
Addictions and Mental Health Division Transformation Initiative Adult Mental Health Initiative (AMHI) - Fact Sheet #1

The Addictions and Mental Health (AMH) division together with consumers, Oregon's Mental Health Organizations (MHO), Community Mental Health Programs, providers and others have embarked on an ambitious initiative that will change the way adult mental health services are delivered in Oregon. The Adult Mental Health Initiative known as AMHI ("Aim-High") is designed to ensure that the right types of services are delivered at the right time to adults with mental illness.

Background

Currently, too many Oregonians living with mental illness spend long lengths of time in the state hospitals and licensed care setting. Many have trouble accessing services that could help them become even more independent. AMH believes this is caused, in part, by:

- Community-based long-term care services are administered separately from the majority of other services and supports;
- Limited incentives to assist individuals in moving to the least restrictive setting possible; and
- A belief that licensed care settings are a person's home.

Goal

- Develop a system that consistently assists adults with mental illness to live and receive services in the least restrictive environment appropriate for their needs.

Process

AMH intends to resolve these issues by:

- Transferring responsibility for managing residential services to the MHOs, that are already administering many community based services funded by Medicaid, thereby creating a full continuum.
- Increasing the availability of individualized community-based services and supports, including assistance in obtaining safe and affordable housing;

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- Holding MHOs accountable for moving individuals to the most appropriate setting with adequate supports and services including:
 - A standardized assessment for all adults;
 - Additional financial and encounter reporting; and
 - Firm caseload targets for moving individuals out of the state hospitals and licensed facilities to appropriate community living situations.

Planning Efforts

AMH intends that AMHI will be operational in 2010. To accomplish this goal, AMH has:

- Dedicated an AMH work team, with members across multiple units, to work on the details that will be necessary to make this system change a reality.
- Created a planning committee with representatives from all sectors of the system to help identify and resolve many of the issues that we know will occur.
- Committed to meeting regularly with the MHOs to develop the specific details and requirements.

Current State

- AMH asked the MHOs to volunteer to become “early-adopters” and to help AMH design this new system.
 - All nine of the MHOs have volunteered.
- Currently, AMH is planning for three distinct phases over two and a half biennia.
 - Phase I will be operational by September 1, 2010 with new contracts with, and new responsibilities for, the MHOs.
 - Future phases will be based on federal approval and the system’s readiness to transfer additional responsibility.

The initiative is sponsored by Richard Harris, Assistant Director for Addictions and Mental Health (AMH). Implementation will be led by Jane-ellen Weidanz and Ralph Summers. For more information please contact:

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