



NEWSLETTER

County Mental Health Services Transferred to Options

Summer 2006, Number 17

After several years of discussion and acting upon the demand for integrated mental health services for the residents of Josephine County, Options and Josephine County Mental Health have successfully completed a transfer of mental health services to Options. This historic transfer took place on July 1st, 2006, and we are now in the midst of melding the two entities into one highly effective organization. As a result of the transfer, Options staff has increased from 42 to 146 employees. We have added four residential treatment facilities to our existing six facilities and are increasing the total number of clients served through our programs to over 3,000 individuals.

Through implementing a "transition plan", with dedicated teams of Options and County employees working together, there has been an identification of several issues to improve operational efficiency. We have defined and are responding to such issues as installation of new phone lines, a computer network, establishing a new operating budget and recordkeeping systems, meeting vehicle needs, transferring licensing agreements, enrolling employees in a new benefit system, and keeping clients, employees and the public up to date on organizational changes through meetings and regular updates.

A key to a successful transition is the leadership of the agency, involving people in creating the change, having a clear articulation and communication of decisions related to this change, and a continuous fine-tuning of the process. County mental health employees bring to Options a different workplace culture, organizational systems, values and relationships with clients and the community. Though some integration of people and organizational systems has occurred during the transition process, there is still much work to do to combine the two organizations into *one* highly effective

provider of mental health services for the citizens of Josephine County.

Options has worked with Charlene Phipps of *Learning Groups* to develop a systems change plan to guide and strengthen the organization's strategic vision, operational systems and professional skills vital to the continued successful integration of the two organizations. Inherent in our vision is a shared treatment philosophy for mental health in Josephine County guiding relationships with clients, staff, and community partners. The results of these changes will provide more resources in Josephine County while focusing on a more coordinated and collaborative provision of mental health and addiction treatment services.

The transfer of Josephine County Mental Health programs to Options has presented significant logistical challenges. Because the existing facility for Josephine County Mental Health has well-documented environmental health and safety issues, we embarked on a mission to relocate the employees to a new building. Options has applied for Community Development Block Grant funding and has initiated a capital campaign to purchase a community mental health facility that will provide for more effective and efficient delivery of services

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Mental health services transferred to Options (continued from page 1)...

to individuals currently enrolled in Options mental health programs.

Options serves all of Josephine County, including the Illinois Valley and Sunny Valley areas, an area of 1,641 square miles. A major benefit of the new community mental health facility is that it will allow for most mental health services to be provided at one central location in Josephine County, instead of housed at various sites. The project will strengthen the community by providing an infusion of capital and resources to improve the social and economic conditions of residents, and will help the organizations providing services to access increased resources to make our community more livable.

The new facility will also provide for improved access and utilization of child psychiatry resources by children and adolescents who require psychiatric screening, evaluation, consultation, and/or medication management due to the severity and complexity of their acute or chronic mental health issues.

We considered it vital to the success of the treatment programs that the community mental health facility be designed in a manner that is conducive to promoting a sense of security and well-being among psychiatrically disabled clients who are very sensitive to their environments. The design provides plenty of daylight and full spectrum lighting to afford a

healthy environment for individuals and families seeking program services.

A key component of the new community mental health facility is its proximity to other mental health and community resources. Bus routes have been rerouted to serve the new facility and it is also located near (within 1 mile) of Three Rivers Community Hospital. If the project was not developed, based on available property, we would have had several programs housed at three sites instead of consolidating clinical services in one location.

The continuum of mental health services in Josephine County includes: case management, prevention, education, screening and evaluation, supportive services, resource networking, and referrals, individual and group therapy, psychiatric evaluations and medication management. Crisis intervention services are available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week through a crisis hotline staffed by Options for Southern Oregon at the nearby Crisis Resolution Center. Over the past several years Josephine County has developed three long-term extended care facilities (Hugo Hills, Ramsey, and Carnahan) for adults with psychiatric disabilities. Management of these facilities has also been transferred to Options. Options has several other service programs



Options Creekside Center

based out of its present location in Grants Pass, including the Bridges to Success and MERIT programs. These programs will not be in the new facility but are important to understand the continuum of mental health care in Josephine County.

The net effect of the transfer of services and the new facility is that more clients we serve will have the resources to help maintain or improve their level of functioning so that they may continue to live in their own homes, find and keep jobs, have a social network, stay out of the criminal justice system, and avoid the need for more restrictive and expensive care.

In addition, Options' nonprofit structure allows a quicker response than county government to changing service needs and increased access to private foundation dollars. The results of these changes will provide more resources in Josephine County while focusing on a more coordinated and collaborative provision of mental health and addiction treatment services.

Options Clinical programs move to Options Creekside Center

After several postponements the big move to Options Creekside Center, located at 1181 SW Ramsey, is scheduled for the fourth week in August. The transition of mental health services from Josephine County Mental Health has presented unprecedented growth challenges, including housing transferred employees into a safer environment. Options' new building was built to house therapists, clinical staff and doctors at one location. The new space is a two-story, 10,504 square foot building, and consists of a variety of individual offices, examination and treatment rooms, group counseling rooms, secure medication storage, file room, clinical waiting area, bathrooms, and space to house necessary clinical staff.

One of Options core values is 'reverse integration' - the concept of bringing the community into the building, facilitating interaction and thereby working to break down the stigma that still surrounds mental illness. The new Creekside Center community mental health facility will increase the availability of mental health services as a community resource. The staff of Options and the developers of the building spent considerable time discussing the requirements of the mental health program in developing a design that accommodates both clients and staff.

The new building will provide effective and efficient delivery of services to individuals currently enrolled in Options and Josephine County mental health programs. Mental health programs to be housed in the new facility include: Children's Resource Team, Adult Resource Team, Case Management, Employment Works, the Medical Unit, and necessary clinical support staff. It is estimated that the proposed project will benefit at least 2,580 persons per year, of whom 98% will be low or moderate income.

If you haven't yet taken a tour of the new facility, an open house will be scheduled in the near future.

Options Puts Human Resource Systems Into Place

As of July 1, 2006, Options has 146 employees. This includes 42 employees from the "old" Options, 95 from Josephine County, and 9 former Personnel Source staff members. The employees have brought with them great patience as we develop systems to handle procedures in our new organization. Once the move to the new facility at Creekside is complete, Sheryl Kellogg from Josephine County Mental Health will join Joann Gillyatt, Human Resources (HR) Director, in the HR department.

The new benefit plan is in place. Our health insurance plan enrollment includes 118 employees and 70 family members. Enough people signed up for voluntary dental and additional life insurance that we are able to offer those programs as well. Benefit or "Benny" cards have been received by Options employees. "Benny" cards are used to access funds from the Flexible Spending Account to help cover costs associated with medical, dental and childcare. Employees can sign up to participate in the Options 403(b) retirement plan at any time.

We have also created a "job opportunities" page on our website (www.optionsonline.org) which has the most recent job postings at Options in addition to our employment application.

For more information about job opportunities or benefits issues call Options Human Resources at 476-2373, extension 1110.



Options Community Garden- Exciting Events Planned!

The *Options Community Garden* is in full bloom! If you haven't taken a walk through it yet, you need to take a break and bask in the garden's glory and inhale nature's fragrance...we promise it will do you good!

Thanks to everyone for all their work thus far...but it's not over yet! The garden needs to be spruced up prior to our September 1st fundraiser at First Friday Art Night. This is a great opportunity to show off what we've done.



Sunflower in the Options Community Garden

You can also visit the *Options Community Garden* online at www.optionsonline.org/Community Garden.htm

Below is a schedule of events planned for the remainder of the summer. For information relating to these events, please contact Crystal McMahon at 476-2373.

September 1st 5-9 PM

Dinner Fundraiser and First Friday Art Night!

Please join us for a wonderful evening show of various artists. We will also have a dinner fundraiser featuring chicken and vegetarian pastas, salad and bread. *Suggested donation is \$10.*

We are planning on having live music for this event. Volunteers are still needed during the event to wait tables and clean up. We are also still seeking artwork submissions.

October 13th, 2-5 PM

Harvest Party and Potluck!

Come down to the garden for a celebration of the bounty of the harvest season. Enjoy a potluck with neighbors and friends and begin cleanup of the garden plots.

Profile: The Union Drop-In Center

The Union Drop-In Center, located on the corner of 5th and 'A' Streets in Grants Pass, services adults with mental health issues. The Union's purpose is to enrich and improve the quality of our community's mental health and to offer support for those who are affected by mental illness. Approximately 50-70 consumers attend this safe and comfortable haven created and managed by, and for, people with mental illness. The Union gives consumers a place for education, socialization, mutual peer support, and respect.

The Union is available to consumers on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Fridays from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Some of the activities that the drop-in center provides are: support groups, educational classes, social events, community outreach, short excursions, picnics and barbecues, arts and crafts, and much more. They welcome adult family members and others interested in mental health issues. Transportation within certain mileage limits is available for consumers on these days.

The Union is looking for financial support to keep its doors open. They are a nonprofit organization that relies on donations from individuals like you for the operation and upkeep of their building. If you would like more information, please contact 541-474-3319. Or you can mail your tax deductible contribution to The Union, 412 S.E. 7th Street #114, Grants Pass, OR 97526.



Options Welcomes New Medical Director



Aloha to our new Medical Director, Dr. Hal Sexton!

Dr. Sexton graduated with a BS in Chemistry from Oregon State University and an MD cum Laude from the University of Oregon Medical School. He became a psychiatrist after discovering the importance of "the need to talk." Since becoming a psychiatrist, he has spent six years in Alaska in a full time practice. The remaining 24 years he worked in public psychiatric practice in Norway. Most recently he was the Chief Psychiatrist at the District Psychiatric Center in East Finnmark, Norway, as well as a Research Advisor at the Northern Norwegian Psychiatric Research Center at the University Hospital of Northern Norway. He will

be leaving a part-time practice in Hawaii and is still a professor of psychiatry at Tromsø University in Norway. Dr. Sexton starts with Options on October 1st.

Dr. Sexton's clinical experience has included providing direct psychiatric services in both inpatient and outpatient settings. Most of his research work has involved the supervision of other psychiatrists or psychologists that were starting their research careers. He has co-authored 40 publications in peer-reviewed journals, has 3 studies in press and several other articles that are currently submitted or in the late stages of preparation.

Dr. Sexton and his wife Anne love the outdoors, woodworking, photography, and building for fun. They have four grown children (a doctor, psychiatrist, interior decorator and statistician) and eight grandchildren all living in Norway. Dr. Sexton is looking forward to being a part of the Options team and getting acquainted with the clients.

Options Receives Funding

Options is pleased to announce the receipt of an OMHAS grant in the amount of \$4,999 toward the replacement of the Carnahan facility roof.

Options is also pleased to announce the receipt of a Four Way Foundation grant in the amount of \$3,000 for the downstairs renovation of the Freedom House .

The Gordon Elwood Foundation granted \$3,000 to Options for the Employment Works Program.

Options also received a multi-year grant in the amount of \$120,000 from the Murdock Charitable Trust to create a Development Department to support Options growing programs and services.

Nurse Practitioner Hired

Pam Rivera joins Options on August 7th as a psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioner. She brings with her 25 years of experience as a psychiatric nurse.

Pam returned to college and graduated with her BSN in nursing, as well as her Masters, from Oregon Health and Sciences University in 2006. Her goal as a nurse practitioner is to provide primary mental health care using a comprehensive and holistic approach. She will be working with adults and children at the new Creekside Center as well as providing clinical and administrative support to the Crisis Resolution Center. Pam is looking forward to her new position and says, "I am an easy person to talk to and I am a good listener."

Pam is a single mother with three children and two grandchildren. She loves the beach, reading, and spending time with her grandchildren.

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Festival of Trees Planning Underway for 2006

The kickoff for the 2006 Festival of Trees was held on June 20th in the Options multi-purpose room which was transformed into a winter wonderland. Attendees were treated to a delicious luncheon provided by Star Catering. The response was positive regarding the new changes for this year's event.

This year Options will be joined by SOASTC and Family Friends in presenting the Festival. Three Rivers Community Hospital is sponsoring the three agencies in an effort to directly support mental health services for children and adults in our community.

The 2006 Festival trees will be on display in a variety of businesses throughout Grants Pass between November 10th and December 8th. A "passport" and map will be available for individuals to

tour the decorated trees. Completed, stamped passports can then be entered into a drawing, one for adults and one for children. Adults will be entered for a "Passport to Oregon" package and children will be entered into a drawing for a huge teddy bear. The trees will be moved December 8th to the gala event at The Lodge at Riverside, where they will be auctioned off. The cocktail hour and grand buffet begin at 5:30 p.m. Ticket holders will be able to view the trees and bid on silent auction items until 7:30 p.m., at which time the auction will commence.

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, volunteer, or purchasing tickets for the gala event, please contact the event coordinator, Sue Price, at 541-890-5472 or email her at somarkco@aol.com.

You can also contact Ellen Johnson at 541-476-2373 or email her at ejohnson@optionsonline.org. To look at photos of the 2005 Festival of Trees, please view our website at www.optionsonline.org.



"Give Peace a Chance" tree at the 2005 Festival of Trees

Options begins work in Mental Health Treatment Study

In September 2005, the Social Security Administration awarded Westat the contract to implement the **Mental Health Treatment Study (MHTS)** in 22 demonstration sites across the U.S, including Options. The MHTS will examine the value of delivering supported employment and appropriate behavioral health services to Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries with a primary impairment of schizophrenia or affective disorder.

The proportion of SSDI beneficiaries qualifying for benefits due to

a mental impairment has grown rapidly in recent years. While effective treatments for most mental disorders are available, many SSDI beneficiaries with mental impairments do not have access to them. The MHTS will provide MHTS treatment group beneficiaries with access to supported employment and behavioral health services, as well as supplemental mental health insurance coverage. Westat has partnered with Dartmouth College of Medicine, the University of Maryland Baltimore County, ValueOptions/Colorado

Health Networks, the University of Texas at San Antonio, and Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis to implement the MHTS. Participant enrollment in the study began this summer.

Options is implementing this study in Josephine County. Options was selected based on our innovative supported employment and case management models. The study will fund a nurse care coordinator and research assistant for each site.

(continued on following page...)

MERIT Program Offers Hope to Meth Users in Josephine County

MERIT (Methamphetamine Early Response Intervention Team), an interagency partnership including Options, OnTrack, Choices, and Adapt, provides free drug treatment for people who have a diagnosis of methamphetamine dependence. In addition to drug treatment, consumers receive strengths-based case management that gives them access to community resources and support that is critical to long-term recovery.

Jane, one of MERIT's success stories, began using drugs at the age of 10. By 13, meth was her drug of choice, although as Jane states, "I would take just about anything that altered my mind." Over the next few years, Jane dropped out of high school and was kicked out of her parent's home. Her addiction led to numerous arrests and convictions for the sale and possession of drugs.

Jane eventually got married, had a son and was able to abstain from using drugs during her pregnancy and for the first year of her son's life. When her husband lost his job, their life began a downward spiral. She began using meth again with her husband. She felt that she was able to fool everyone and work a 9 to 5 job. "I thought of myself as a functional junkie," she says. Her meth use led to more arrests and convictions. Her life was out of control. Her probation officer offered her a choice: treatment or prison. "Kicking and screaming," Jane chose treatment.

Once Jane began working toward recovery, a metamorphosis began. She could identify the triggers and cravings that led to her drug use and develop coping skills to help her maintain sobriety. Jane says, "I began to feel like a new person. I quit lying to myself and others. I worked very hard and made recovery my first prior-

ity. Everything about my life had to change."

Jane has now been drug free for over 7 months. Through the MERIT program she completed MATRIX, an evidence based treatment model which has been shown to be highly effective in working with addiction. MATRIX entails three group sessions per week, individual sessions, family involvement, and encourages participation in the local recovery community.

Jane, now 27, now has a part-time job in the community and plans to begin college in the fall. Her goal is to be a Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor. She currently speaks on recovery panels in the community and helps others in their recovery from substance abuse. Jane is a testimony that people can succeed when they have hope, work hard, and have resources and community support.

Mental Health Treatment Study (continued...)

The MHTS will address the following research questions:

- ◆ Does providing supported employment, appropriate behavioral health services, and supplemental health care coverage improve the employment status, health, and functioning of SSDI beneficiaries with primary mental impairments?

- ◆ Do certain types of beneficiaries with mental impairments benefit more than others from the MHTS intervention?

- ◆ What is the cost of services required to successfully return beneficiaries to competitive employment?

- ◆ What are the reasons beneficiar-

ies decline to participate in the MHTS?

No new participants are being accepted because the Social Security Administration is randomly assigning individuals. If you have any questions about the MHTS, please contact Judy Klein, Crystal McMahon, or Jeff Krolick at Options for Southern Oregon 541-476-2373.



OUR MISSION: OPTIONS FOR SOUTHERN OREGON offers consultation, training and innovative programs to serve low income individuals and people with psychiatric disabilities to inspire hope while supporting their participation as respected members of the community.

Options for Southern Oregon, 1215 SW G Street, Grants Pass, OR 97526

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