

Overcoming the barriers of mental illness.

For consumers with serious and persistent mental illness, meeting the challenges of everyday life can be overwhelming. They need assistance and advocacy, and that's exactly what Horizon's Intensive Case Management/ Supportive Case Management (ICM/SCM) Program provides.

"If not for case management, many of our consumers would simply fall through the cracks because of their illness and inability to cope," says Donna Sherman, program director. "They'd end up homeless, in a hospital or even in jail. Our program helps them understand their illness, maximize their self sufficiency and adjust to life in the community so that does not happen."

Currently there are approximately 100 consumers enrolled in Horizon's ICM/SCM program, with another 60 participating through the Niagara County jail system. Horizon case managers work closely with these consumers to teach them about recovery and help them apply the concepts they learn to everyday life. Horizon also collaborates with organizations such as the Niagara County Jail; Niagara County Department of Mental Health; the SPOA System; hospitals and psychiatric centers, outpatient programs and the consumers' families.

A Horizon case manager might accompany consumers to a court appearance or to a Medicaid appointment to help explain their illness and to assist them in advocating for themselves so as to insure they receive the benefits they're entitled to or other services they require. As part of the program, consumers might learn how to budget and shop, how to get around using public transportation and even how to talk to sales clerks. Horizon helps consumers access whatever public providers might provide services they need, and then supports the consumer and assists in any way it can.

"Consumers with mental illness want to be productive. They want to be self-sufficient and not reliant completely on others," says Sherman. "It's our goal to help them reach their goal of living a healthy and productive life."

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Doug Johnson, (r), case manager at Horizon's City Market facility in Niagara Falls, shows a consumer, Reggie, how to select ripe fruit and make his purchase.



Gordon James Photography

From the desk of...

Anne Constantino President & CEO

Mental disorders affect 1 in 5 individuals each year. Drug abuse and addiction affect 1 in 10 each year.

Mental disorders, domestic violence, gambling and/or addiction affect almost every one of us, either directly or through a family member. Many families keep these types of problems "secret."

Even the youngest member in a family that has a "secret" learns the rule about not talking. When there is no talking, there is no real understanding of the situation or the impact. The result: reality is distorted, family members blame themselves for the family trouble and individuals suffer in silence. Not being able to communicate about the "secret" prevents the development of skills necessary for describing and coping with one's feelings and identifying an action plan to improve the situation. Keeping a secret can have devastating effects on all family members. Family "secrets" can be harmful physically, emotionally, financially and legally.

Why don't people talk about their "secret"? Shame, embarrassment, fear and hopelessness are common reasons. There is difficulty trusting others and fear of acknowledging the problem. Denial, minimization and rationalization are common but powerful defense mechanisms.

What can families do? Seek out information. Allow children to talk about their feelings. Know where you stand and how you feel. Set small goals. Sustain your physical, mental and spiritual health. But, most important, consider asking for help. The fact is when families seek help it increases the chances of recovery for everyone. ♥



Helping to keep Niagara County healthy.

A \$100,000 grant received by Horizon from the Community Health Foundation of Western and Central New York is helping to provide much-needed medical services to Horizon Village residents as well as residents of nearby Niagara County communities.

The grant was originally targeted to fund a medical services unit to be located at Horizon Village. When Horizon experienced some difficulties with that plan, senior management decided instead to expand its existing City Market location in Niagara Falls and place the Medical Unit there. This allowed the consolidation of Horizon's limited medical space at 6520 Niagara Falls Boulevard into the City Market facility, and permitted the expansion of chemical dependency and mental health services at the former site. The result is a full-service clinic at the City Market facility that provides primary medical care to Horizon Village residents, Horizon consumers in Niagara County and to other residents.

The Medical Unit staff works in tandem with the behavioral health counselors and staff of Horizon Village and other Horizon Niagara County clinics, sharing critical information that contributes to a consumer's overall health and welfare.

"Our City Market Medical Unit provides the care and services our residents lacked and need to live a healthier life," says Maria Pasceri, Horizon vice president of services and development. "A person who is physically healthy is in a much better position to participate in counseling and rehabilitation.

"At the same time, we are able offer these services to anyone in the Niagara Falls area who does not have access to care, including physical exams, same-day sick visits, medication administration and more," says Pasceri. "At Horizon, we believe anyone who requires medical care should be able to get it."

The City Market Medical Unit, located at 1750 Pine Avenue, is currently open Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays, and is staffed by an on-site medical director, certified family nurse practitioner and a registered nurse. Certified by the NYS Department of Health, the Medical Unit provides a spectrum of medical and psychiatric services, specializing in the treatment of diabetes and hypertension. The Unit accepts Medicaid and other insurance plans. There is plenty of free parking and the facility is handicapped accessible. An open house is planned for Fall 2006. For more information, contact the Unit at 716.215.0700. Horizon also has two Medical Unit sites in the city of Buffalo. ♥

Horizon integrates DBT practices into its treatment for mental health issues.

In the late 1970s, psychologist Marsha M. Linehan developed Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), a cognitive-behavioral treatment for complex, difficult-to-treat mental disorders.

Originally, DBT was used to treat individuals who were chronically suicidal, but it has evolved into a treatment for individuals with multiple disorders, and Horizon has begun using this approach as part of its holistic treatment for consumers with mental health issues.

"DBT assumes a shift in philosophy," says Anne Constantino, Horizon CEO. "Consumers are accepted as they are and it is assumed they are doing the best they can. It also assumes they

want to improve, want to learn new behaviors to solve various problems and live a better life. DBT is another option that helps to make that happen."

According to Sue Temperato, program director at Horizon's Hertel-Elmwood Counseling Center, DBT helps decrease life-threatening, therapy-interfering and quality-of-life-interfering behaviors and helps increase core mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation and self management.

"Consumers may not have caused all of their own problems, but they have to solve them anyway," says Sue. "They know they need to do better, try harder and/or be more motivated to change. DBT helps with that, with the message being that nobody can fail in DBT.

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MEET OUR Board

Name:

Reverend
Jesse J. Scott

Title: Pastor

Company: Word
of Life Ministries
Church, Niagara
Falls, NY



Gordon James Photography

On which Horizon Board(s) do you serve? "I serve on the Horizon Village board."

How did you come to be on the Board?

"I teach a weekly Christian-based recovery class at Horizon Village, which is well attended by many of the residents, and I got to know Maria Pasceri, who asked me to serve on the board."

What have you found most rewarding about serving on the Board?

"It has given me the opportunity to meet other people and to see firsthand how the decision-making process is carried out. I have also witnessed how management operates as a team in the decision-making process, how caring and experienced the staff is and how Horizon Village is connected to the other Horizon locations to help meet the needs of the residents."

What do you want people to know about Horizon?

"That it works. We're all faced with challenges, but Horizon is there to help individuals face and overcome some of their challenges in a positive and productive way." ♥

Did you know that, in the United States, one percent of the adult population has a problem with pathological gambling, while an additional three percent are problem gamblers.

thePathtoRecovery

Here is the true story of a consumer who overcame many obstacles to turn her life around. Last names have been omitted for privacy.

It started with a simple task: moving furniture at her house. Tammie, a suburban thirty-something mother of two and warehouse worker, hurt her back badly enough that her doctor prescribed pain pills and patches. The trouble was that, by the time the pain was gone, Tammie was addicted. "Even when the pain stopped, I kept using the pills and the patches," she said. "But then, one day, I just decided I was done, and I stopped."

Tammie was clean for several months before she started using again and was arrested on an unrelated charge. She was offered treatment as an alternative to jail and, realizing how badly she wanted to recover and that she'd need help, Tammie asked for a more long-term treatment program. She was sent to Horizon Village.

"Tammie welcomed the opportunity to come into the Horizon Village program," says Pat Pasculle, an addictions counselor at the Village. "The arrest was her wake-up call, and she was completely motivated to do whatever it took to change her life around. She arrived in early April and has really been applying herself since."

"I thank God every day that I was allowed to come to Horizon Village," says Tammie. "The staff members are wonderful; they put 110 percent into each of us. I am getting so much out of the groups I attend, and working hard every day toward my goals."

The treatment program involves the consumers telling their story, facing their situation and recognizing how drugs have influenced their lives so they can begin to mend relationships, learn to like themselves again and build toward recovery. Families often participate, as is the case with Tammie's situation.

"I understand Horizon is here to give me the tools I need, but that I need to do the work," says Tammie. "I am taking each day one at a time because I want to get clean and stay clean. I want to be a better mother and I want to get back to work. I want my life back."

Tammie says the acupuncture treatments she receives at the Village have been a big help in her recovery. They help relieve her cravings and lower her stress level, and that helps her focus on her task at hand. She says she's learning to forgive herself, to accept that she cannot change the past, to deal with the hurt this situation has brought her family and, most of all, to realize that she can live without drugs.

"Every day I wake up with no drugs in my system whatsoever is a great day for me," says Tammie. "Horizon has helped me and my family overcome this situation, and work on the things I need to – and will – change. I just know someday soon I will be coming back to Horizon Village to talk to other consumers and let them know they can change their lives for the better and that they are in a great place in which to learn how to do just that." ♥

Overcoming the barriers of mental illness. (continued from page 1)

Members of the ICM/SCM program are in constant communication with Horizon mental health and addiction counselors, who – according to Sherman – do a wonderful job in identifying consumers who would benefit from the ICM/SCM program. "It's in the consumers' best interests for us to all work together and communicate regularly," says Sherman. "The ICM/SCM staff is very much involved in each consumer's case. Everyone at Horizon wants to see our consumers be happy and be functioning." ♥



These Horizon staff members work closely with the ICM/SCM program.

Front row (l to r): Romaine Migliorie; Alisa Pucci; Kimberley Russell; Nicole Tobey and Lisa Massaro.

Back row (l to r): Joe Julian; Lomax Barnes; Doug Johnson; Mike Tilton; James Peterson and Program Director Donna Sherman.

Horizons integrates DBT (continued from page 2)

"The most caring thing a therapist can do is help consumers change in ways that bring them closer to their own ultimate goals," says Sue. "And to fully understand a person's behavior, we have to look at all components: behavior, environment, etc."

DBT is most effective when used as a team approach. It can involve the primary

therapist, as well as doctors, nurses, even the family. It is usually integrated with other therapies and practices, all with the same goal in mind: to help the consumer live a better life.

For more information about DBT, contact Sue Temperato at Horizon's Hertel-Elmwood Counseling Center at 831.1977. ♥

The 2002 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) showed that approximately 9% of the U.S. population has used pain relievers illegally in their lifetime.

Check us out online!

Horizon recently relaunched its website, which has been updated to include helpful information on alcoholism, mental health/psychiatry, gambling, chemical dependency and so much more.



Viewers can get answers to common questions, take a self-test, learn more about Horizon's various services, apply for employment at Horizon and find a Horizon location.

The site features colorful graphics and photos and is easy to download and navigate. Visit us at www.horizon-health.org. ♥

Five things you'll find on the Horizon website:

- ♥ 1. Self-tests for various addictions.
- ♥ 2. Links to other helpful websites.
- ♥ 3. Profiles of staff members.
- ♥ 4. A list of open positions.
- ♥ 5. Personal stories of consumers helped by Horizon.

According to the NY Council on Problem Gambling website, female problem gamblers spend approximately two-thirds of the amount that male problem gamblers spend on gambling.

Horizon is the largest and most comprehensive outpatient provider of integrated mental health, chemical dependency and medical services in WNY.

HorizonHealthPulse is published for the employees, consumers, Board and friends of Horizon Health Services. Please share this newsletter with a friend. If you would like additional copies of this newsletter or if you have any questions or comments about its content, please call Pat Chrzanowski at 716-831-1800 or email her at pchrzanowski@horizon-health.org.

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INSIDE: Helping those with mental illness live productive lives.

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