

# The Joint Commission BHC News

A complimentary publication of  
The Joint Commission

Issue Two 2009

## Executive Director

*A new crop of behavioral health care surveyor candidates recently experienced an intensive six days of instruction (see article). It brought back memories of my own training days. I was thrilled to be selected as a Joint Commission surveyor because I valued the teaching aspect of the role and believed wholeheartedly in the mission — to continuously improve the care provided to the public. These new surveyors have the same passion.*

*After training, exams and a preceptorship, they will join the 31 other behavioral health care surveyors. It's a rigorous, exacting process, but we want our surveyors trained to provide the best possible service to our customers.*

*Our customers are at the heart of everything we do, which is why we're showcasing them on the home page of our [Web site](#). Behavioral health care providers Jeff Ralicki from Tykes & Teens in Stuart, Fla., and Dustin Tibbitts of InnerChange New Haven in Provo, Utah, were kind enough to provide us with their insights. If you'd like to be featured in a testimonial, the process is easy. Simply e-mail your contact information to me at [mcesaremurphy@jointcommission.org](mailto:mcesaremurphy@jointcommission.org).*

*Mary Cesare-Murphy, Ph.D.*



## Meet the new BHC surveyors

Becoming a Joint Commission behavioral health care surveyor takes dedication and more, according to David Wadner, Ph.D., field director, Surveyor Management and Development.

“Joint Commission surveyors must have great people skills, like to teach, be customer-focused, disciplined, and excellent problem solvers. They should also be able to handle people in a sensitive and caring manner, all while being experts on the BHC standards and survey process,” says Wadner.

Five surveyor trainees recently went through more than a week of training. To be selected is an accomplishment in itself, notes Wadner. “The selection process is rigorous. Candidates must have a master’s degree and at least five years of behavioral health care experience. In this class, all candidates have 20 plus years in the field, know the BHC accreditation manual very well, and at some point in their career, worked as survey coordinators at a Joint Commission accredited organization.”

Next, the candidates will take the General Surveyor Certification Exam and the Behavioral Health Care Certification Exam. After passing, they

will complete preceptorships with veteran surveyors before surveying on their own. The soon-to-be surveyors are:

- **Eileen Fraser**, M.A., R.N., part-time surveyor, is coordinator and consulting clinical liaison for Gero-Psychiatric services at Chestnut Health Systems in Granite City, Ill. She is board certified in psychiatric/mental health nursing.
- **Mark Halal**, L.C.S.W., part-time surveyor, is campus administrator at Devereux Florida Treatment Network, Viera, Fla.
- **Mike Matoney**, M.B.A., L.I.C.D.C., intermittent surveyor, is the executive director at New Directions, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio. He also maintains certification as an Internationally Certified Clinical Supervisor.
- **Martin Ricketts**, L.C.S.W., intermittent surveyor, is deputy director of Rehabilitation Services at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in New York, N.Y. He is certified in the field of hypnosis.
- **Nahid Shavakhi**, M.S.N., intermittent surveyor, is director of Clinical Services at KVC Behavioral HealthCare Inc. in Kansas City, Kan.

## Surveyor provides field input for SII



Hagesfeld

Tom Hagesfeld, Ph.D., behavioral health care surveyor, has been a key member of the team reviewing the behavioral health care standards for the

[Standards Improvement Initiative](#). Since January 2008, the team has devoted

many hours to painstakingly reviewing the language of every standard. He talks about his experience and the work the team has accomplished.

### What is the goal of SII?

To clarify the language in the *Behavioral Healthcare Accreditation Manual* so it is more understandable and precise.

*Continued on page 2*

## newsline

### Scoring changes

Changes have been made to the scoring and criticality levels of some elements of performance (EPs) based on comments from customers, surveyors and staff. Revisions are listed in the May and June 2009 issues of *Joint Commission Perspectives*. Some changes are effective immediately, others will go into effect July 1, 2009. For more information, see the [Requirements](#) page.

### See you there!

Behavioral health care staff members attend meetings and conventions throughout the year. In 2009, we'll be at:

- Florida Council for Community Mental Health, Boca Raton, Fla., Sept. 2-3
- American Association for Children's Residential Centers, Cleveland, Ohio, Oct. 6-9
- Alliance for Children & Family Services, Houston, Texas, Oct. 14-16

### Standards Q&A

Megan Marx, M.P.A.

Associate director, Opioid Treatment Program

#### **Q. Is it necessary for my Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) to assess and document "take-home" medications every holiday or Sunday?**

A. No. During the initial phase of treatment, a documented assessment should be conducted the first time take-home medications are used over a Sunday or a holiday. Additionally, if the patient's take-home doses are suspended because of a recent positive illicit drug test or because he or she is known to be diverting methadone, a subsequent documented assessment should be conducted to resume take-home dosages.

As treatment progresses and the dosage is boosted to two or three take-home medications per week, another one-time assessment should be conducted and documented. If you have questions regarding OTP requirements, please contact Megan Marx at [mmarx@jointcommission.org](mailto:mmarx@jointcommission.org).

### Surveyor provides SII input...continued from page 1

#### **How is this being achieved?**

A skilled team with extensive behavioral health care experience reviews every element of performance and rewrites it so the meaning and applicability is easier to understand. Then experienced writers edit the revisions to reflect decisions of the team.

#### **Why is it important to include a surveyor on the SII team?**

As an experienced clinician, administrator and surveyor, I'm very familiar with how the standards work. I know where organizations struggle to meet the requirements.

#### **How will SII benefit BHC organizations?**

Hagesfeld notes three positive effects of the initiative:

- Organizations will clearly understand how to meet the standards.
- Organizations will see the relevance of the standards to their efforts to provide high quality, safe behavioral health care services.
- The standards and elements of performance will be easier to survey, which will enhance the reliability of the survey process and improve customer satisfaction.

### Resources

#### Education

##### **Save the dates!**

**Behavioral Health Care Update**  
Sept. 25, Philadelphia, Pa.

##### **Annual Behavioral Health Care Conference and Update**

Nov. 16-18, 2009, Chicago, Ill.

#### Publications

##### **2009 E-dition for Behavioral Health Care**

Single user license order code:  
EBHS09H, \$297

Site license order code:  
EBHS09H, \$1,485

##### **2009 Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Behavioral Health Care**

Order code: CBHC09, \$265

##### **2009 Accreditation Process Guide for Behavioral Health Care**

Order code: BHSP09, \$119

##### **A Practical Guide to Documentation in Behavioral Health Care**

Order code: BH600, \$99

To purchase products or register for programs, go to the [JCR Web site](#) or call (877) 223-6866.

#### Online newsletter

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#### Contact us

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