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March 15, 2014

Dear ,

### Midway Status Report

Yes, we're at the 54th day of this year's legislative session. There were 1,186 bills introduced and so far seven have been passed and six have been signed by the Governor. There'll be a huge push for the Senate and House to hear the bills they've received from the other chamber of the legislature by March 21st when everything should be "in play" as far as policy bills is concerned. The session would have to adjourn by April 21st to meet the 100 day deadline. They've not done that very often in recent history, so we'll have to see how this goes.

Discussions about the budget for FY 2014-15 have not yet gotten seriously underway. The major state agencies such as AHCCCS, DHS, and DES have indeed presented before the Senate and the House Appropriations Committees. There really wasn't much that could be garnered from the hearings to help in reading the "tea leaves" about what'll happen to these state budget line items. We'll try to keep you in the loop as we see movement on the budget front.

The debate around Child Protective Services (CPS) is a major policy item that is still under development, perhaps necessitating a special session. Timing on that is, as yet, undetermined, but rumor has it targeted for early May. Stay tuned for this development.

Now onto the bills, just a high level review (don't want to bore you):

- Additional funding requests have been made for Mental Health First Aid. First, **HB 2490** would add \$250,000 for this program targeted to adults interacting with youth. The bill has cleared the House but is not yet assigned or scheduled for Senate consideration. A similar measure, **HB 2543**, would provide \$250,000 for schools. This bill has cleared

the House and been assigned to Education and Appropriations committees, but is not yet on the agenda for either committee. This may be a budget negotiation issue, so all hope isn't lost yet.

- Two bills are of interest to licensed behavioral health professionals. **SB 1077**, which is targeted to individuals seeking reciprocal license from their "home" state, has cleared the Senate and House committees. It looks like this will be sent to the Governor within the next week or two. **SB 1216** dealing with licensure of institutions and outpatient clinics has cleared the Senate and House Health committee. This bill will assist with issues of integration and co-location of behavioral health services. Looking good, so far.
- **HB 2234** which would repeal the expansion of AHCCCS and the hospital assessment-- essential components of last year's restoration and expansion success-- has not cleared the House Appropriations committee. While we can't declare it victory yet, it's obviously in trouble.
- Speaker Tobin has introduced **HB 2367** which would require AHCCCS to seek waivers to require able-bodied adults to participate in a workfare program and would impose a 5-year limit on benefits. Amendments offered in the House sought to clarify the able-bodied definition. In addition, the bill would have AHCCCS establish "meaningful" copayments for use of the ER for non-ER care. The bill is on the Senate Health & Human Services agenda next week.
- **HB 2508** would require licensure by the Department of Insurance for Marketplace Navigator and Certified Application Counselors. The bill will be heard in Senate Health & Human Services next week.
- A couple of bills relating to court orders for incapacitated persons are making their way through the process. **HB 2093** rewrites current laws regarding court proceedings subsequent to guardian appointment and transfer of venue for incapacitated individuals. **HB 2105** allows a police officer to detain a person who is believed to need evaluation due to a mental disorder or of being a danger to self or others.

A ways to go before the legislature can adjourn, but some sorting is underway. Don't forget to let **your** legislator know your views. Use your voice to inform them of what works.

## Birthday Bash

On Friday, May 2nd, **Mental Health America of Arizona** (MHA-AZ) will join with the **Mental Health Guild** (MHG) to celebrate the 60th and 50th year since the founding of these two organizations. Our theme is "*Those Were the Days*".



The event will be at the Arizona Country Club at 5668 E. Orange Blossom Lane, Phoenix. We will open the doors at 5:30 pm with your favorite 1950s and 1960s tunes played by a local DJ, a silent auction, and an all- American dinner with a sundae bar to satisfy your sweet tooth. There'll be a birthday toast and a concert with William Florian, a former singer with The

New Christy Minstrels He performs many of the greats from Peter, Paul and Mary, John Denver, the Mamas and Papas, and Pete Seeger. You'll be able to "cut the rug" (that's "dance", for you Millenials) under the stars until closing at 10:30 pm.

Are you ready to drag out your poodle skirt, a Buddy Holly jacket or find your bell-bottom pants, tie-dyed shirt and love beads? Join us for fun and renewing as well as making new friends!

Tickets are on sale at this [link](#) or if you want to send a check please do so to MHA/MHG Fundraiser, c/o R.L. Peterson, 7928 E. Sage Dr., Scottsdale 85250. You get an early-bird rate of \$75 per person if you buy before April 15th.

Want to be a sponsor for the birthday bash? We welcome your interest and participation; contact Cheryl Collier at [colliercl@me.com](mailto:colliercl@me.com) about opportunities to be our "patron".

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### Enrollment Deadline Pending

As we send out this month's newsletter, we **NEED** to remind you, those you care about, know or serve, that the deadline for enrolling in the Marketplace is on March 31st. That's just 16

days away!



Get online [here](#) or call 1-800-318-2596. You can also call 211 to get the name and phone number of a local Navigator or Certified Application Counselor to help you sign up for essential health care. Remember, once this deadline passes, the next enrollment will not be until November 1st unless you have some major event in your life such as getting married, having a baby or moving.

Nationally, over 4.2 Million have signed up for the ACA or Obamacare, with 57,611 enrolled here in Arizona.

On the AHCCCS front: with the restoration and expansion we've seen 156,153 individuals with incomes less than 100% of poverty restored to the program. There have been 5,806 enrolled in the expansion group. This is great news! Thanks for all your hard work last session, and thanks as well to the legislators under Governor Brewer's leadership in making that a priority during the 2013 session.

So, this is an important message, **sign up for coverage!!!**



**Case Concludes:**

On Thursday, February 27th, Governor Jan Brewer was one of the speakers at the fairness hearing that brought the Arnold v Sarn lawsuit to end after 33 years. "I am pleased Judge Bassett acted so quickly to approve the stipulation, which helps us maintain our momentum implementing a behavioral health system worthy of the people of Arizona," said Governor Brewer. "The Court's decision is a true testament to the collaborative and good-faith efforts of the state, plaintiffs and

other stakeholders who have worked diligently to bring about this long-awaited accomplishment. I thank those involved for their hard work and commitment, and I commend the Court for its swift support of our mission."

Now it's on to the work of actually implementing and monitoring the terms of the agreement described in the January issue of the newsletter. In brief, the elements include: 1) Eight Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams are to be available around the clock providing a wide range of flexible services, to help stabilize an individual in the community; 2) Supported Housing provided at scattered-sites and is permanent for the individual for 1,200 new people; 3) Supported Employment services to serve up to 750 individuals; and, 4) Peer and Family Support Services to serve 1,500 peers and their families.

#### New RBHA in Maricopa County:

Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care (MMIC) is scheduled to officially become the Regional Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA) for Maricopa County on April 1st. MMIC is a not-for-profit locally owned and operated health plan sponsored by Mercy Care Plan and Maricopa Integrated Health System. MMIC will provide an integrated health plan for AHCCCS-eligible SMI members by meeting both behavioral and physical health care needs for this population. MMIC has a toll-free line (866-796-5598) and staff dedicated to answer your questions. You can also go to their [website](#) to get more information.

SMI members who are not enrolled in AHCCCS will continue to receive the same behavioral health services. For non-AHCCCS individuals receiving general mental health or substance abuse services, MMIC will be their RBHA for those services. Physical health care services will not be integrated or bundled for non-AHCCCS SMI, substance abuse or general mental health care individuals.

For children who receive AHCCCS coverage, their behavioral health will be provided by MMIC and their physical health needs met by the child's current AHCCCS health plan. Children who are not enrolled in AHCCCS will receive only their behavioral health from MMIC.

There are a few remaining community forums where you can go to get answers to your questions:

- **March 26** - 3 to 6 p.m., Partners in Recovery, 4330 E. University Drive, Mesa
- **April 16** - 3 to 6 p.m., Partners in Recovery, 5625 W.

Bell Road, Phoenix

- **April 23** - 3 to 6 p.m., Mountain Health and Wellness, 625 N. Plaza Drive, Apache Junction

### **Coming Events**

Arizona Healthy Communities Conference: The Intersection of Health & Community Development will be held on **Wednesday, March 19th** at the East Valley Institute of Technology, 1601 W. Main in Mesa. The registration fee is \$75. Link here for [registration](#).

The Terros 10th Annual Cesar Chavez Behavioral Health Conference, will be held on **Thursday, March 27th** at ASU West at 4701 W. Thunderbird Rd., Glendale. Keynote Speaker is Dr. Francisco A. Moreno, a Tenured Professor of Psychiatry and Deputy Dean for Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Arizona, who has a special interest in underserved populations and has established collaborations to decrease the gap in mental health services for communities in Arizona. [Enroll](#) by **March 21st**.

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We invite your participation and sharing of this newsletter by forwarding to your friends and colleagues. If they wish to receive the free newsletter, encourage them to simply click on the link [here](#). Let's share the word. Let's get involved.

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