

Staff Briefing #76

June 24, 2005

First Co-Occurring Conditions Graduation Marks Important Advance in Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol Service Integration

Background

As most of you know, individuals with "co-occurring conditions" – a mental health condition and drug or alcohol involvement – comprise an estimated 60-70% of our open cases. To ensure effective care for these individuals, one of our Department's goals is the integration of mental health and drug and alcohol services.

To that end, ADMHS executives from Mental Health and Alcohol & Drug Program, staff of community-based organizations, an expert consultant, **Mary Ann Barr, Ph.D.**, and faculty from **Allan Hancock** and **Santa Barbara City Colleges** worked together for nearly two years to develop the curriculum and structure for the **Co-Occurring Conditions Certification Program**. As a result, the innovative two-semester training provides clinicians specialized tools and skills to meet the needs of dually diagnosed clients.

First Graduation Celebration

On June 7, ADMHS celebrated the graduation of the first class to receive the **ADMHS Certificate in Co-Occurring Conditions**. Addressing the inspiring group of 21 graduates were **Heidi Garcia**, MFT, Assistant Director-Programs, **Suzanne Grimesey-Kirk**, MFT, Children's Division Manager and Chair of the Co-Occurring Conditions Oversight Committee; **Stan Speck**, MFT, Alcohol & Drug Program Coordinator; **Sylvia Barnard**, Executive Director, **Good Samaritan Homeless Shelter, Inc.**; **Cynthia McCoy** OTR, Regional Director of Operations, **Telecare Corporation**; and **John Lovern**, Ph.D., Allan Hancock College Program Coordinator and Instructor for the Co-Occurring Conditions Program. Most of the graduates, primarily staff of **ADMHS** and **community-based organizations**, hold down demanding full-time jobs, yet showed great commitment to complete the rigorous two-semester program. As **Ken Nichols**, MFT, told the *Santa Maria Times*, "It was a higher quality class than my master's program."

Students in the Class of 2005 are **Mary AlKhaja** (Community Action Commission), **Erin Baglio** (Allan Hancock College), **Mark Braithwaite** (Allan Hancock College), **Nilda Delia** (Telecare), **Art Dossey** (ADMHS), **Sharon Elam** (Allan Hancock College), **Linda Gerarden** (Santa Maria Valley Youth & Family Center), **Juan Carlos Gutierrez** (ADMHS), **Carrie Hankston** (Community Action Commission), **William Hargadon** (Good Samaritan), **Jackie Jackson** (Good Samaritan), **Kay Jeffers** (ADMHS), **Marianne Marinello**, (Allan Hancock College), **Ray Mayer** (ADMHS), **Annette Minnoch** (ADMHS), **Donna Mooneyham** (Good Samaritan), **Ken Nichols** (ADMHS), **David Rogers** (Community Action Commission), **Betty Treur** (Good Samaritan), **John Treur** (Good Samaritan), and **Carollyne Wingrave** (Allan Hancock College).

Next Steps

Both **Santa Barbara City College** and **Allan Hancock College** will offer the first semester in Co-Occurring Conditions in the fall. ADMHS staff interested in enrolling in the two-semester program may call or e-mail Eric Baizer, 884-1637; ebaizer@co.santa-barbara.ca.us for an **application form**. Please submit the completed form to your **Program Manager** for review.

If you have already taken the first semester at Santa Barbara City College, you may complete the certification program by taking the second course, also to be offered in the fall.

Conclusion

The vision of ADMHS is "a world in which **people affected by alcohol, drug, and mental health problems are valued by their communities and empowered to strive for their dreams.**" ADMHS and community partner staff trained in state-of-the-art approaches to the treatment of co-occurring conditions will help achieve this vision.

-- James L. Broderick, Director