

the Recovery Route

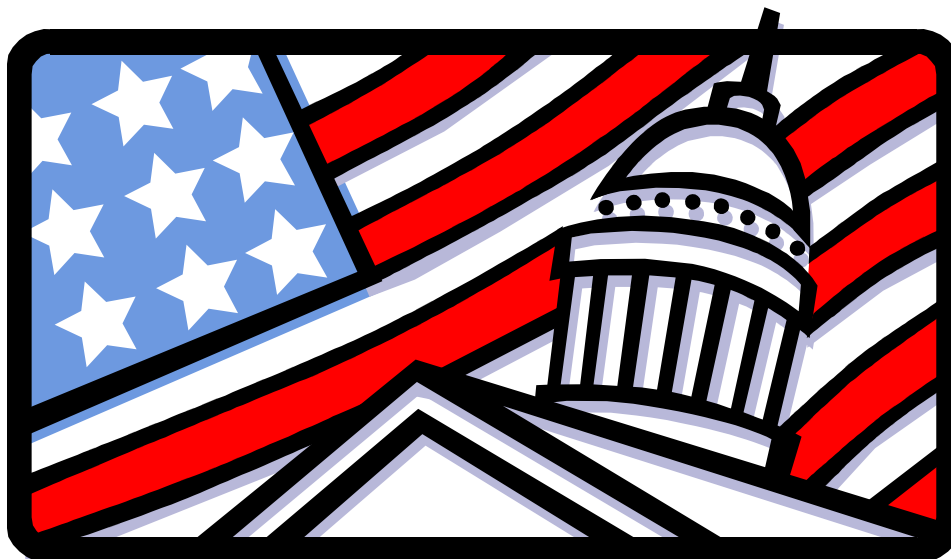
PUBLISHED BY THE DEPRESSION AND BIPOLAR
SUPPORT ALLIANCE OF OKLAHOMA

MISSION

**TO IMPROVE
THE LIVES
OF PEOPLE
LIVING WITH
MOOD
DISORDERS**

MENTAL HEALTH DAY AT THE CAPITOL

Mental Health Day at the Capitol is a chance for consumers, providers and loved ones to let their lawmakers know how much mental health services mean to them. Some of our leaders have no idea how many people in the State of Oklahoma are affected by mental health issues; this is our chance to educate them. Let's pack the second floor rotunda; have person after person knock on legislators' doors and say, "I'm a voter and this is important to me!"; make sure they can't ignore you. Your voice can help make mental health services a priority funding program in Oklahoma.



WHEN & WHERE?

Thursday March 13, 2008 2nd Fl Rotunda Oklahoma State Capitol

- 9:00-9:45am Visit booths (1st Floor). Visit your Senator(s). Find seats for presentations.
- 10:00-11:15 Presentations by speakers including OMHCC staff, state leaders and consumers.
- 11:30—12:15 **FREE LUNCH!** Don't forget to call and/or email to make your reservations so that we can have enough food for all participants.
- 12:30—?? Visit Lawmakers- don't forget to set up your appointments now!

Contact OMHCC with your name, name of your group and the number in your group. We need an accurate count to make sure we have enough space, volunteers

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and lunches for everyone. Contact Angela by email at aperatta@okmhcc.org or phone at 405-604-6975 or 1-888-424-1305.

PLAN YOUR TRIP!

Many CMHC's plan group transportation. Check with your RSS or Case Manager to see if you can catch a ride. If you live in the OKC area, check the bus routes.

MAKE APPOINTMENTS WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS NOW

Your Senators are more likely to be open to see you in the morning and your Representatives more likely to be available in the afternoon– but the time to set up your appointment is NOW. Go to the internet and type in www.okhouse.gov. Click on House Membership. On the drop down, click Find Your Representative. Type in your address in the pop-up window. You will get a list of legislators. Scroll down and find your Senator and Representative, then call and make your appointment!

WRITE OUT WHAT YOU WANT LAWMAKERS TO KNOW

This is your chance to tell your legislators what is important to you. So plan ahead! One of the most powerful things you can do is tell them what services have been valuable to you or a loved one. If you are in recovery, let them know– it helps if they can put a face to the issue. Remember– your lawmakers work for you, and they need to know what you feel is important!

PACK YOUR TOTE!

Things to put together now: Your legislators' information, your medications or id you may need and your list to talk to the legislators about!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



There are several conferences coming up and if you would like to get involved, this is a good starting point! Most booth times are one day, usually from 10 am– 3 pm, but any time you can contribute is greatly appreciated. Call Rave Meyer at the State office to volunteer!

MARCH 6 disABILITY Resource Fair @ Shepherd Mall 10 am—3pm

MARCH 12—14 OK Public Health Conference, Tulsa Southern Hills Marriot

MARCH 26—28 OK Task Force on Minority Aging, Meridian Conf. Center, OKC

MARCH 29 Strong & Healthy OK Event @ Bricktown Coca-Cola Event Center

FACILITATOR NEWS

The Facilitator Summit's have been going well. We encourage **all trained facilitators** to participate and join in the discussion. It's like a support group for the trainers. Get things off your chest, talk about what works, what doesn't, and what you need for your particular group.

The Summit's are held on the third Wednesday of each month, usually at 4:30pm, at the State Office.

FROM SANDY'S CHAIR



Register and VOTE.

That is my message to everyone reading this newsletter.

The Mental Health Day at the Capitol is so important this year. One of the items in the budget request from the Okla. Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is for more money for more Recovery Support Specialists in the mental health and the substance abuse field. This is such a good program that I don't even have to talk about it, if you know one you know what I mean. I can think of 4 off the top of my head: Chana from Red Rock, who is also the President of the State DBSA Board of directors, Becky from COCMHC in Norman, Ginger from Red Rock in Clinton, Franny and Marti at HOPE, Morgan from the Crisis Center in Okla. County, I could go on and on and in fact I am. There is a page elsewhere in the newsletter that tells the purpose and what to do, this isn't just a demonstration of the numbers of people with mental illness in our state, it is a chance to look your state legislators in the eye and say "I have an opinion and I vote".

About one year ago, the Transformation Center set up a meeting with a group of consumers from around Oklahoma. Our task was to develop a list of Standards for Consumer Involvement. This means that when anything that involves a mental health consumer takes place, consumers will be involved. Sounds simple doesn't it? Not so fast, Kemo Sabe. Then we learned that this had never been done. Ever. At least 4 universities had tried and failed. So, if you would put your tongue between your lips and blow until a rude sound comes out, you will hear the opinion of the group as a whole to that news. We started out to do the task, and 1 year later we have the Standards going out all across the state for evaluation. If you attended the Consumer Conference, you may have attended that part where the first Standards were handed out and your opinion was asked. Those opinions were read and tallied up and the next two months in our meetings the Standards were revised. Now they are being sent out all over the state to town meetings and to PSR groups, asking again for some feedback. If you want to participate, you may download the Standards and the response sheet at okinnovationcenter.org.

The final decision on the Standards will lie with the Governor's Transformation Advisory Board (GTAB). This will probably be done by fall or early winter. Decisions still have to be made about "sanctions", what to do if organizations aren't compliant. The GTAB is composed of heads of state departments, as in the Health Department, Department of Human Services, etc. There is a member who represents consumers, Carolyn Archer. A complete list of members, minutes, materials, etc. is available on the innovation center website.

One of my current favorite websites is at bipolar.guide@about.com. It is run by two women who each have bipolar disorder and they discuss everything. It is monitored so people can't get on and be rude. Topics covered are hygiene, anger, sex, family, etc.

NEW GROUPS

There is an open group that meets at 10:30 on Tuesdays at the state office. Call Sandy for information at 286-9370.

A group started on Tues. March 4, from 6-7. This group is for North Care consumers only.

A other new group is started Tues. March 4 at 4 pm at the Oklahoma County Crisis Center for residents of the Crisis Center.

Groups in Bethany, Edmond and Shawnee are in the planning stages. If you have information that might be helpful in these areas, especially meeting places, please call the office.

OKLAHOMA
DEPRESSION &
BIPOLAR SUPPORT
ALLIANCE

4501 N. Classen Blvd
Suite 108
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

Phone: 405-286-9370
Fax: 405-286-9372
E-mail: OKDBSA@COXINET.NET
WWW.OKDBSA.ORG

**WE'VE BEEN THERE,
WE CAN HELP.**

Beginning with this edition of the newsletter, each group will receive five (5) copies of the newsletter unless requests are made for more. All editions of the Recovery Route are available online in pdf form at www.okdbsa.org for viewing/printing at your leisure.