



## THE STANDARDS GROUP: ACHIEVING CONSISTENCY AND UNIFORMITY ACROSS THE PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

### WHAT IS THE STANDARDS GROUP?

While Michigan's public mental health system has many important strengths, it is widely believed that consumers and families will benefit from more uniform access and availability of services and supports. The Standards Group (TSG) is a joint effort of the Community Mental Health System, the Michigan Department of Community Health, and the Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards to work with consumers and advocates to provide focused attention to the development of recommendations for uniform and consistent administrative, programmatic and business practice standards for state-wide use in serving persons with mental illness and/or developmental disabilities and/or substance use conditions. These parties have committed to working together to create a capacity to standardize practices that affect how services and supports are organized and delivered. By building on and tightening coordination of existing committees, coalitions and initiatives, recommended standards will be developed that provide for:

- **Equity** – Care is consistent in terms of the quality and array of services and supports
- **Effective Care** – Services are provided in a manner that meets individual consumer goals as identified through the person-centered planning process. Consumers are informed and have opportunities to choose services and supports that produce intended results, including emerging practices, best practices and evidence-based practices.
- **Efficiency** – Standards required to administer services and provide care are designed in a manner that avoids waste and assures that the maximum amount of funding available is directed to the delivery of consumer services and supports.

The work of TSG is guided by the following principles:

- Proactive inclusion of primary consumers, families, advocates and stakeholders
- Respect for diverse opinions
- Grounded in the fundamental values of person centered planning, recovery and resiliency
- Work products recognize diversity and are culturally competent
- Work is completed with a sense of urgency, and with transparency
- The Process provides for continuous search for and sharing of best practices
- Utilizes outcomes-oriented approaches to the projects prioritized for action
- Builds upon and harnesses the strengths of existing, related efforts

### HOW IS TSG FUNDED?

The eighteen Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHP's) have demonstrated their commitment to standardizing clinical and administrative practices across the state by contributing \$30,000 each (over an 18-24 month period) to sustain the work of TSG. This amount is supplemented with in-kind contributions from the Michigan Department of Community Health and other stakeholders. This pool of money is used to fund a full-time Director to provide overall coordination to the work of TSG, and to pay for consultants and other related activities necessary to complete TSG's Work Products.

The Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards serves as the fiduciary agent (manages the funding) of TSG.



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### **WHAT IS TSG WORKING ON?**

Given the expected short-term duration of TSG, the Governing Board has prioritized a set of initiatives that will form the basis of its work. It is important to note that this list is dynamic, and may change over the course of the 18- 24 month period.

- Develop recommendations for uniform service access and eligibility criteria
- Create a method to ensure consistent eligibility and budget decisions for Self Determination are made and implemented
- Develop recommendations for the use of Health Information Technology to create the capacity and infrastructure to implement efficient sharing of health information across systems
- Develop recommendations for uniform business practices (including forms and procedures) for working with CMH providers
- Develop recommended standards for consolidating administrative functions within PIHP affiliations
- Produce recommendations for the integration of mental health and substance abuse systems.

In addition, TSG will coordinate with other efforts that are the responsibility of, and are already underway, at MDCH, including:

- Ensure there is a fair, systematic way to distribute funding across the public mental health system
- Develop consistent administrative costing methodologies
- Promote practice improvement and the consistent use of evidence-based practices (based on person centered planning) across the public mental health system
- Create ways to enhance interdepartmental collaboration at the state level in ways that will benefit the public mental health system

It is important to note that TSG is addressing issues related to the broad, system-wide functioning of the public mental health system, and is not solely focused on Medicaid-specific issues.

### **HOW IS TSG STRUCTURED?**

TSG is governed by a Board made up of one person designated by each Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan, three senior leaders from the Michigan Department of Community Health, and four consumers/advocates. The Board meets no less than once per quarter.

The Board has elected an Executive Committee of five PIHP representatives, three MDCH representatives, and two consumers/advocates. The Executive Committee meets monthly to administer the work of the Board.

Whenever possible, existing work groups will be used to complete the work associated with the priorities listed above. In some instances, however, new work groups will be formed to move the initiative forward. These Work Groups will be composed of consumers, advocates, CMH staff, providers, and other interested parties.



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Products developed by TSG will be submitted to the MDCH for approval. MDCH may share the products with other groups for feedback prior to approval. If approved, products will be included as appropriate in the contracts between MDCH and PIHPs and CMHSPs.

### **WHAT ROLE DO CONSUMERS, ADVOCATES AND FAMILIES HAVE IN TSG?**

Consumers and advocates are integral to the workings of TSG, and will play a significant role in shaping its work products. In addition to serving on the Board and Executive Committee, consumers and advocates will be invited to chair/participate in Work Groups and contribute their ideas as TSG moves forward.

### **HOW CAN I FOLLOW WHAT IS HAPPENING AND SHARE MY IDEAS?**

There are many ways you can help shape the work of TSG:

- Offer to join a Work Group
- Talk with a Board member (list is attached)
- Visit The Standards Group's web site (expected in July, 2006). The web site will have minutes from Board meetings, work group meetings, updates, and information on what is happening with the initiatives.
- Attend a Board meeting and speak during Public Comment period

### **HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?**

Please contact Joanne Sheldon, Project Director, The Standards Group

Phone: 517-796-4525

E-mail: [Joanne.sheldon@lifewaysmco.com](mailto:Joanne.sheldon@lifewaysmco.com)