr. Mary Ellen Copeland.

Mary Ellen Copeland is an author, educator and mental health recovery advocate. She specializes in the successful self-management of psychiatric symptoms. Her work is based on her intensive nationwide studies of thousands of people who have psychiatric symptoms and on her own personal struggle with manic depression - rising from total incapacitation to enjoying a rich and rewarding life. She has authored many self help guides to managing symptoms out of which grew the idea for a comprehensive plan to attain and maintain wellness and what to do in case of a crisis which she calls WRAP—Wellness Recovery Action Plan.

The website features lots of information about WRAP with downloadable forms to start your own WRAP. On the website you can also access articles, newsletters and webinars related to recovery.

BACK TALK

We want to hear from YOU!

Do you . . . . . . .
♦ have a thought about an article you read in this issue
♦ have an idea about a topic you would like us to cover in the future
♦ have a resource you think we should highlight
♦ want to contribute an article

Then we can’t wait to hear from you. Use our contact info on the back page and tell us your thoughts and ideas.
The community support program is a coalition of all people who are stakeholders of the mental health system. A stakeholder could be a person in treatment and support, their family members, a provider of behavioral health care or any interested community member.

We have monthly meetings where we come together to exchange information and ideas about how to promote recovery and excellence in the delivery of community-based mental health services.

**CSP Vision**
Every person with behavioral health challenges will enjoy the highest quality of life. Quality of life consists of inclusion in community, easy access to and choice of comprehensive treatment services and supports and multiple opportunities to enhance personal growth and recovery.

In order to achieve this vision CSP utilizes guiding principles that identify the way mental health services should be designed, developed and delivered. We use these principles at our meetings as we discuss and evaluate different elements of the community mental health system. We then set goals for the CSP committee in terms of making recommendations/advocating for changes that will positively impact the lives of those with mental health challenges.

**CSP Principles:**
- Person Centered/ Person Empowered
- Culturally Competent
- Designed to Meet Special Needs
- Community Based / Use Natural Supports
- Flexible
- Coordinated
- Accountable
- Strengths Based

**Wherever you live you are not too far away from a CSP meeting.**

**Upper Bucks CSP Meetings**
1st Meeting Nov 19, 2013 1:30PM - 3:30PM
Penn Foundation - Women’s Village of Hope
807 Lawn Avenue, Sellersville, PA 18960
Mary Fala 267-404-5057
mfala@pennfoundation.org

**Central Bucks CSP Meetings**
2nd Wednesday every month 10AM-12PM
Lenape Valley Foundation
500 N. West Street, Doylestown, PA 18901
Phil Braun 215-893-5282
philip.braun@lenapevf.org

**Lower Bucks CSP Meetings**
2nd Thursday every month 3-5 PM
Penndel MH Center - Community Room
1517 Durham Rd, Penndel PA 19047
Nancy Scheible 267-587-2300 x1104
nscheible@penndelmhc.org