

New Mexico Interagency Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative

Collaboration for Recovery, Resiliency and Empowerment

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For Immediate Release

New Mexico Behavioral Health Consumers Very Satisfied with Services through New System of Care

Children and Adults Report Highest Level of Satisfaction since Survey Has Been Administered

Santa Fe, December 7, 2006 – The New Mexico Behavioral Health Collaborative (Collaborative) has just completed the 2006 Consumer Satisfaction Survey for children/families and adults who have accessed New Mexico's public mental health and substance abuse services during the first year of the new behavioral health system of care. And the results for both groups are the highest of any survey during the years they were administered.

“For consumers' level of satisfaction to be high during a transition to streamline and improve behavioral health services says a lot,” said Secretary Pamela Hyde, Human Services Department and co-chair of the Collaborative. “This does not mean, however, that our job is done. We will use the information from the survey to continue to improve services for New Mexico's children, families and adults.”

The random sample telephone survey of approximately 1,400 children/families and adults, was conducted during the first year of the new behavioral health system of care, which began July 1, 2005. At that time, a significant amount of publicly funded behavioral health services, both mental health and substance abuse, was administered through a single statewide entity, ValueOptions New Mexico.

Those surveyed respondents were asked to rate their levels of satisfaction in five areas: Access, Appropriateness, Satisfaction, Effectiveness and Empowerment. High levels of satisfaction were reported in all areas.

The top three positive responses from the children/families survey are:

1. Staff was sensitive to our cultural-ethnic background,
2. Staff respected our wishes about who is, and who is not, to be given information about my child's or family's treatment, and
3. My family and I were treated with respect and dignity by all of the provider's staff.

The top three positive responses from the adult survey are:

1. Staff respected my rights,
2. The services I received were helpful, and
3. I felt comfortable asking questions about my treatment and medications.

This first-time Collaborative survey will now serve as a baseline for maintaining and improving satisfaction among New Mexico's behavioral health consumers. “Our next step is to show consumers across the state the results of the survey and get their feedback and suggestions for improvement,” said Secretary Michelle Lujan Grisham, Department of Health and co-chair of the Collaborative.

The survey did reveal some areas in need of improvement. For example, only 42 percent of children/families and over 50 percent of adults did not know whether consumers are involved in decisions about the quality of care they received.

(more)



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Administrative Office of the Courts

Children, Youth and Families Department

New Mexico Corrections Department

Department of Finance and Administration

Department of Health

Department of Labor

Department of Transportation

Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Governor's Commission on Disability

Governor's Health Policy Advisor

Health Policy Commission

Human Services Department

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Another area in need of improvement is crisis services, which was lowest on the scale for access among adults. This result is consistent with findings from the Behavioral Health Gap Analysis of 2002 and of the current Collaborative, which has identified the lack of after-hour crisis services as a major access issue in New Mexico. “We share consumer’s concerns and are working diligently to enhance these services through strategic planning and community reinvestment initiatives,” said Pamela Galbraith, CEO of ValueOptions New Mexico.

It is important to note that consumers are at the heart of the Consumer Satisfaction Project. Consumers participate in the Steering Committee, are trained to conduct the telephone survey, a consumer wrote the final report, and trained consumers will take the findings of the report across the state to explain the results and get more feedback from consumers. “If we find that people are not satisfied with the services, we need to change them,” said Marilyn Rohn, State Liaison with the Office of Consumer Affairs at the Department of Health. “This can only happen when consumers drive the process for change, which is what is happening in New Mexico right now.”

The complete Consumer Satisfaction Survey can be found on the Collaborative website at www.bhc.state.nm.us under the news/resources section.

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