

# Staying in Touch

## Message from the Director

February 2009

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Dear DMH Employee,

The Council Committee on Health recently held its performance oversight hearing on the Department's performance last fiscal year. The annual hearing is held in preparation for the Council's consideration and vote on the Mayor's budget submission for the upcoming fiscal year. The hearing was a great opportunity to highlight some

of our accomplishments. I am very proud of the work we are doing to reach more people in need of mental health services and to expand the range of available services—from crisis services to more affordable housing. On page 4, you can read about these initiatives.

At the same time, we are continuing with our transition of consumers from the DC CSA to community based private providers. Our focus continues to be ensuring that DC CSA consumers are aware of their right to choose a new provider, become familiar with the available providers, and participate in the selection process.

A consumer/provider choice fair will be held each Tuesday in March with the first one on March 3, at the Spring Road location. The first provider open house is on March 11 and others are scheduled through April. The schedule will be posted on our website, [www.dmh.dc.gov](http://www.dmh.dc.gov), the DC CSA Consumer Transition Information page.

I cannot say enough about the importance of DC CSA employees during this transition period. We are making every effort to identify other job opportunities and create flexible supports for displaced employees.

I welcome your comments or any suggestions about ways to make this process smoother at [steve.baron@dc.gov](mailto:steve.baron@dc.gov).

*Steve*

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**Mental Health Authority  
Quarterly Staff Meeting  
March 6, 1 p.m.-2 p.m.  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor Training Room**

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## CPEP Gets a Make Over and Adds Eight New Stabilization Beds



*CPEP entrance before renovation*

In the August enewsletter, **Cynthia Holloway**, CPEP Director, described the improvements taking place for patients and employees. And it happened just as she planned.

The renovation is over—and CPEP is bigger and better with a new triage room closer to the entry, a brighter, bigger urgent care waiting area with space for the personal belongings of consumers, and additional space to observe new admissions.



*CPEP entrance after renovation*

Employee workspace is bright and airy with more privacy and better use of space. A modern medical records room has replaced the previous cramped space.

Eight new 72-hour extended observation beds were added allowing for more intensive on site psychiatric stabilization and, hopefully, avoid admissions for inpatient care. A new wing houses the mobile crisis services. Congratulations to **Cynthia, Richard Warsh**, Facility Planning Director, and the entire CPEP team.

## Human Resources News

**February 27 Deadline for Retirement Incentive Award.** The deadline for submitting an application for the retirement incentive award program is 5:00 p.m., Friday, February 27. Decisions will be made on a case by case based on the needs of the Department and the availability of funding.

Employees accepted for the incentive program must separate from the government by March 31.

In addition, the voluntary program without incentives has been extended to December 31, 2009. If you want an application or have any questions, contact your HR representative.

**Emerging Leaders Program accepting applications** for its Certified Public Manager program. Administered by the DCHR in partnership with George Washington University, this program builds the leadership and management skills of managers. The deadline for applications for the October 2009 cohort is May 1, 2009.

The Emerging Leaders Program also is accepting applications for its Capital City Fellows and Centralized College Internship Programs.

For more information, Visit the [Emerging Leaders Programs information page](#) at [www.dchr.dc.gov](http://www.dchr.dc.gov) or call (202) 727-1523.

## Employee Spotlight: Cynthia Holloway: CPEP Director

When **Cynthia Holloway** arrived at CPEP in May 2005, the building was badly in need of renovation, furniture was broken, and maintenance for the aging facility was hard to come by. Basic equipment such as blood pressure cuffs was lacking and the staff was forced to buy food for consumers. Understandably, consumer complaints were regular occurrences.

**Cynthia** was undaunted and, today, the long promised renovation is complete and she couldn't be happier. The renovated facility makes it easier to provide quality services and already has improved efficiency and morale among staff. Her goal is for CPEP to be a premier service and a model for other psychiatric emergency programs in the country.

Along with the improved physical plant has come more work. As the director of crisis and emergency services, **Cynthia** also is responsible for the new mobile crisis services housed at CPEP and eight new extended observation beds. And, during the first quarter of the fiscal year, nearly 1,000 people presented at CPEP—up slightly from last year.

But, she loves it. She sees her job as a “calling”, and enjoys putting together programs and administering them.

**Cynthia** came to DMH from Saint Vincents Catholic Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York where she was in charge of a day treatment program for people diagnosed with both mental illness and substance abuse disorders. Before that, she was a social worker supervisor at Harlem Hospital where she was responsible for a very



**Cynthia Holloway**

similar comprehensive psychiatric emergency program, including a mobile crisis service. Prior to that she worked with the Westchester Urban League developing community-based programs.

She has a Master in Social Work from Fordham University with a focus on community organization and administration.

Cynthia's “better half” as she calls him is a retired Postal Police Officer and they are the proud parents of an adult daughter with two very active grandsons. Although a native New Yorker, she has fallen in love with the metro area with its cultural diversity and wonderful museums.

### DC CSA Consumer Provider/Choice Fairs in March

March 3, 10 a.m.-12 noon	Spring Rd (3700 10 <sup>th</sup> Street NW)
March 10, 10 a.m.-12 noon	35 K Street NE
March 10, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	821 Howard Rd SE (child/youth providers only)
March 17, 10 a.m. to 12 noon	Saint Elizabeths Hospital, Chapel
March 24, 10 a.m. to 12 noon	3849 Alabama Ave SE
March 31, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	1250 U Street NW (child/youth providers only)

*For more information, contact the Office of Consumer and Family Affairs on 202. 673.4733*

## Director's Testimony at Committee on Health Oversight Hearing

*Excerpt about program initiatives from the testimony. Mr. Baron also talked about operational improvements, stepped up monitoring by the Office of Accountability, our progress exiting Dixon and our DC CSA implementation plan. You can read the entire testimony on the W and S Drives under "Director Baron's Testimony at FY 08 Performance Oversight Hearing".*

...Last February, I identified the lack of mobile emergency services as a major weakness of our system of care. This has changed. We now have mobile crisis services for adults and children and an expanded Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP)—the Department's emergency psychiatric services. The adult mobile crisis teams responds to individuals, anywhere in the District, experiencing a psychiatric crisis. The service provides psychiatric stabilization with the goal of resolving the situation in the most appropriate setting while diverting people from unnecessary hospitalizations, incarcerations or periods of homelessness. Since October, the teams have had 880 contacts, with more than half during January. They have developed valuable relationships and been responsive on many occasions to MPD, Fire and Emergency Medical Services and the Mayor's office. This is a growing, valuable and much needed service now available to District residents.

The new emergency mobile crisis service for children and youth called ChAMPS is run by Catholic Charities. During the first half of February referrals and response calls have doubled from the previous three months to almost 4-5 calls /day. We are seeing an increasing number of calls from CFSA foster families and workers just what the service was intended to do. Both the adult and child crisis service can be reached by calling our 24 hour Access Helpline at 1-888-793-4357...

The adult mobile crisis services teams are part of CPEP and housed in the newly renovated emergency care facility located on the grounds of the old DC General Hospital... the renovation has made a huge difference in our ability to provide good, quality services

### Urgent Care Clinic

Working with the judges and the Office of the Attorney General, we identified a need to better

reach people who have contact with the judicial system who may need our services. As a result, an Urgent Care Clinic opened last June on the first floor of DC Superior Court. This is unique... The Clinic treats people on a walk in basis who are referred by the judges—primarily from misdemeanor and traffic court which has a high percentage of homeless individuals—who need psychiatric services.

Since its opening in June, 244 people have been seen at the Urgent Care Clinic—30% or 73 of whom are homeless. The Clinic provides a full range of mental health services.

### Consumer Wellness Center

As you know the new the new Ida Mae Campbell Wellness & Resource Center opened last summer and the word is spreading. So far more than 800 individuals have used the Wellness Center, participating in a range of employment, social and recreation programs. This is a great example of peer support and is filling a much desired and needed option for individuals with a mental illness.

### Providing Affordable Housing

With Mayor Fenty's leadership, the District is at the forefront of providing affordable housing for individuals with mental illness. As a result of our partnership with the Department of Housing and Community Development, we transferred \$14 million dollars to support the development of 300 new affordable housing units. We are pleased that the first ten new housing units will be ready for occupancy at the end of next month and another 210 units will come on line during the spring and summer...In addition, we provide housing subsidies to close to 750 individuals, supported independent living opportunities to another 461 individuals as well as on site 24 hour group home living to 220 individuals...

*eNewsletter produced by Phyllis Jones, PIO  
Paul Davis, Photographer*