

Department of Mental Health
Ch. 171 - Annual Individual and Family Support Plan – FY 12

OVERVIEW OF FAMILY SUPPORT

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) defines family support through program and practice expectations. Family support includes all activities that assist families to support the growth, recovery and rehabilitation of their affected family member. In providing family support, DMH uses a very broad definition of family, which may include adults and children, parents and guardians, other relatives, and non-related individuals whom the client defines as family and who play a significant role in the client's life. In addition, DMH includes in this report support that is provided to the person themselves in order to facilitate his or her recovery process as these activities are central to the mission and values of the Department.

Types of individual and family support services available:

- Age and role-appropriate education that enables family members and individuals to better understand mental health issues and the treatment being offered to their family member with mental illness or serious emotional disturbance and to themselves
- Direct assistance in caring for a family member with mental health needs
- Training in managing challenges that a family member presents
- Linkage with other resources that can reduce the care-giving burden, recognizing that children and adolescents, as well as adults, may be serving in a care-giving capacity for their family member with mental health problems
- Linkage with other resources that promote recovery, resiliency and wellness
- Linkage with other families either coping or struggling with the same concerns
- Provision of parent support providers and family partners to adults caring for children with serious emotional disturbance and of peer support to adults and parents with mental health conditions
- Training and assistance in advocating on behalf of family members or for themselves and in building leadership skills
- Assistance in navigating the human services and special education system, dealing with eligibility requirements, and accessing entitlements and insurance for family members and for themselves
- Supports that sustain and strengthen families, such as respite care or groups for siblings
- Supports that promote recovery, resiliency and empowerment, including peer-run services
- Supports that focus on the strengths of the person and the family and assist them in achieving life and family goals
- Support groups for families, other caregivers, and individuals

Network for providing family and individual support services

Family and individual support is interwoven into numerous activities and services within DMH. These activities include DMH case management services and contract services, such as

Individual and Family Flexible Support Services, Area-based family support specialists, Recovery Learning Communities, Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT), Clubhouses, and Community Based Flexible Supports (CBFS). Opportunities for family and consumer input are extensive and routinely available.

PROCESS FOR OBTAINING “SUBSTANTIAL CONSULTATION” FROM FAMILIES REGARDING FLEXIBLE SUPPORT NEEDS

- DMH Area and Site boards regularly participate in needs assessments and program planning. (Ongoing)
- The Mental Health Planning Council, a federally mandated body including consumers and family members of adults, adolescents and children, meets throughout the year. There are several subcommittees of the Planning Council with significant family member and consumer involvement. These include the Professional Advisory Committee on Child/Adolescent Mental Health, Youth Development Committee, Multicultural Advisory Committee, TransCom (The Transformation Committee), Restraint/Seclusion Elimination Committee, and the Parent Support Committee. (Ongoing)
- PPAL, the Parent Professional Advocacy League, conducts monthly training and information sessions with DMH Family Support Specialists and Mass Health funded Family Partners. A senior DMH staff person attends these meetings and uses them to keep up with issues, problems, and accomplishments as well as to present information to the group for feedback.
- The Massachusetts Chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI-Mass) and the Parent Professional Advocacy League (PPAL) are in frequent communication with the Department regarding issues of concerns to family members. (Ongoing)
- The DMH CORE (Council on Recovery and Education), a consumer council was established in FY11 to: provide the consumer perspective on emerging and ongoing DMH policy and programming initiatives; enable DMH senior and other staff to have access to consumer thinking on a range of issues facing the Department; and disseminate key information from DMH statewide, regionally and locally.
- For children and adolescents, DMH service system planning is intertwined with planning and implementation of the Children’s Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI), the first phase of which is the remedy for the Rosie D lawsuit. The population directly affected by the remedy (MassHealth members from birth to 21 with Serious Emotional Disturbance, or SED) includes many families who are also part of the DMH service population. Therefore, DMH continues to assess how it purchases and delivers services so that its services align with the Commonwealth’s overarching goal of a service system for families of children with serious emotional disturbance that addresses child and family needs regardless of the family’s insurance status or particular agency involvement. The input from families of youth up to age 21 and from young adults is critical in guiding thinking about the DMH child-adolescent system and is solicited through targeted meetings of parents and young adults, as well as the active participation and engagement of parents who sit as members of CBHI executive and advisory committees and other DMH policy committees.
- Multiple meetings have been held across the state with parents of children with SED as part of the planning process for implementation of new child and adolescent residential and family partner services which DMH is jointly procuring with DCF. The purpose of

these meetings is to gain better understanding of the services families are seeking and how they might best be delivered.

- DMH has enhanced its websites and public information materials to make information about DMH services more available. Nearly one-fourth of all calls fielded by the office come from family members of consumers.
- Through administrative processes, staff assignment, and procurement, DMH will continue to address key concerns raised to date by families, to the extent that resources allow. Specific recommendations to enhance family and individual support include:
 - Make information about DMH and its services easier for families and consumers to obtain.
 - Improve access to services that enable a child to receive appropriate services in a timely manner, thereby significantly decreasing the burden on families.
 - Continue to focus assessment and services on a strengths-based, youth and family driven approach.
 - Redesign services to strengthen consumer and family voice and choice and increase flexibility of service system to meet the individual and changing needs of the person and their family.
 - Work with providers so that they can do a better job informing families about their family member's diagnosis.
 - Provide peer and parent support for consumers and their family members and build it in at various levels of the service delivery system.
 - Increase availability of respite care, including mobile respite and peer-run respite.
 - Include families and consumers on human rights committees.
 - Recognize that adults who are parenting while trying to cope with their own mental illness need specialized services and supports, for themselves and for their children.
 - Make sure that "crisis plans" for adults who are parents address what will happen to their children.
 - Keep the focus on "recovery" for adults – provide them with the opportunity to become effective, capable independent adults (and parents).
- DMH conducts an annual satisfaction and outcome survey of adults receiving services and of family members of youth receiving services. The family member survey assesses the following domains: general satisfaction, access, quality and appropriateness, functioning, treatment outcomes, social connectedness, participation in treatment planning and family-centeredness. The adult consumer survey assesses general satisfaction, access, quality and appropriateness, functioning, treatment outcomes, social connectedness, participation in treatment planning, person-centeredness, self-determination, health and wellness, and hope. Both surveys also request written comments about helpful aspects of treatment and areas for improvement.

FOCUS AREAS

The DMH family and individual support initiatives discussed below represent DMH's response to date to the input given by families and consumers through the ongoing DMH processes of constituent involvement in program development. Parents, family members, and consumers

have been involved in both the design and implementation phase of these initiatives. Specific levels of involvement are identified with each initiative.

I. Family Empowerment

Family members and consumers are represented on various councils and advisory boards that provide significant input and direction into the development of DMH policies, procedures, program development and service evaluation, including:

- Commissioner's Statewide Advisory Council
- State Mental Health Planning Council and its subcommittees, including the Professional Advisory Committee on Children's Mental Health, Youth Development Committee, TransCom, Restraint/Seclusion Elimination Committee and the Multicultural Advisory Committee. Parents and consumers also assume leadership roles on these subcommittees.
- CBHI Executive Team, chaired by the Commissioner of Mental Health and attended by senior leadership of the other child serving agencies and of EOHHS, with representation by two parents.
- The Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Council, established in 2009 in response to Chapter 321, the Children's Mental Health Law, has parent representation as Council members and on its six sub-committees.
- Young adults are represented on the following committees and workgroups: Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Council and CBHI sub-committees, DMH Healthy Changes Task Force, DMH Safety Task Force, DMH New Hospital Advisory Work group, Young Children's Council, DMH Council on Recovery and Empowerment (CORE), and MBHP Consumer Council.
- DMH continues to participate on the Statewide Advisory Group for Parents with Mental Illness and their families created through the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS). This group includes representatives from DMH, PPAL, the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS), Employment Options, the Cole Resource Center, Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee, Wayside and Rosie's Place.
- Site and Area Boards that advise on local program development, regulations, statutes and policies.
- Service procurement process through community forums, Requests for Information (RFIs) and membership on proposal review committees that make recommendations to the Department about contract awards. Recent procurement activity with family and consumer involvement include: Community Based Flexible Supports, Peer Respite and Clubhouse Services in the adult service system and Individual and Family Flexible Supports and Joint Residential Services (DCF/DMH) in the child and adolescent service system.
- Contract management meetings and other and other local committees that work on the details of refining and improving the quality of services.
- DMH makes a significant contribution to the research and intervention projects developed by the Parents' Project team at the UMMS Center for Mental Health Services Research. DMH administrators, staff, clients and family members are key stakeholders in identifying the team's agenda, implementing projects, and disseminating findings to the field, consumers and family members. A DMH staff member serves on the Steering Committee of the Family Options Project which is implementing and testing an

innovative psychosocial rehabilitation intervention for parents with serious mental illness and their children. Researchers from the UMMS and Employment Options, Inc., a psychosocial rehabilitation clubhouse agency, are partnering to study both the process of implementing a family intervention and its outcomes.

During the last several years, DMH strengthened the infrastructure and supports for consumer, youth and family involvement in policy and program development with the goal that all policy and program development is guided by consumer and family voice.

- In FY11, the DMH Commissioner issued a Directive that set forth a procedure to provide consumers and family members with stipends and travel reimbursement for participation in policy development and planning activities.
- Also in FY11, DMH established the CORE (Council on Recovery and Education), as a consumer council to provide the consumer perspective on emerging and ongoing DMH policy and programming initiatives; enable DMH senior and other staff to have access to consumer thinking on a range of issues facing the Department; and disseminate key information from DMH statewide, regionally and locally.
- The DMH Director of Policy tracks consumer, youth and family involvement in policy and program development, solicits feedback on their experience, and modifies the processes used to engage consumers and families as needed.
- In FY12, DMH promulgated an Electronic Device Use Policy. The policy establishes the standards and procedures for the possession and usage of Electronic Devices at DMH inpatient facilities. A workgroup of consumers and other interested stakeholders developed recommendations which were used as the foundation for the policy. The policy recognizes that Electronic Devices are often people's primary link to the community and for an individual hospitalized, maintaining this connection facilitates their own recovery and successful re-integration into the community.

DMH also contracts with the Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PPAL), the state chapter of the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health and statewide organization responsible for making sure that the voices of parents and family members of children with mental health needs are represented in all policy and program development forums both within DMH and in other state agency and interagency forums. PPAL efforts to promote family empowerment include:

- Training to a network of forty-three family support specialists to enhance their advocacy skills.
- Regular communication with the local support groups facilitated by family support specialists. This communication is used to solicit input on proposed changes to state and federal laws, regulations, and program designs that affect children with mental health challenges.
- Feedback from PPAL to DMH staff about problems that parents are experiencing in regard to service access and quality based on information from support groups, surveys that it conducts, and calls to the office. PPAL members have also been frank about the fact that, beyond the child identified as the client, family members often have their own needs, and PPAL has advocated for service provision that is built on an understanding of the needs and strengths of both the child and the family.

- Development of a model for the training and certification of family specialists in state-funded activities, including the Family Partners working in the CBHI Community Service Agencies (CSA) and the DMH Family Support and Systems Specialists working in the community and as part of the Mobile Crisis Teams

New Initiatives for FY13:

- In FY13, DMH opened the Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital (WRCH), a 320-bed, state-of-the-art psychiatric facility. In planning for the WRCH opening, the DMH Director of Policy convened a workgroup of families, consumers and other interested stakeholders to inform the development of the policies, procedures and the environment of care at this new facility. This diverse workgroup met weekly over a six month period and developed a set of recommendations on issues that promote recovery and are important to consumers and families, including the environment that greets patients and visitors, admissions process, discharge and treatment planning, visitors processes, and staff training. The recommendations were distributed to DMH senior leadership and the new facility steering committee where they are currently being utilized in developing the policies and procedures for WRCH.
- In FY13, DMH will procure Adult Clubhouse Services and Child/Adolescent Joint DMH/DCF Residential Services. Consumers and family members will be involved in the procurement process, including representation on proposal review committees.
- DMH recently contracted with PPAL to conduct a statewide survey of parents regarding the role and importance of respite care in maintaining youth at home and in the community. The results of the survey are currently being tabulated.
- The State Mental Health Planning Council subcommittees remained active this year and provided significant input into policy and program development. Examples of subcommittee activities that included substantial family member and consumer involvement include:
 - Professional Advisory Committee on Children's Mental Health (PAC): Ongoing involvement and monitoring of the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative and planning for medical homes.
 - Youth Development Committee: Participation in the STAY (Success for Transition Age Youth) Together Grant (described in the Interagency Collaboration Section), trainings for GLBTQ Youth and on youth/young adult employment, and development of youth website with EOHHS
 - Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC): Continued participation in other advisory bodies of the Department and community groups and organizations. MAC members are involved with planning and implementation of cultural and linguistic competence strategies to reduce disparities.
 - Restraint/Seclusion Elimination Committee: Renewed engagement with senior and facility leadership, including development of a revised safety tool, increased communication, expanded committee membership, and inclusion in policy development.
 - Parent Support Subcommittee: Continued engagement of agency senior leadership following a successful interagency forum in October 2011 in partnership with DMH, Department of Children and Families Mass Health Behavioral Health Unit and the Department of Transition Assistance; implementation of a survey of parenting needs;

- development of a public information campaign; and a focus on the needs of young adult parents
- TransCom: Prepared an updated document on *The Developing Peer Workforce in Massachusetts*, which provides a context and recommendations for the successful integration of mental health peer specialists into the workforce.
- Planning Council Steering Committee: Continued involvement in developing the agenda for meetings and facilitating the business of the Council.

II. Family Leadership

DMH provides and supports numerous opportunities for families and consumers to enhance and develop leadership and advocacy skills, including:

- NAMI's "Family to Family" curriculum utilizes a train-the-trainer model to help families learn essential skills relevant to caring for a family member with mental illness and become knowledgeable about available interventions and resources. Trainers run groups in their local areas and thus continue to build an informed family base. In addition, NAMI trains family members to co-facilitate support groups for families.
- Parents of DMH clients participate in trainings offered through Families Organizing for Change that focuses on advocacy strategies.
- PPAL provides monthly trainings for family support specialists that build skills in specific areas, such as effective advocacy with schools and insurers and evidence based treatments. PPAL has also provided training on family empowerment for parents of Medicaid enrollees.
- Family support funds are used to pay for expenses associated with attending conferences and trainings.
- Parents from across the state attend and often present at the annual national conference of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, the annual children's mental health research conference sponsored by the Research and Training Center of the University of South Florida, and the annual Building on Family Strengths conference sponsored by the Research and Training center of Portland State University.
- Parents co-chair the Family Advisory Committee of the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership (MBHP) and are represented on the EOHHS Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Council. Parents serve on the Department Elementary and Secondary Education's Statewide Advisory Committee for Special Education and on its newly formed Advisory Council on Behavioral Health in the Schools, a mandate of chapter 321, the children's mental health law.
- The Young Adult Policy Team, created through a partnership with the Transformation Center, is comprised of young adults who receive leadership training and coaching as they participate on the subcommittees of the Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Council. In FY12 the YA Policy Team conducted a survey of youth in DMH residential programs to inform the DCF/DMH residential procurement.
- The Transformation Center, Massachusetts' statewide consumer technical assistance center, conducts annual peer specialist trainings. There are currently over 300 people who have graduated from these trainings and received certification. The Transformation Center also offers a Massachusetts Leadership Academy, which has focused the last

several years on increasing leadership skills and opportunities among multi-cultural populations.

- The Transformation Center participates on training teams with DMH and several leading national consultants to provide training on person-centered planning and trauma-informed care.
- A DMH-convened workgroup created definitions and job descriptions of peer and family support workers to be utilized in advancing policy development, funding opportunities and implementation.

New Initiatives for FY13:

DMH is developing new opportunities to support families and consumers in developing and exercising their leadership and advocacy skills.

- In FY12, the DMH Commissioner announced the reorganization of the Office of Consumer Affairs into the Office of Recovery and Empowerment in recognition of to further support DMH in expanding its peer workforce, informing the system on the principles of consumer choice, and raising awareness among the mental health community and the general public of DMH's commitment to Community First. DMH expects to hire a new Director of the Office of Recovery and Empowerment in FY13. The staff in this newly reorganized office continues to serve as integral members of DMH's Executive Team, Senior Management, and other key committees.
- In addition, staff from the Office of Recovery and Empowerment chair the CORE and a statewide peer worker forum that provides support to peer workers and a mechanism to bring forward issues to DMH senior leadership.
- In June 2012, DMH participated in an interagency summit hosted by the Lieutenant Governor and sponsored by the Departments of Early Education and Care (DEEC) and Children and Families (DCF) with the goal of identifying opportunities for strengthening information, referral, supports and services to adoptive families in the Commonwealth. The Summit, the first Massachusetts Post Adoptive Summit, provided leaders in Massachusetts with the opportunity to hear from national and local experts about best practices, national trends, and what is currently in place within the Commonwealth. Attendees included families, youth and adult adoptees, professionals, policymakers and practitioners who participated in discussions on key topics impacting adoptive families and developed a blueprint for improving services and supports to adoptive families.
- There are new opportunities for young adult training and employment with the awarding of a five year grant to create and sustain "The Learning and Working during the Transition to Adulthood Rehabilitation Research and Training Center" at UMass Medical Center. This Center has created eight part-time employment positions for peer mentors and is focused on the successful completion of education and training to assist young people (14-30) with serious mental health conditions move into rewarding and sustaining work lives.
- DMH continues to work to advance the participation and professionalization of parents and caregivers working in the system of care for children and youth with SED through DMH's parent support network and its commitment to supporting and advancing the role of family partners and other parent/family support providers.
- The Youth Development Committee of the State Mental Health Planning Council recently held a special meeting, "Transition Age Youth & Employment: Research,

Experiences & Remembrances”, which featured presentations and experiences from young adults as well as national experts and researchers on young adults in transition.

- The DMH workgroup that developed definitions, job descriptions and a job series for peer and family support workers is currently developing recommendations for an organizational structure, staff training and further definition of the job series.

III. Family Support Resources and Funding

DMH is re-designing its community-based service system to improve the flexibility of services to meet the needs of consumers and families and to increase consumer, youth and family voice and choice. Family and individual support is embedded within a number of these services. Parents are usually the legal guardians and the ones responsible for their children’s care; therefore most child and adolescent services and activities are designed to support parents in their role. DMH-funded services for adults with mental illness also provide support to families of adult clients, if the adult client has consented to having the family aware of his/her situation and are involved. Family support is provided for both clients living at home with mental illness and those who are not. For adults, these service systems promote independence while at the same time offer support to families of adult clients, many of whom continue to be key resources for their adult children, even when those children live out of the home. DMH will continue to work on the question of how to support family members of clients who are their own guardians who choose not to involve their families in their treatment, as those family members often feel distraught and frustrated by being cut out of the process of helping a loved one.

Case Management Services – Child and Adult

- Virtually all case management for children, and some of it for adults, can be defined as family support, in that assisting an individual to access services they need provides benefits to the entire family.
- Case managers work with parents to develop a child's Individual Service Plan and check in with the family regularly. They are available to families to help resolve situations as they arise. DMH case managers can assist parents of child and adolescent clients who may have their own mental health and substance use issues to obtain appropriate services.
- For adults living at home, much of case management support is directed to assisting the family. Even if the adult is living out-of-home, case managers and providers work with the adult's family so long as the adult has given consent.
- Case managers for children, adolescents, and adults help families think through the impact of the affected person's mental health problems on their lives, identify their strengths and personal resources, as well as outside resources and supports to promote the client's recovery and growth.
- Case managers link families to assistance for themselves, as well as for the client, as part of the service planning process, and are often the people families turn to for help in case of crises and unexpected events. They work with clients and their family members to develop advance plans for managing crises and to minimize family disruption in times of unexpected events.
- Case managers authorize the provision of services which directly support the family's care giving capacity, help families get benefits for the client, and assist families in advocating with other entities for services and supports.

- As a result of the implementation of CBHI, most children on MassHealth receive Intensive Case Coordination through the CSAs. Consequently, DMH does not provide case management to these clients, although DMH does authorize other non-Medicaid reimbursable services as needed and available. One of the goals of CBHI is to integrate services across public payers and to create a seamless delivery system for the youth and family. Collaboration between DMH and MassHealth is focused on that goal.

Individual and Family Flexible Support Services (IFFSS) – Child

- Individual and Family Flexible Support Services (IFFSS) provide an individualized and targeted set of interventions and services intended to prevent out-of-home placement, sustain the youth with his/her family and community, and assist the youth to successfully function in the community. Through this Service, a youth and his/her family develop the skills, strategies and supports needed to live successfully in the community and to support the youth's ongoing development of age-appropriate social, emotional, academic and pre-vocational competencies. The IFFSS is designed to be highly flexible to meet the varying needs of youth with serious emotional disturbance and their families. Because of the wide variation in youth and family needs, and in family abilities and the capacity of the service system to meet those needs, services provided under Individual and Family Flexible Support Services encompass a range of highly individualized interventions that focus on the youth and his/her family. These include: (1) Family Systems Intervention; (2) Individual Youth Support; (3) Youth Support Group; (4) Collateral Contact/Consultation and (5) Flexible Pool Administration. Individual and Family Flexible Support Services are intended to support a coordinated approach to delivering services among the educational, therapeutic and other community services working with the youth and family. The Flex Support Service Components may be delivered individually or in combination to meet the individual needs of youth and their families.
- DMH re-procured IFFSS services in SFY12. Services were enhanced in order to improve the ways in which the network identifies, outreaches to, and supports families of children, youth, and young adults with serious emotional disturbance.

Respite – Child

- While respite care is mostly funded in IFFSS contracts, DMH also procured several respite care-specific contracts in SFY12. Respite is brief or short-term care of a child or youth with SED that is provided by adults other than the birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents or legal guardian with whom the child/youth normally resides. Respite is typically used to give the parents/LAR and child/youth time away from each other in order to decrease stress and support the family system. Respite care may be provided in the home or in settings outside the home, including overnight respite facilities.

Program of Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) – Adult

- PACT is a multidisciplinary team approach providing acute- and long-term support, community based psychiatric treatment, assertive outreach, and rehabilitation services to persons served. Services are comprehensive, highly individualized and are modified as needed, through an ongoing assessment and treatment planning process. The majority of services are provided directly by PACT team members in the natural environment of the

person, and supports for the adult and family are available on a 24 hour, 7 day a week basis.

Community Based Flexible Supports (CBFS) – Adult

- CBFS services support persons served as they increase their capacity for independent living and recover from mental illness. Services are individualized and delivered in partnership with each person served. The mix and intensity of CBFS services provided are flexible so as to meet each person's changing needs and goals. Family support, education, and involvement in the family member's treatment planning are included within the service model, with the adult client's consent.

Other Family and Individual Support Activities

DMH funds some family support activities that are not restricted to individuals who have been determined eligible for DMH services.

- In FY12, DMH contracted with NAMI for \$244,738 and with PPAL for \$ 252,000. This funding supports educational programs for families. Both PPAL and NAMI offer trainings for providers to help them understand the family perspective and for community groups.
- In addition, DMH contracts with M-POWER/The Transformation Center for \$820,383 to serve as the state's consumer-run technical assistance center, conducting the certified peer specialist training program and providing supervision, support and training the peer workforce, including those employed at Recovery Learning Communities and Community Based Flexible Support services.
- In each Area, DMH funds at least one family support specialist to assist individuals by telephone and to facilitate parent support groups that offer emotional support, provide education about mental health needs and state of the art treatment, teach advocacy strategies, and promote self-help for parents or other caregivers. Family support specialists are sensitive to the challenges of parents who may have mental health needs themselves, and the specialists are trained to support parents in accessing appropriate services. Parents in the support groups decide how the group can best meet their needs and often invite community members and various professionals to provide technical assistance and training on selected topics. Services available through these family support specialists are available to all parents of children and adolescents with behavioral, emotional or mental health challenges, whether or not their child is involved with a state agency and regardless of insurance coverage. The total dollar amount in Area-based contracts for family support in FY11 is \$3,164,851 and reflects in its entirety services provided by locally-based family support specialists. Parent education, parent support groups, training and leadership development, and parent mentoring activities are some of the activities offered with these funds. By enabling parents to increase their knowledge and get emotional and practical support from other parents, these activities empower many families to support their child's needs without the necessity of formal state agency involvement.
- DMH also provides \$57,350 in funding to the Clubhouse Family Legal Support Project (CFLSP), which was established in 2000 and is also supported by the Massachusetts Bar and the Boston Bar Foundations. The project attorney, working with the Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee legal team and several clubhouses, provides legal

representation to low income parents with mental illness who are at risk of losing custody and/or contact with their children. The project is proving effective in helping some parents regain or retain custody and others gain visitation rights.

- DMH funds six Recovery Learning Communities (RLCs) for \$ 2,869,738. The RLCs provides peer-to-peer support to individuals with serious mental illness. It is expected to serve as a “hub” in its respective DMH Area. The RLC Program is a resource and referral center that provides general information on topics of concern to peers. The information focuses on community resources and programs. Services may be offered in a variety of settings; at the RLC Program site, community mental health centers, inpatient hospitals, generic community settings, town hall, fairs, shopping mall, etc. Services include: providing and/or referring to a wide range of peer to peer support services; supporting the providers of peer-to-peer support through training, continuing education, and consultation; and linking together peer-operated services and supports for the purpose of creating a network.

As noted above, DMH provides flexible funding to families of children and adolescents through individual and family flexible support and/or intensive wraparound contracts with mental health providers. If the DMH Individual Service Plan that is developed collaboratively by the case manager and the parent or guardian calls for family support, the family is referred to the flexible support/wraparound provider. This provider then develops an initial plan with the family, indicating the family support services to be provided by the agency's staff, by services purchased on behalf of the family, or through vouchers given to the family. The provider is responsible for assuring that expenditures support the treatment goals for the child or adolescent. Supports are changed to address new needs or circumstances with the agreement of the family and the provider.

In addition, DMH has taken concrete steps through use of the internet and printed materials to improve awareness of mental health services and has modified its application forms for authorizing DMH services. These changes were designed to streamline paperwork, link consumers and family members with appropriate services in a more efficient manner and to provide consumers and family members with a user-friendly process that focuses on their desired outcomes and goals. Since these changes were made, there has been an increase in the percentage of completed applications for services.

New Initiatives for FY13:

DMH continues its redesign of adult and child services. For children and adolescents:

- DMH and DCF are jointly reprocurng their residential services system.
- Family Partners have been built into the design, this primarily the result of family feedback at dozens of Family Forums across the Commonwealth convened by DMH and DCF. With initial DMH funding, PPAL began work on a training and certification process for parent support providers and will continue this work in coordination with the joint procurement planning team and CBHI during FY12 and FY13.

Within the adult system:

- DMH procured a new service, Peer-Run Respite in the Central-West Area, Peer-Run Respite Services provide a temporary place, in a home-like environment, where

individuals in emotional distress and/or emergent stay overnight on a short-term basis. All direct-care staff are Certified Peer Specialists. The service will be implemented in FY13.

- DMH plans to re-procure Clubhouse services in FY13 to address unmet needs in the current system and focus on goals of employment and community integration. Clubhouse Services is a psychosocial rehabilitation service that provides supports through a membership-based community center. Clubhouse Services assists people served to recognize their strengths, develop goals, and enhance the skills people determine are needed to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities. Components of Clubhouse Services includes: linkage to community resources, housing supports, employment services, education services, health and wellness services, social and recreational services, transportation services and empowerment and advocacy.

IV. Accessing Services and Supports

The legislated mission of DMH calls for a focus on serving adults with serious mental illness and children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbance who have continuing care needs that cannot be addressed by acute care services. DMH's budget is predicated on the assumptions that the acute care sector will fulfill its role, in that insurers included under the state's parity legislation will fund the mental health services identified in the legislation, and those generic community agencies and organizations, given some assistance, can and will serve most children and adults, including those with mental health needs. In September of 2009, DMH and the Division of Insurance issued a joint Bulletin clarifying Intermediate Care and Outpatient Services covered under the Massachusetts Mental Health Parity Law.

One approach DMH has taken to assuring access to services is to foster educated consumers and families who can advocate for high quality acute care services and necessary funding. It should be noted that for adults, unless the parent is the legal guardian, DMH cannot contact the family without the client's permission. Thus, outreach work targets both families and adult consumers themselves. DMH does extensive outreach and training with community agencies and organizations to make them aware of DMH services including services such as education and family support activities sponsored by NAMI and PPAL. In addition, DMH is also increasing its communication and publicity activities.

- DMH funds entitlement specialists who provide training and who work with consumers and families around access to the full array of entitlements and supports for individuals with mental health problems, including Medicaid, private health insurance coverage, SSI and SSDI, housing and legal aid.
- PPAL offers a variety of supports through its network of family support specialists to more than 4,000-5,000 families and trains 500 families, youth and providers each year. More than 100 parents and youth sit on policy making committees and PPAL provided training to Family Partners involved with CBHI's mobile crisis initiative in both FY10 and FY 11. Data is collected annually from families with almost 500 respondents highlighting their experiences and priorities. These data are shared with DMH on a regular basis and assists in the development of program designs for reprocurement purposes.

- NAMI has a statewide information and referral line that services thousands of callers a year. Through these calls and other requests, NAMI-MASS mails and distributes approximately 10,000 informational packets a year, covering topics ranging from the basics of mental illness to issues surrounding guardianship. The PPAL Central Office distributes a newsletter to more than 4,000 individuals. Area-based parent coordinators, part of the PPAL family support network, serve as local information and referral resources.
- DMH also works collaboratively with Adoptive Families Together, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, and Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change, an organization focused on individuals with developmental disabilities and mental retardation which is increasingly drawing families whose children have behavioral health problems, to assure that they know about DMH services.
- DMH provides training to acute care psychiatric units, and to other state agencies such as the Department of Children and Families to keep them abreast of DMH services and service authorization requirements.
- The six regionally based Recovery Learning Communities are also taking on an increasing role in providing information, referral, and outreach activities.
- Several organizations, including PPAL and the Transformation Center added features to their websites, including blogs and chat rooms that are responsive to the needs of a variety of consumers and family members.
- In particular, the Child and Adolescent division worked through the Transitional Age Youth Initiative to increase media involvement through increased development of Area newsletters and youtube events, creation of videos, and greater utilization of the yakyak website. Yakyak is a website developed by the Youth Development Committee as a forum for young adult conversations.
- The toll-free Consumer Help-line at DMH fields calls from families as well as from clients. In FY11, the line received a total of 687 calls including 227 from individuals who identified themselves as consumers and 224 from family members. DMH has noted a drop in calls to the DMH Consumer Help-line due to the availability of other reliable sources for assistance such as the Transformation Center, PPAL, Recovery Learning Centers and NAMI. In addition, the Consumer and Family Resource Guide (see below) has been available on the DMH website for several years and can easily be viewed and printed by the general public. DMH is working with EOHHS to develop a plan to better align its state-operated and supported information and referral lines to create operating efficiencies and to improve access to consumers and families.
- DMH publishes several resource guides, which are also accessible on the DMH internet site, including:
 - **The DMH Consumer and Family Resource Guide** is a listing of information and referral resources made available from the DMH Information and Referral Line. The guide is tailored for the needs of consumers and families and provides information and referral in a variety of categories from accessing DMH services to listings of consumer organizations to contact information for legal resources for consumers.
 - **The DMH Young Adult Resource Guide** is an updated guide reflecting the changing needs of the young adult population in DMH as well as those services and supports that accompany the young adult's journey through education, employment, transportation, and housing. The guide is intended for young adults who need

- assistance in navigating these areas so that they may achieve their goals of recovery and become successful, independent adults who live and thrive in the community.
- **Creating Positive Culture of Care Resource Guide** provides information and resources that promote emerging promising practices and interventions, sensitivity to trauma, respecting and empowering children and families, and focusing on resiliency. The goal of the Guide is to promote strength-based care and reduce the use of seclusion and restraints in licensed and contracted child and adolescent hospitals and residential treatment programs.
 - General community information campaigns are conducted by the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health (MAMH) as part of its campaign to combat the stigma of mental illness. Media are particularly involved during the month of October to promote the National Depression Screening Day, and also during May, which has been designated nationally as Mental Health month. The first week in May is Children's Mental Health Week. The DMH Areas and family support specialists sponsor numerous activities to increase knowledge about child mental health and the successes that youth with mental health issues can achieve. Local activities have included photography shows of work done by youth, Area-wide conferences with youth performances, and distribution of informational materials to libraries, schools, and pediatricians' offices.
 - DMH and the Department of Children and Families continue to collaborate to assure that caregivers with mental illness involved with the child welfare system receive the services they need. In January 2002, DMH changed its adult eligibility guidelines to require that adult applicants be asked if they are involved with the Department of Children and Families and if so, to offer short-term DMH services while their applications are being considered. The DMH Request for Services asks all adult applicants if they are parents, as any individual involved with the mental health system may need parenting support.
 - In August 2009, DMH promulgated revised service planning regulations which were designed to incorporate the planning processes that are integral to DMH's new service model, Community Based Flexible Supports (CBFS). The regulations describe the Individual Action Plans (IAPs) required to be developed by CBFS providers, and distinguish them from Individual Service Plans (ISPs) developed by DMH case managers. The planning processes focus provider and consumer attention on consumer voice and choice, and are driven by a commitment to the principles of recovery. The regulations also shift the process away from categorical DMH eligibility to one of service application and approval. The purpose of this shift is to emphasize the matching of consumers who meet clinical criteria to specific services that DMH offers and has available, as opposed to a less well-defined "eligibility" for any or all DMH services.

New Initiatives for FY13:

DMH continues to monitor the impact of redesigned services in the child and adult systems to ensure that they are accessible to consumers and families.

V. Culturally Competent Outreach and Support

The Department is committed to culturally competent care. All services are made accessible to individuals and families as needed. If English proficiency is limited, then interpreter services are

made available. Likewise, interpreters are made available for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. DMH attempts to insure that all written materials are available in the client's preferred language. Translations are done, as needed, for individuals for client-specific matters.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMCA) has the structural and functional responsibility and accountability for developing DMH's cultural and linguistic competence and all aspects of cultural competence in the mental health service delivery system for children and adults.

Included in the OMCA activities are:

- Coordination of statewide interpreter and translation services
- Development of a language assistance program based on census tracking, client language data tracking and points of contact between DMH Areas, Sites and DMH hospitals and the client population
- Implementation of the DMH Cultural & Linguistic Competence Action Plan. The SFY11-12 DMH Cultural Competence Action Plan establishes goals, objectives and timelines for the integration of cultural and linguistic competence into Community Based Flexible Support Services and Children's Behavioral Health Initiative services.
- Implementation of the DMH Language Access Plan which defines the actions DMH is taking to ensure meaningful access to DMH services, programs and activities on the part of persons who have limited English proficiency

Examples of accomplishments and activities of DMH under the leadership of OMCA include:

- Participation in the planning and implementation of five federally funded community programs to increase access and cultural and linguistic competent care
- Provision of technical assistance to increase the participation of diverse population in four consumer, family and community focused programs
- Planned and implemented the Community of Practice (CoP) for 7 Children's Services Agencies (CSA) across Massachusetts to become more culturally and linguistically diverse organizations, increase access to diverse populations and improve quality of care. The goal of the CoP is to develop organizational, cultural and linguistic competence for the CSAs to include a forum for discussion, coaching and uptake of practice strategies and a minimum of one action responsive to the diverse needs of underserved populations and the workforce.
- Development of two reports on culturally adapted treatment and best practice models:
 - Current culturally adapted treatment models for adolescents with depression
 - Trauma on social, emotional and cognitive development of children
- Consultation to DMH direct care staff and providers on cultural issues that affect the care and recovery of multicultural and Limited English Proficient clients and assisted staff in conducting cross cultural assessment, formulation and treatment planning and provide information and referral for services when needed.
- As a member of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Cultural Consideration Domain Development Team, development of the domain questions and the online learning tool for CANS users.
- Continued consultation on the inclusion of cultural and linguistic diverse clients in the annual DMH consumer and family member satisfaction survey
- Provision of "Clinical Competence in Working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Clients" training to DMH and providers

- Partnership with Boston Public Health Commission, Tufts Medical School, University of Massachusetts Boston, over 15 community based organizations, to plan and implement the Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Forum on Integrated Care. The conference was funded by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration through the Early Childhood Mental Health System of Care grant.
- Updated all population demographics by DMH areas, cities, age groups, race and Hispanic/Latino origin with 2010 American Community Survey to define race/ethnic/age in preparation of service reports on enrollment and utilizations based on prevalence of mental illness.
- Continued collaboration and identification of multicultural & disparities research focus with the two Centers of Excellence
- Updated the Multicultural Populations Resource Directory, translated materials catalog, bibliography, and web-links on cultural competence.

New Initiatives for FY13:

The Office of Multicultural Affairs will continue to be an active participant in the service planning and procurement process. Specific activities in progress are:

- Assessment of the daily language assistance needs of the Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital to develop a pilot onsite Interpreter and Translation Services Program to provide daily interpreter coverage when the new facility opens in FY13.
- Continued implementation of federal grants:
 - MyChild, Boston Public Health Commission & Executive Office of Health and Human Services
 - Project Launch, Department of Public Health & Executive Office of Health and Human Services
- Continued collaboration with PPAL on multicultural community outreach and training of Family Partners for FY13.
- Partnership with the Racial Ethnic Disparities Reduction and Elimination Committee, Children's Behavioral Health Council, to develop FY13 plan and objectives
- Partnership with DMH Child & Adolescent Research and Training Center on the study of cultural and linguistic competency practice model
- Continued implementation of the Community of Practice for 7 Children's Services Agencies (CSA) across Massachusetts to become more culturally and linguistically diverse organizations and increase access to diverse populations and improve quality of care
- Presentation by the Director of OMCA at the 2012 System of Care Training Institutes on Community Organizing and Leadership Development
- Continued participation in the development of states and national strategies to eliminate disparities of the Cultural and Linguistic Competence Coordinators Affinity Group organized by the National Association for State Mental Health Program Directors and National Center for Cultural Competence
- Participation with the Office of Behavioral Health Equity, SAMHSA, to develop the use of client race, ethnic and language data as strategies to reduce behavioral health care disparities

VI. Interagency Collaboration

Major planning for child and adolescent service system development and integration continues to take place as part of the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI).

- The DMH Commissioner chairs the Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Council, on behalf of the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative's Advisory Council. This Council is mandated under legislation passed in 2008, chapter 321, An Act Improving and Expanding Behavioral Health Services for Children in the Commonwealth. It is made up of stakeholder groups identified in the law and meets monthly to monitor, plan and make recommendations on targeted activities.
- The DMH Commissioner also chairs a monthly CBHI Executive Team which includes the Commissioners of the state child serving agencies and their senior staff, the Medicaid Director and the head of the Office of Behavioral Health, two parents, the Assistant Secretary for Children/Youth/Families at EOHHS as well as two parents. There are subcommittees on Transition Age Youth and Early Childhood.

DMH is also engaged in interagency activities with a specific focus. There are numerous activities to promote the mental health of youth and adults.

- DMH has been an active participant in DPH's Project LAUNCH grant program funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for promoting the wellness of young children from birth to 8 years of age by addressing the physical, emotional, social, cognitive and behavioral aspects of their development. Massachusetts was one of 12 states awarded this grant for up to \$850,000 each year for 5 years.
- DMH is also actively engaged in the MYCHILD SAMHSA Children's System of Care grant which seeks to identify children through age 5 who have or are at high risk for SED, providing them with family-directed, individualized, coordinated and comprehensive services.
- DMH is active member of an Interagency Work Group (IWG) established by the Department of Public Health in 2001 with membership that also includes the Departments of Children and Families, Youth Services, Developmental Services and Transitional Assistance, MBHP, the Juvenile Court and the Parent Professional Advocacy League (PPAL) and selected substance abuse providers. The IWG goals are to build common understanding and vision across state systems; design and implement a community centered system of comprehensive care for youth with behavioral health disorders that incorporates evidence based practice; coordinate service delivery across systems; simplify administrative processes; and develop purchasing strategies that maximize federal and state dollars.
- DMH remains actively engaged with the CMHS Systems of Care grant to Central Massachusetts Communities of Care (CMCC) to serve Worcester County, excluding the city of Worcester, which focuses on youth with SED at risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system. Primary measures of success for that program are reduction in the use of DYS detention and Child in Need of Services (CHINS) filings. As a complimentary activity to CMCC, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is also paying for the introduction of school-based Positive Behavioral

Interventions and Support (PBIS) into selected schools within the CMCC service area. EOHHS is the grantee, with DMH providing administrative oversight

- DMH is represented on DCF's Statewide Advisory Council. In addition, DMH collaborates with the Transition Age Youth Coordinator for DCF on matters pertaining to young adults 16-25.
- DMH is a funding partner with DCF and DESE on the Special Schools Initiative, a multi-year project focused on improving capacity in nine local schools to identify strategies to deal with school climate as it relates to students with behavioral health issues. DMH is also a member of the Schools Task Force chaired by DCF as the lead funder.
- DMH is a member of the Task Force on Behavioral Health and the Public Schools established by Chapter 321, the Children's Mental Health Law. Since its inception in 2008, the task force has focused on building a framework to increase the capacity of schools to collaborate with behavioral health providers as well as provide supportive school environments that improve educational outcomes for children with behavioral health needs.
- DMH also collaborates with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) on a number of initiatives and task forces, including:
 - DMH representation on the Special Education Advisory Council whose purpose is to review and make recommendations pertaining to Special Education's State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report.
 - DMH representation on the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act Steering Committee, which reviews the allocation of federal funds and makes recommendations for Homeless Liaisons and programming allocated throughout Massachusetts school systems as well as reviews reports on numbers of Homeless in Mass preschool, elementary and high schools.
 - DMH representation on the Massachusetts Family Literacy Consortium, which oversees Literacy grants and initiatives.
 - DESE representation on the Transition Age Youth Policy Academy for the development of federal grants for the 16-25 year old population.
 - DMH representation on the 0-3 Early Childhood Task Force to review models and programs for early childhood population.
 - DMH representation on the Safe and Supportive Learning Environment Advisory Council.
 - DMH participation on the Bullying Prevention Advisory Council to DESE in the design of expectations related to the recently passed Bullying Prevention legislation.
 - DMH as the convener of a School Based Collaborative in its Metro Boston Area, attended by senior representatives from the Boston Public Schools and community based mental health agencies which contract with DMH to provide consultation, training, and specialized interventions to students in over 100 schools within the greater Boston area.
- DMH participated with the Massachusetts Association of Older Americans, Executive Office of Elder Affairs, the Massachusetts Aging and Mental Health Coalition in producing the second edition of "Eliminating Barriers to Mental Health Treatment: A Guide for Massachusetts Elders, Families, and Caregivers", a resource in great demand within the state and which federal officials are recommending as a national model.

- DMH partners with the Department of Youth Services (DYS), the Office of the Commissioner of Probation and the Juvenile Court Clinics to address issues of joint concern. The DYS Commissioner is a member of the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative Executive Team which is chaired by Commissioner of Mental Health and which meets bi-weekly with the goal of integrated planning across child serving agencies for youth and families with mental health challenges. The Commissioner of Probation meets regularly with the Commissioner of Mental Health and senior management staff related to the interface/accessibility of the CBHI services with youth on probation. Lastly, DMH and DYS senior clinicians participated in a training fellowship at Georgetown University focused on racial/ethnic disparities for youth who are involved with both child welfare and juvenile justice. DMH and DYS are developing consistent care coordination practices that ensure integration and coordination of service delivery for youth served by both DMH and DYS.
- In response to growing concern about restraint and seclusion use in child-serving settings, DMH is participating in a cross-secretariat effort to reduce and prevent their use. The Initiative brings together leaders from the state Departments of Children and Families (DCF), Mental Health (DMH), Youth Services (DYS), Early Education and Care (EEC), Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) to work in partnership with the Office of the Child Advocate and parents, youth, providers, schools and community advocates to focus on preventing and reducing the use of behavior restrictions that can be re-traumatizing. The vision for the multi-year effort is that all youth-serving educational and treatment settings will use trauma informed, positive behavior support practices that respectfully engage families and youth. This Initiative capitalizes on the Department of Mental Health's award-winning, nationally recognized, 10-year restraint and seclusion prevention.
- An EOHHS meeting of the formed Children, Youth and Families Advisory Council was convened to identify critical issues for system and services reform. To date, the following categories have been identified for discussion: collaboration between human services and education; integration, coordination and collaboration; data sharing; family engagement; family support; prevention; and disparities.
- DEEC, which licenses all childcare programs in the state, and MassHealth have jointly funded clinical positions, based in community clinics selected by childcare programs, to provide consultation, training and triage for children with behavioral problems. Many of these children exhibit symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or other early traumas. DEEC also funds clinical consultation to day care programs, inviting DMH to participate in its provider selection process. Following the receipt of a multi-year \$50 million Race to the Top federal grant by DEEC, DMH will partner with DEEC to oversee the mental health consultation grants on DEEC's behalf and provide training and consultation to pre-school programs across the state. Parent support groups will be expanded to address the needs/interests of parents with pre school age children.
- DMH and DCF have collaborated to change daily practice in both agencies to better address the needs of service provision for parents with mental illness and improve outcomes for children. DMH changed its practice to offer short-term services to adult applicants who were DCF involved, cross-training has been provided so that workers in each system better understand the resources and also the regulatory environment in which each works, and DMH consults to DCF regarding service planning for children with

mental health problems and for those whose parents have mental illness. The DMH Child Medical Director meets monthly with the DCF Psychiatrist and the DCF Clinical Specialists to discuss trends, issues, and complex situations related to client/family needs. DMH continues to assess how its services can be improved for those children who have a parent or primary caregiver living with mental illness and collaborate with DCF to improve identification and supports for parents with mental illness. Towards this end, the Department of Children and Families partnered with the Department of Mental Health, Mass Health Division of Behavioral Health and the Department of Transitional Assistance at an interagency forum in October 2011 to develop more effective collaborative responses to the needs of parent and caregivers with mental health and co-occurring conditions and their children.

- As a majority of children in the state have some of their mental health treatment covered by private insurance, this population must be considered as well when talking about an integrated system providing comprehensive services. Massachusetts passed mental health parity legislation in 2000 mandating coverage for both acute and intermediate care and created an ombudsman resource at DPH to oversee managed care implementation. In 2008, the law was amended to broaden its scope to include substance abuse disorders, post-traumatic stress disorders, eating disorders and autism for both adults and children. In 2009, DMH, the Division of Insurance, and DPH issued guidance clarifying what is covered under intermediate care. As the state achieves full implementation of the Rosie D court order, a continuing challenge is to create a provider network that serves both the publicly and privately insured and ensures continuity of care as children move on and off of MassHealth.
- DMH continues to partner with MassHealth on a number of initiatives. DMH, MassHealth and DCF are partnering in the standardized design and development of a Family Partner workforce which will assure continuity of care for families across levels of care and across public payors. DMH and MassHealth jointly review the activity of the Medicaid Managed Care Entities (MCE's) related to Emergency Services Programs which are jointly funded by MassHealth and DMH. DMH is also represented on the Family Advisory Council of the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Program (MBHP). In addition, the DMH Child Medical Director and the MassHealth Office of Clinical Affairs Medical Director co-chair an ongoing Committee related to psychotropic medication use among children with the goal of developing an algorithm for best practices.

New Initiatives for FY13:

As DMH proceeds with its procurements in FY13, it will continue to solicit input from the other state agencies with which DMH regularly interacts, including the child-serving agencies and Elder Affairs. Family support will continue to be a critical agenda item. The Family Partner and Parent Support Provider training and certification process being developed by DMH and PPAL will have the capacity to be tailored to address the needs of CBHI in general and agency-specific needs.

- A major focus of activity between DMH and DCF is the ongoing collaboration related to the upcoming joint procurement of all residential services for clients/families served by each agency. A Project Manager, jointly hired by the agencies, facilitates the planning activities leading up to the RFR issuance. Teams of DMH and DCF staff work collaboratively on development and design tasks.

- DMH continues to take a leadership role in responding to the concerns of provider organizations and parents of children with behavioral health issues regarding the number of people in Emergency Departments (EDs) and excessive wait times as they sought evaluation and admission to psychiatric hospitals. In FY12, DMH convened workgroups to address issues related to wait times in Emergency Department and access to acute-care psychiatric units/facilities, including improving referral process, promoting community-based medical screening, establishing routine regional meetings among community-based step-down providers, inpatient facilities and Emergency Departments, and developing new statewide referral process for anticipated new inpatient specialty unit.
- The DMH Child and Adolescent Division is committed to the principles of family voice, choice, and engagement at all levels of service delivery and policy development. Developing a highly skilled workforce of Family Partners and Parent Support Providers is an integral component of any effort to make that a reality. To that end, DMH is collaborating with MassHealth and PPAL in developing a training program for family partners/parent support providers working across a variety of settings, the first phase of which is expected for roll-out in FY13.
- DMH, in partnership with CMCC and EOHHS, received a one-year planning grant to develop a strategic plan to enhance services and increase service access and relevance for transition age young adults (16-21) within the Children’s Behavioral Health Initiative. Key components of the grant planning include: Youth-Partnered Assessment Team; youth and young adult leadership roles, especially with social marketing; trainings and professional development for youth and staff; creating Youth Advisory Groups with Community Service Agencies (CSAs); and a CSA Self-Assessment pilot project to enhance the engagement of transition age youth/young adults and their families. The Youth Development Committee of the State Mental Health Planning Council is also a key partner in these activities.
- DMH continues to partner with DPH/Health Imperatives and jointly offered three regional trainings on “Creating Safety for GLBTQ Youth in our Communities”.
- DMH is an active participant in multiple efforts within EOHHS to improve the integration of behavioral and physical health care systems including the Accountable Care Organization (ACO) Initiative, MassHealth planning regarding the Health Homes option in the Medicaid State Plan, Integrated Care Initiative for Individuals Dually Eligible for Medicaid and Medicare, and the Patient-Centered Medical Home Initiative (PCMHI).