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Rose at the MPHP Dalco House
August, 2012

Mission:

The Medical Professionals Health Program, a program of the Maine Medical Association, assists medical professionals of Maine by providing confidential and compassionate assistance and advocacy. Our staff and committee members help participants with diagnosed substance use disorders. Although we do not provide evaluation or treatment, we help participants better understand the treatment and recovery process and help implement strategies for return to safe practice.



SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH!

September is National Recovery month, and the staff at the Medical Professionals Health Program wants to help you to celebrate the decisions to become sober, remain sober, and to participate in the Program. Though the efforts and gains may not always be visible, the MPHP staff is constantly strategizing to best support your recovery program, quietly celebrating participant success, and advocating to improve awareness and increase employment options for professionals in recovery. Congratulations on the many steps you've taken. - **This issue is dedicated to you!**

National Recovery Month (Recovery Month) (www.recoverymonth.gov) is a national observance that educates Americans on the fact that addiction treatment and mental health services can enable those with a mental and/or substance use disorder to live a healthy and rewarding life.

Recovery month promotes the benefits of prevention, treatment, and recovery from substance misuse, abuse, and dependence. It is a time to acknowledge that prevention is essential to overall health, and has inspired millions to share their stories and assist those who continue to struggle.

Two Maine events are part of the national program.

- **Portland Recovery and Wellness Resource Fair.**
September 25, 2012. Preble Street Resource Center Portland, ME 04101
<http://www.recoverymonth.gov/Community-Events/2012/Portland-Recovery-and-Wellness-Resource-Fair-4121.aspx>
- **Tri County Area Recovery Walk ***
September 29, 2012, Festival Plaza Auburn, Maine 04210
<http://www.recoverymonth.gov/Community-Events/2012/Tri-County-Area-Recovery-Walk-3946.aspx>

* Following the walk there will be a celebration with entertainment including bands, poetry reading, art displays of consumers.

MPHP STAFFING UPDATE:

INTRODUCING DR. AMY TARDY AND HEIDI LAMONICA



We are now pleased to officially announce that Amy Tardy, a MPHP case manager, has successfully completed her PhD program in public safety and leadership, with a dissertation that examined the impact of chronic stress on job satisfaction and burnout in the field of corrections. Amy has juggled her home life, work and schooling for the past 7 year and is greatly relieved to have this completed. Congratulations, Dr. Tardy!

The Medical Professionals Health Program also welcomes our new Administrative Compliance Assistant, Heidi LaMonica. Heidi is a native of central Maine and has a strong background as a quality and regulatory associate with a company that markets and manufactures medical devices. There, she provided assistance to a number of their departments with process, audit and regulatory issues. Heidi currently works half

days (20 hours per week) and is responsible for ensuring that reports and forms are submitted and appropriately uploaded to the participant files.

She is a strong addition to our team so please feel free to contact her (623-9266 ext 1) if you have any questions about your monitoring reports.



Monitoring Interruptions:

The Purpose & Process

The monitoring interruption is a tool that enables participants to get a temporary release from the requirements of their monitoring program.

This short-term interruption may be requested by a participant for **major life issues** - illness, travel outside the continental United States, etc.)

Planned Events:

For planned events, participants must first contact their case manager to request the interruption. Participants are required to provide at least two weeks notice prior to the leave.

When considering whether or not to approve the interruption, case managers will consider the reasons for the request and hold participants to their random monitoring program as much as possible. For travelers, collection sites are avail-

able across the country. Affinity and the MPHP case manager can help identify a site if needed.

Emergency Events:

Monitoring interruptions are also for unplanned or emergency events, such as illness or unexpected life events. Understandably, emergency leave is handled differently than a scheduled leave.

Participants experiencing an emergency that makes monitoring prohibitive should call or email their case manager at first opportunity. Note that verification documentation may be required once the emergency or treatment is complete.

During this type of interruption, any requirements missed as a result of the emergency will generally not be considered a non-compliance event.

Requesting an Interruption:

There are a couple of ways to request a monitoring interruption:

- **Call your case manager** to discuss and request a monitoring interruption. Your case manager will decide if an interruption is appropriate and guide you to the next step in the process.
- **Log in to Affinity.** On the top right of the home page, click the “my calendar” icon. When the calendar appears, click the “monitoring interruption request” link on the top centered of the screen. Complete and submit this form.

Once the case manager reviews the request, the case manager enters the appropriate information in Affinity and notification is sent to the participant with instructions.

BOARD OF LICENSURE UPDATE: NEW COLLABORATION WITH THE BOARDS OF LICENSURE

As some of you may know MPHP is working to develop new effective ways of collaborating with the Licensure Boards. Our hope is that through this effort we will better serve public health, enhance recovery for all medical professionals, and help everyone better understand the disease model of addiction.

The MPHP has been working with the Boards and their attorneys for many years to find an alternative to discipline for medical professionals referred by their Boards to the MPHP, but efforts have not resulted in sweeping legal or disciplinary changes. Recently, however our efforts have resulted in meaningful progress.

Several participants with excellent monitoring records (licensed by the BON) and a strong work history independently petitioned the BON to review their disciplinary status. The Board, upon review of these cases, recently ruled to terminate their consent agreements and reinstate their licenses without encumbrances. Decisions are being made

on a case by case basis. Others are still pending, but it is clear that the BON is open to new alternatives. For health reasons, the participants who were released from discipline will continue their monitoring program with the MPHP until ready for graduation.

It's safe to share this step was not taken without growing pains. The MPHP goal, to build consensus with the Attorneys and the Boards, is still a work in progress and we anticipate there may always be discomfort with allowing participants to participate confidentially in the MPHP - especially when their issues have already come to the attention of the Board. That said, it is important to highlight and celebrate this huge step taken by the Board of Nursing as they are counting on the participants and the MPHP to justify their trust.

What does this mean for other Boards? We don't know yet. The Boards are still a ways from having a uniform response to licensees who are ill as a result of Substance Use Disorders. But clearly, there

are individuals who understand this is a spectrum of illness and are willing to step forward and show faith in those participating in the MPHP and in the MPHP Program. We will continue to talk to the other Boards about taking similar steps.

MPHP Participants should also be aware that the Boards are scrutinizing the program much more intensely as a result. Some participants may even find that you are being held to a higher standard. It's not about you. It's about change. We are really excited about these new approaches that are developing and our collective hats are off to the BON for being willing to try something different.



MPHP AND SOCIAL MEDIA: LIKE US ON FACEBOOK



We've dipped our toes in to social media and now have a Facebook page. We'll be updating the page with events and milestones. At this point, for confidentiality reasons, all feedback to the site will not be posted, but we will be reading your posts and comments. Let us know if this is helpful!

<http://www.facebook.com/MedicalProfessionalsHealthProgram>

Maintaining Sobriety:

RUNNING OUT OF STEAM?

“Keep your eye on the prize.”

Most of us have heard this phrase from time to time, whether in the athletic, academic or spiritual arena. Some of us post reminders on our kitchen cabinets, in our wallets, and on our cell phones to remember tasks and goals. And, while reminders of our goals are helpful, what happens when feelings of ambivalence settle in? Here are some tips to avoid losing the driving force for sobriety:

1. Find the many good reasons for remaining sober.

- Maintain a gratitude list – remind yourself of why sobriety is important to you.
- Help others - Carolyn Schwartz, a research professor at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, found that in peer support relationships, not only did those receiving support experience a benefit, the real beneficiaries were those lending a supportive ear. In fact, those who offered support experienced dramatic improvements in their quality of life—several times more so than those they were helping.



2. Make it Fun.

- Find a Social Support Network – Create a group of people around you who want to help you succeed. When you reach out to friends and peers, you can become motivated by listening and sharing ideas.
- Try asking “What can I do to make this fun for myself, and possibly others?”
- Recovery should be all about experimenting and trying new things.

3. Get Physical.

- Schedule workouts as you would any other important activity. Be creative!
- Take a walk, take the stairs, pedal a stationary bike or do strength training exercises while watch TV.

4. Recognize you’re not perfect.

It’s hard to maintain perfect motivation. You may set goals for perfect attendance or consistent call-ins, but, due to something out of your control, may fall short. It’s important to strive for consistency, but to recognize that failing to meet the interim goals perfectly does not equate to failing at recovery or the MPHP. Getting back into it is a step toward success.

5. Reward Yourself!

Somehow, its human nature to want to have things happen at once. In many scenarios, including during recovery, the task is so vast that without small steps, the motivation would be drained long before reaching the goal. So, acknowledge your daily accomplishments and give yourself a reward – take a walk, listen to music, call a friend.

*"Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind.
To the fearful it is threatening because it means that things may get worse.*

To the hopeful it is encouraging because things may get better.

To the confident it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better."

~ Author Unknown ~

RELATED RESOURCES:

Many fantastic conferences are available in New England. If you want to recommend a conference in this newsletter, please email Cathy Stratton (cstratton@mainemed.com). If you attend a conference and want to anonymously share your experiences with other participants, send us an email or letter summary and we will post it on the Affinity website in the “my documents” tab.

CELEBRATING OUR JOURNEY~ The 5th Annual Summit on Addiction Recovery - Coordinated by the Bangor Area Recovering Network

(www.bangorrecovery.org)

September 26, 2012, Brewer Auditorium, Brewer, Maine

<http://www.masap.org/site/documents/5thannualsummit.pdf>

Barbecue and Dance - Sponsored by Freedom for the Day Group

September 29

Barn 401, North Main St. Brewer

Eating Your Way To Recovery: Nutrition's Role In The Treatment and Recovery From Addiction & Co-occurring Disorders - Sponsored by the Maine Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHS)

October 11 & 12, 2012 at the Best Western Plus, Waterville, ME

<http://www.cvent.com/events/maine-samhs-327-500-osa-eating-your-way-to-recovery/event-summary-a5f979f378914a02be6a2ba432db676c.aspx?i=791eb208-69db-47c8-9e37-e2361b5691f2>

2012 District 21 Women's Round-up - Sponsored by District 21

Saturday Oct. 20, 2012, Community Christian Fellowship, 105 Princeton Blvd., Lowell, MA 01851

<http://www.aamassd21.org/Shared%20Documents/Women%27s%20Round-Up%20Registration%20Form%202012%20Final.pdf>

2012 AMA-CMA-BMA International Conference on Physician Health

October 25-27, 2012, Montreal, Canada

<http://www.cma.ca/physicianhealthconferences>

New England Professional Group ~34th Annual Meeting

November 1-4, 2012, Manchester, Vermont

<http://www.idaa.org/meetings/international/nepg/nepg.pdf>

3rd Annual Woman to Woman New England 2012 Recovery Conference – Sponsored by Women to Women New England

November 9, 10 & 11, Sheraton Harborside Inn, Portsmouth, NH

[womantowomannewengland.org](http://www.womantowomannewengland.org) <http://www.womantowomannewengland.org/w2w%20flier%202012.pdf>

Mark your calendars and save the date!

Announcing the first MPHP Health Conference focusing on addiction, recovery and wellness - This conference is open to all licensed professionals.

1st Annual Professionals Conference: Health, Wellbeing & Awareness – Sponsored by the Maine Medical Professionals Health Program.

April 5, 2013

Holiday Inn By The Bay, Portland, Maine



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Medical Professionals Health Program

Helping:

- Dentist
- Denturists
- Hygienists
- Nurses
- Pharmacists
- Physicians
- Physician Assistants
- Veterinarians

Supported by:

- Maine Professional Licensing Boards
- Maine Hospitals and Medical Staffs
- Medical Malpractice Carriers of Maine
- Individual contributions

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

ADDITIONAL WEB RESOURCES

There is a wealth of information on the web that can be helpful. We've taken some time to review a few sites and we thought these contain some helpful information. (Cautionary note: Be wise about purchasing products from any site.)

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Websites - internet sites featuring information and publications on a variety of health related topics.

- <http://www.samhsa.gov>
- www.newliferecovery.net
- <http://www.masap.org/site/default.asp>

Treatment Programs - offering written materials on recovery, web book groups, 12-step meetings, and seminars, etc

RELATED RESOURCES:

Reading Material:

Know Your Rights: Recovery from Drug and Alcohol problems - <http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content//PHD1091/PHD1091.pdf>

Ready, Willing and Able and Willing to Work, SAMHSA
<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Ready-Willing-and-Able-to-Work-Employment-for-People-In-Recovery/SMA12-4676DVD>

A Gentle Path through the Twelve Steps: The Classic Guide for All People in the Process of Recovery, Patrick J. Carnes Ph.D.

Available Online:

MASAP listing of all recovery meetings - <http://www.masap.org/site/maar-support.asp>

Lunder-Dineen Health Education Alliance of Maine - <http://www.mainehealtheducation.org/>

Alcoholics Anonymous - www.alcoholics-anonymous.org

Alateen - www.al-anon.alateen.org

Narcotics Anonymous - www.na.org

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence - <http://ncadd.org>

American Council for Drug Education - www.acde.orgwww.drugabuse.gov



Key Dates:

Monitor and Self Reports: due end of the month - no later than the 10th of the month.

Caduceus Groups:

Monday ~

Bangor: 7:00pm, Acadia Hospital

Wednesday ~

Portland: 7:15pm, Mercy Hosp.
Bangor: 7:00pm, Acadia Hosp.

Thursday ~

Calais: 7:15 pm, 15 Palmer St.
Lewiston: 7:15pm, St. Mary's Hospital
Manchester: 7:00pm, Community Church
Presque Isle: 7:30pm, AMC