

At Horizon, "whole health" also means kicking the habit.

Dealing with chronic mental illness presents numerous challenges; many consumers turn to cigarettes as a way to combat the effects of their illness or as a "reward" for keeping up with therapy and treatment. This habit, of course, can lead to nicotine addiction and other health problems, such as emphysema or cancer.

Nicotine is a drug found naturally in tobacco. It is as addictive as heroin or cocaine. It produces pleasurable feelings that make the smoker want to smoke more, and also acts as a depressant by interfering with the flow of information between nerve cells. As the nervous system adapts to nicotine, smokers light up more cigarettes to derive more pleasure. As tolerance is developed, smokers have to light up more to maintain the level of nicotine they crave. Over time, the body becomes physically and psychologically dependent on nicotine.

Studies show that ex-smokers enjoy a higher quality of life, as well as fewer illnesses and a better self-reported health status. Plus, food tastes better, the sense of smell returns to normal and ordinary activities no

longer leave the ex-smoker breathless. Some treatment programs look the other way as consumers smoke, believing that it's more effective to

treat one problem at a time or not wanting to take away something that "helps" consumers deal with their illness. At Horizon, the emphasis is on "whole health," so addressing a nicotine addiction is part of the overall treatment program. And it starts with raising the consumers' level of awareness as to why they are smoking and the health hazards of such a habit.

"Some consumers use smoking to help with their concentration," says Stephanie Watson, senior coordinator. "Nicotine chemically counteracts the negative effects of their medications, so they believe it helps them relax and focus better. We try to help consumers find other ways to achieve relaxation without nicotine."

"For example, rather than taking a smoking break, Horizon encourages an aromatherapy break, acupuncture or meditation," adds Bob Morrow, HR coordinator. "Activities that keep the hands busy, such as board games or knitting, are also encouraged as a smoking replacement."

Horizon counselors try to be encouraging, and put a positive focus on quitting, rather than a negative focus on smoking. They work individually with consumers, tailoring a quit-smoking plan that will work for their particular needs and situation.

"We look at a consumer's treatment from a rehabilitation mode," says Stephanie. "Helping them to quit smoking is one more way we can help our consumers achieve overall health." ♥



♥ We try to help consumers find other ways to achieve relaxation without nicotine. ♥

Smoking costs the average smoker about \$3,400 per year.



Gordon James Photography

From the desk of...

Hak Ko, M.D. Medical Director

A drug is only effective when it is actually taken as prescribed on a regular basis. The issue of medication compliance is a major reason why so many patients fail to maintain remission despite being properly diagnosed and stabilized with certain medications.

There has been tremendous progress in the field of psychopharmacology, and we now have available a new generation of medications referred to as "atypical anti-psychotic medicines." Some of these, which include Risperidone, Zyprexa, Seroquel, Geodon and Abilify, have unique mechanisms of action and, in general, offer benign side effect profiles. Overall safety and tolerability of these types of drugs have improved greatly, which would seem to promise a much better chance for compliance. These are the issues that pharmaceutical companies are trying to address. There are already two rapidly-dissolving drugs – Zydys and Risperidone – that eliminate the chance for the patient to sabotage the tablets. These drugs are easier for people who have difficulty swallowing, such as the elderly, and those who have a fear of swallowing. There is also a liquid concentrate form of Risperidone, and an injectable type of Geodon.

There is also the promising development of a long-acting, injectable type of Risperidone that may be available in the next six months. This is particularly exciting since it could replace a large number of Proliximand Haldol Decanoates, which are used in great numbers despite their high risk for side effects.

The more information available to consumers and their families, the more likely that consumers will make good decisions regarding medication options and adherence. ♥



Involving loved ones means a more successful recovery.

Including family members in the treatment program of the individual with a chemical dependency can accomplish three things: 1) it motivates the consumer with addiction toward recovery; 2) the family becomes more supportive of the recovering member, and 3) the family as a whole becomes engaged in, and benefits from, the recovery program. When someone in treatment for addiction achieves abstinence and early recovery, but the family continues with old patterns and behaviors, the prognosis for long-term recovery is jeopardized.

The Family Program at Horizon Village has been an integral part of the overall addiction treatment program for more than 10 years. The purpose of the program is to focus on the personal growth and recovery of residents and their families through a variety of educational methods. "Family member" is defined at Horizon Village as a parent, a spouse, significant other, children and even sponsors of the recovering consumer.

"Residents whose families are involved in their recovery in a positive way do much better in our program," says Dave Schaefer, senior counselor at Horizon Village and Family Program coordinator. "The program helps families understand the disease process, look at their own unhealthy behaviors and look toward better habits – all of which provide positive assistance to the recovering consumer."

For example, there was the father who went out and bought heroin for his daughter so she could use it at home; his thought process was that he was keeping her out of bad neighborhoods that were dangerous. There was the sister who kept giving her brother money she thought was being used to pay his rent so he would have a place to live, but he was really using the money to support his crack habit. "Most families have unhealthy behaviors that, though well-meaning, can inhibit the recovery process," says Dave. "We teach people how to listen so others will be encouraged to talk. We teach problem-solving that doesn't focus on winners and losers, just solutions."

The Family Program at Horizon Village is based on three important components:



Eric Frick Photography

1) helping families and friends of current residents understand and deal with the addiction process; 2) helping families and friends of current residents understand and deal with co-dependency issues, and 3) helping families and friends of current residents understand and deal with family-oriented issues.

"Families with chemically-dependent members develop certain interaction patterns to manage and survive the problem," says Dave. "Predictably, and in order to survive, the family adjusts to the disease. This adjustment, however, results in an unhealthy family structure and a pervasive emotional pollution from which there seems to be no escape."

Often, consumers and their families have been through several other programs before coming to Horizon Village and, in many cases, have lost hope for finding a workable solution. The Family Program restores that hope, and presents an opportunity for things to work out positively.

More than 30 education modules, as well as guest speakers and family events, help draw family members into the therapy regime, and also provide opportunities to share experiences with others who have "been there, done that," so they realize they are not alone and the situation is not hopeless.

"At Horizon Village, we firmly believe the best method of recovery is a combination of self-help groups (working the 12-step program), individual therapy and family involvement and support," says Ron Stewart, director of Horizon Village. "Combined, this offers individuals a complete and powerful recovery program."

For more information on Horizon Village or the Family Program, call (716) 731-2030. ♥

Our commitment to our employees

Horizon's Human Resources Department has been having some fun with its PayDay Perks Program. Every so often a scratch-off ticket appears with pay stubs, and our employees have a chance to win a small prize, such as movie tickets or a gift card for a gasoline purchase. It is little efforts like this that enhance employment at Horizon and demonstrate the high value placed on employee morale.

Recognizing that our employees are our most valued assets, Horizon made a commitment to offer the best salaries and benefits economically possible. Significant enhancements have been made to our benefits program, including a generous company contribution to a Cafeteria Plan that allows employees to "spend" their dollars on much-needed benefits that include health insurance, dental, vision and life insurances, and long- or short-term disability coverage. The cafeteria spending is in addition to the amounts already contributed by Horizon for employee health and life insurances.

On a lighter note, we are looking forward to our annual summer picnic that we share with our friends and family members. This year we will be making a return trip to Darien Lake, and we thank our HR Department for arranging this trip and for making Horizon a fun place to work! ♥

Horizon receives first GMSA community gift from UB.

The Graduate Minority Student Association (GMSA) of the School of Social Work at UB is a growing organization looking to make a positive impact within the communities it serves. Its primary purpose is to increase opportunities for interaction and visibility between minority students, the university community and the society that surrounds us. Toward that end, the GMSA recently initiated a community fundraising event to benefit GMSA and also to establish ongoing relationships between GMSA and various community organizations. A raffle drawing was held, with Horizon Health Services as the recipient of the proceeds.

L'Oreal Carson-Dunn, vice president of GMSA, and Anita Mathai, community fundraising coordinator, presented a check to Horizon for \$450.00 on behalf of their organization.

"We initiated this raffle drawing with the hope of creating an annual community fundraiser that would benefit a different agency each year," said Anita. "When challenged with the decision of who our efforts would first benefit, Horizon Health Services was unanimously agreed upon because of the vast array of services it provides to those in need in Erie and Niagara Counties."

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The GMSA is proud to have established a relationship with Horizon Health Services, and both organizations look forward to working together in the future. ❤️



Horizon CEO Anne Constantino (left), accepts a check from L'Oreal Carson-Dunn, SSW-GMSA vice president (right) and Anita Mathai, SSW-GMSA community fundraising coordinator.

Hello
My name is
Amanda Wenner
Mental Health Supervisor
Niagara Falls
Counseling Center



Amanda Wenner has worked for Horizon Health Services for just a few months, but already she knows she made the right decision in moving back to Buffalo and joining the Horizon staff.

"Horizon offers many, many different helpful services," says Amanda. "I'm learning more every day about what this organization can do to help people. And everyone has been so accepting of me and very helpful and friendly."

Amanda's supervisor is Stephanie Watson, senior coordinator, Mental Health Services. She's thrilled to have Amanda on board because of Amanda's wealth of knowledge and experience. "Amanda's background in

inpatient care, severe mental illnesses and forensic mental health issues, as well as psychological testing, make her a real asset to Horizon," says Stephanie. "She is dedicated to delivering services that empower consumers and enable them to recover."

Before coming to Horizon, Amanda worked at an inpatient psychiatric facility in Missouri, where she had lived for the past 12 years. She returned to Buffalo last summer to help care for her ill mother, and decided to move back permanently.

In her current job, Amanda takes care of a full case load of consumers, and conducts individual and couples therapy. Soon she will be handling group therapy as well. She is also Horizon's representative at the Niagara Falls Mental Health Court and clinical supervisor for Horizon's Niagara Falls mental health program.

A native Buffalonian, Amanda grew up in Amherst and attended Amherst Central

Schools. She received her undergraduate degree in Psychology from Kent State University, and her master's degree from Southeast Missouri State University. How did she end up in this field?

"I was lucky... I knew early on that I wanted to go into the field of psychology," says Amanda. "I am very interested in human behavior."

Amanda hopes that, in her new job, she will be able to help people change their behavior to improve their quality of life and gain more independence. "Many people are very unhappy, and don't know why they are unhappy or what they can do to change all that," says Amanda. "I try to be a role model for them and help them figure out how to improve their lives."

When she's not working, Amanda – who lives in Amherst – spends as much time as she can with her mom and her family. An animal lover, she also loves to care for her pet dog and cat.

Welcome to Horizon Amanda!

Here is the true story of a consumer who overcame many obstacles with the help of Horizon Village to turn her life around.

Last names have been omitted for privacy.

For Shelley, the road to recovery has been bumpy and full of twists and turns. A native of Indiana, she moved to New York City after receiving her BFA degree in metalsmithing and jewelry design. For a while, things were working out, and Shelley was happily designing jewelry and enjoying life in one of our country's most exciting cities. But then work became more and more difficult to find, which meant there was less money coming in. Shelley feared she would lose everything she'd worked so hard for. And that's when she started making mistakes.

Her best friend introduced her to heroin, which they used casually when stress built up. Shelley eventually kicked the habit, staying clean for five years. But then a breakup with her boyfriend and other hardships brought her back to that same group of friends and her addiction. Eventually, Shelley needed heroin just to maintain all the responsibilities in her life. When she was in her early thirties, Shelley was asked to take a trip to South America and bring back a "package" as a favor to a friend. Desperate for money, Shelley agreed. When she returned from her trip, she boarded a train in Toronto bound for Indiana.

But it was one month after September 11th, and security at the border was tight. "I was exhausted from the trip and a novice at international travel," says Shelley. "I tripped up when questioned by border patrol, and they ended up searching me and arresting me for trafficking as I tried to enter the United States in Buffalo. It was the beginning of hell."

Shelley was eventually released to her mother and mandated to a two-week

inpatient program in Indiana, which, she said, was useless. Shelley panicked, thinking she was going to end up in jail for 10 years or more, and that she had ruined her life completely. Once again, she turned to drugs, a violation of her mandate. Federal marshalls escorted her back to Buffalo, where she served time in jail. During that time, she talked to inmates who'd been in the federal system and who told her how bad it was. Shelley was determined to avoid federal prison if at all possible.

Shelley got lucky. The prosecuting attorney and the magistrate in charge of her case saw something in Shelley, believed in her. They saw that she had begun looking at her life more positively, and they recommended she be sent to Horizon Village. Shelley spent five months at Horizon Village, and she credits the counselors – especially Paige Prentice – with helping to turn her life around.

"The counselors at HV gave me the time and space to get in touch with myself, to find out who I really am," says Shelley. "I had time to reflect on what I had had and lost. I was able to work on the relationships I'd damaged, especially the relationship with my mom. I renewed my passion for life while at HV, and began reaching for goals again."

Shelley adds that the counselors at HV didn't use the "cookie cutter" rehab approach many programs use which, she says, never works. Instead, at Horizon, they work hard to tailor an individual approach, which makes all the difference. Shelley was even allowed to help do landscaping while at HV, along with facilitating groups and helping other residents. "I felt needed and productive, with a purpose, while I was there," she says.

"Shelley's experience is exactly why rehabilitation is so valuable to people in the criminal justice system," says Paige. "Shelley is not a drug trafficker. She

was a desperate woman who made some poor decisions.

"I have never heard her say she should not be held accountable for what she has done," continues Paige. "But, rather, she wants to make restitution by giving back to the community, by reaching out to help others. These are clearly the attributes of someone who has made a mistake and learned from it."

Even with possible jail time hanging over her head, Shelley has managed to remain positive. She stayed in Western New York, where she now works two jobs she loves and has stayed clean. She is no longer in contact with her friends in NYC, and has a much better relationship with her family. And it's paying off: her sentencing, originally scheduled for August, has been pushed back to December. This was done to give Shelley more "clean time" so her lawyer could request probation rather than jail time when her sentencing comes up.

Because she credits Horizon Village with helping her turn her life around, Shelley has remained very active at HV. She works closely with Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, does whatever speaking engagements HV asks her to do and stays in touch with many other HV alumni. She's even dared to think about what she might do if she is granted probation.

"I would love to go to graduate school and get my master's degree," says Shelley. "I enjoy working with animals and cooking and making jewelry, so I'd like to combine all that and maybe open a doggie daycare business that also sells gourmet dog biscuits and funky, one-of-a-kind dog chains and collars and jewelry."

Shelley also says that, while she hated Western New York in the beginning, she has come to love it here and hopes to remain in the area. "There's a lot of potential here," says Shelley. "There are many good people in the area, and it's affordable. I could make a nice life here." ♥



Coping with addiction: a family member speaks out.

Addiction doesn't just affect the person suffering with the addiction. It also affects loved ones: spouses, parents, children, significant others, co-workers. This is a true story of how one woman's addiction to alcohol and her death affected her younger sister. Last names are omitted for privacy. This is Virginia's story as told by her sister, Sue.

"Virginia was the second oldest of the six siblings; I was 13 years younger.

"Virginia was polished, intelligent and reserved. She worked as a hairdresser until she began having children, and then her life revolved around her marriage, her four children, her church and school. Virginia began drinking in her early twenties.

"My sister was always conscious of her looks and took care of herself, but then she began letting herself go. Our parents, her husband and her siblings were all worried about her, and had many family discussions to try to figure out how to help. My parents never had drinking problems, so it was sad and hard for them to understand, because they couldn't help their daughter.

"Virginia went through two rehabilitation programs with the support of her family; we were trying hard to understand what she was going through and help in whatever way we could. She stayed sober for 12 years, but then she became depressed and slipped back into drinking.

"We'd notice the smell of alcohol on her breath. The ironic thing is that four of the siblings in our family suffered from alcohol addiction, and Virginia was always there to help get us sober.

"I knew something had to be done for my sister. The family did an intervention, and we sent Virginia to rehab in Pennsylvania for one month. That worked for a while. But, again, Virginia relapsed. Finally, I called my

friend, (Horizon CEO) Anne Constantino, who recommended Horizon Village.

"Virginia was at Horizon Village for three months. She liked it very much. She felt she was more understood, very cared for and supported at Horizon Village.

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"Our family just wanted Virginia to get better and to be sober, but we were too emotionally involved and didn't always know how to help. The staff and residents at Horizon Village understood Virginia and her addiction. Virginia told us she was feeling better, was committed to recovery and that she had a better understanding of her addiction to alcohol. She successfully completed treatment at Horizon Village and was referred to continue her recovery in community-based self-help and outpatient counseling.

"Virginia never made her outpatient appointment. She died six days after being released from Horizon Village. She was 56 years old when she died in 2001 from esophageal varices, as a direct result of her alcoholism. She had come so far, worked so hard. Her last days were very good, but this is a wound we will all carry. We learned so much about this disease from Virginia."

Today, Sue has become very involved with Horizon Village, and says she is glad to be able to give back to the place that helped her sister live her last sober days. She believes rehabilitation is very helpful, because it provides much-needed support. And Sue also believes that family members should become involved. "My sister's situation brought our family closer together, and it certainly helped me and my siblings deal with our own addiction. And I believe Virginia valued our support." ♥

MEET OUR Board

Name:
Pete Grum



Title:
President,
Rand Capital
www.randcapital.com

HHS Board/Position: Pete is vice chairman of the Health Management Group Board

Length of Term: Pete's first term began in June 1999. He was re-elected for a second term, which ends in April 2005.

How did you come to be on the HMG Board? "I met Anne Constantino through a business group we were both associated with, and she asked me to serve on the board."

What have you found most rewarding about serving on the board? "Horizon was experiencing some financial difficulties when I came on to the board, and I was able to help management work through them. I also helped bring Vince DiMura, Horizon CFO, on staff."

What do you want people to know about Horizon? "You don't think addiction can happen to you or anyone you know, but it can happen to anyone. It amazed me how large Horizon is, how many locations they have around Western New York and how much they are able to help people."

On what other not-for-profit boards do you currently serve? "I serve on the board of Kaleida, as well as Buffalo State College, the Boy Scouts and the Health Care Industry boards." ♥

Smoking not only causes lung cancer, but is also a risk factor for cancer of the mouth, voice box, bladder, kidney, pancreas, cervix, stomach and leukemia.

Horizon recently put several of its staff members through an American Cancer Society (ACS) program designed to help them help their consumers to quit smoking. Pat Bax, tobacco control specialist for the Western/Lakes Region of the ACS, used the "Living Well Tobacco Free" program to train the Horizon staff.

“First you survey the tobacco usage, then tailor a health message for that consumer...”

“First you survey the tobacco usage, then tailor a health message for that consumer,” says Pat. “You must also assess the person’s readiness to quit, give him materials with an action plan and, most importantly, evaluate his progress. It’s a very successful method.”

Pat also said she gives brief intervention strategies, offers tips on how to implement the information within groups, and relates how to assist consumers who are contemplating quitting when she conducts these “train the trainer” sessions.

“I am very excited about Horizon’s commitment to this program,” she says. “Historically, nicotine addiction has been minimized because it’s not often viewed to be as ‘dangerous’ as alcohol or drug addiction. Horizon is among the first mental health facilities in the area to recognize the need to incorporate a Quit Smoking Program in the overall treatment plan.”

For information on the negative effects of smoking, tips on how to quit and more, visit the American Cancer Society website at www.cancer.org. ♥

A 35-year-old person who quits smoking will live an average of 8.5 years longer than someone the same age who continues to smoke.

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 Michelle Wroblewski at 716-831-1800 or email her at mwroblewski@horizon-health.org.

President & CEOAnne Constantino
Medical DirectorHak Ko, M.D.



HorizonHealthPulse
Volume 1 • Issue #4 • Summer 2003
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INSIDE:
Kicking the habit...

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HORIZONHEALTHPULSE

