

Note from the Commissioner

In March, 2008, I detailed my vision for the DMHAS service system. My vision was simple: **Healthy People, Healthy Communities**. At that time I described four targeted goals to guide us in realizing that vision. The first goal focused on quality of care management. The other goals focused on improving the service system, increasing workforce effectiveness, and enhancing our resource base. Each of these goals is linked to the provision of quality care. As a healthcare network, we must be committed to a continuous process of performance measurement, evaluation, and quality improvement.

This is accomplished in many ways in the DMHAS service system. One measure is the annual Consumer Satisfaction Survey which provides us with information regarding the degree to which consumers/individuals in recovery approve of our services. DMHAS pays careful attention to the feedback we receive from consumers/individuals in recovery through this annual survey. The FY 2008 Consumer Survey measures consumers' satisfaction with the services they receive from the DMHAS Healthcare Service System.

This year, we added a Quality of Life (QOL) component to the survey, which will capture additional outcomes information about consumers/individuals in recovery. DMHAS is using the WHOQOL-BREF instrument, which is a widely used, standardized quality of life tool developed by the World Health Organization. The QOL component of the survey was voluntary and consumer and provider participation varied by agency. These results, which are being compiled, will help us to learn more about how our service recipients feel about the quality of their lives.

Our focus on meeting the highest standards of care in our entire service system is a continuous goal. By evaluating the service system, we ensure that we remain responsive to the people that we aim to serve. Last year was the first time that we asked people to comment in general about what they wanted to tell us about our service system. That process was continued this year. The feedback we received helps us to identify areas of strength while acknowledging the challenges that we still face as we continue to build a recovery-oriented service system. I strongly encourage all of our service providers to review the feedback summarized in statewide report and in the agency-specific reports. The feedback is extremely useful as we consider whether we are attaining our quality goals.

I want to thank all of the people who participated in the survey and those who assisted the survey process in any way. This participation and the feedback we receive must always inform our efforts to improve our services.

Thomas A. Kirk, Jr., Ph.D.
Commissioner
Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

September 2008