



**MHIA**  
Mental Health America  
of Dutchess County

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

***Bringing Wellness Home***



## A Message from our Executive Director

Dear friends of Mental Health America of Dutchess County,

The landscape of healthcare seems to be changing very quickly. Just as Dutchess County Government is combining its departments of Health and Mental Health, many of our services are beginning to be driven by NYS Department of Health initiatives, and less frequently by the NYS Department of Mental Health. The ongoing provision of core services such as homeless services, care management services, child and family support services and social club activities are all folding into managed care.

This is a big change for an agency like MHADC, that for years provided services under contracts. Agencies like MHADC have always had a difficult time measuring outcomes for the fine work we do and quantifying the difference we make in the lives of people throughout this county. However, we are contracting with companies providing new technology so that we can quantify the great work we do. The staff has been extraordinarily flexible under extreme duress of an ever-changing way of documenting while continuing to be an ever-present positive force in their clients' lives.

2014 has been a very positive year for MHADC. The amount of people in our community who know who we are and what we do is growing. Our work strengthening families, linking people to supports, instilling hope, breaking down stigma, and ultimately strengthening our community one person at a time continues.

Thank you,

Andrew O'Grady, LCSW-R

# CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Lisa Connolly, MA, Psy.D., Division  
Director, Adult Services



## In 2014

- Care management served 2,741 individuals, including 25,409 face-to-face visits.
- Housing services provided homes to 16 individuals.
- The Living Room was visited over 30,000 times and 783 people received services, an increase of 132 over last year.
- Beacon PROS provided 2,616 services to 124 individuals, an increase of 578 services.

## Bringing wellness home

Homebound and looking for a way to keep in touch with her family and friends, Jan didn't know where to begin. Her Care Manager, Christa, knew exactly what to do and coordinated with Acts of Kindness to find a laptop to keep her connected. Being able to stay connected provided Jan support when needed the most.

### **Adult Services.** Dr. Lisa Connolly, Division Director.

Dr. Connolly oversees the departments below assuring that MHADC is strategically positioned to provide the best care possible to our adult services clients, and that we are successfully meeting the needs of the people in our community. Within the Care Management Department falls our Supportive Housing Program, the Pet Project, as well as Generic and Health Home Care Management.

### **Care Management.** Mike Napolitano, Department Manager.

Our growing staff of 65 care managers and support staff serves people with severe and persistent mental illness. We help clients maintain their housing, find satisfying work, increase their social and recreational activities, and set a variety of personal goals. We coordinate with virtually every person in our clients' lives including families, psychiatrists, therapists, advocates, primary medical doctors, landlords, and parole or probation officers.

### **Mel's Place: The Living Room.** Vernae Johnson, Program Manager.

Mel's Place, also known as The Living Room, provides a safe haven, hot food, showers, and more to individuals and families who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless and struggle with mental health and/or substance abuse. Staff members offer support and referrals for housing, employment, help with addiction, and health benefits including weekly visits from representatives of the Veteran's Administration.

### **Beacon Wellness PROS.** Kristina Hazleton, LMSW, Team Leader.

Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS) is a comprehensive recovery-oriented program for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. Support and rehabilitation aim to improve functioning, reduce the need for inpatient and emergency services and contact with the criminal justice system, increase employment, promote education, and secure preferred housing.

# EDUCATING OUR COMMUNITY

Janet Caruso, M.S.L.S., Director,  
Community Education



## In 2014

- Kids on the Block taught 141 children about bullying, obesity, substance abuse, and more.
- Our library had 772 visitors.
- Our information and referral service responded to 781 calls.
- 3,302 people attended MHADC's classes, workshops, training sessions, and conferences.
- 25 students participated in Supported Education.

## Bringing wellness home

Plagued by depression and a series of hospital stays following high school, Sue was very anxious about starting college. An education specialist at MHADC worked with her to calm her fears. Sue acclimated well and is now succeeding at SUNY Dutchess.

## Kids on the Block

Using nearly life-size puppets, Kids on the Block educates and entertains young children, stimulating communication between the audience and puppets. Children learn healthy life skills that increase awareness and understanding. Programs on the following topics are available free to schools and youth groups: bullies and school safety, childhood obesity, multiculturalism, and learning disabilities.

## Library

Community members can use a computer, read journals, borrow books, and browse the reference collection in the Library at our Mansion Street headquarters and visit us online to browse the collection and order titles to pick up. The Library also maintains a collection of more than 130 videos and DVDs.

## Information and Referral

With a phone call or a visit to our website, people seeking help or information are connected to a variety of resources including a private referral list of Dutchess County psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers. We also offer classes and participate in health fairs, giving the public an opportunity to learn about mental wellness and services available from MHADC and other local programs.

## Supported Education

Supported Education serves students whose post-secondary education has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a disability. Ongoing support services are designed to help the student succeed. This is a cooperative program of MHADC, Dutchess Community College, and New York State's Adult Career Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation.

# STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Lydia Edelhaus, MA, Ph.D.,  
Director, Family Support and  
Advocacy Services



In 2014 we served over 1,500 people including...

- 251 people in Family Support.
- 111 parents with psychiatric disabilities.
- 185 children, youth, and young adults in Respite.
- 831 people in Adult Advocacy.
- 25 scholarships awarded to children with SED for summer camps.
- 35 people in Compeer.
- 34 children via Court-Appointed Special Advocates.

Family Support and Advocacy Services helps families where one or more members has a mental illness including families of adults who continue to live with parents or other family members. Stressing strengths, rather than illness, and emphasizing family involvement, we often collaborate with other community groups to provide skill-building, peer support, education, empowerment, advocacy, and opportunities for social interaction.

## **Mental Health Support Programs**

Family Support offers peer advocacy and help to parents and caregivers of children with serious emotional disorders and other special mental health needs. Programs and services include: HOPE for Families, peer support groups, advocacy, and Medicaid-Waiver Family Support. The latter is provided through the New York State Office of Mental Health. MHADC also provides these services for families with children in residential treatment facilities.

Staff members work with parents to decrease their sense of isolation, help them access community and regional supports, and help them meet self-directed goals. In addition, to improve family relations and educate and support the siblings of children with serious emotional disorders (SED), MHADC offers two age-specific groups through our Sibling Support Program. These educational and recreational groups use an evidence-based curriculum to help children better understand their siblings who have SED while enjoying special fun activities for themselves.

## Bringing wellness home

This past year a group of our teens participated in the “No Name Calling Art Project Exhibit”. They created a piece of artwork that was displayed and photographed for the Poughkeepsie Journal, with an accompanying article in which they were quoted. One teen hoped to inspire other teens, saying, “I want to boost up people who feel they are nothing”.

Another teen participated in the project because of her own experiences, stating, “We want to help people who are being bullied. I know, because I’ve been bullied.” The show helped to give them a voice and boost their confidence, and they made sure they were heard.

The teens were very active in the community in 2014, volunteering their time to help others in need. This included assisting with John Flowers’ Annual Easter Egg Stuffing event in preparation for the annual Easter Egg Hunt.



## Programs for Parents with Psychiatric Disabilities

EMERGE uses evidence-based curricula to support, advocate, and educate, and to provide parenting skills to help achieve self-directed goals. MHADC also offers peer support, the Wellness Recovery Empowerment Program/Advanced Directives, and Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model. Parents build on positive interactions to learn strategies that prepare their families for disruptions arising from their illness.

## Respite Programs

MHADC’s Respite Programs offer a wide array of services for families with children who have serious emotional disorders (SED). Although technically respite services are for parents, the primary interaction occurs between trained respite workers and children through individual excursions and group recreation that provide parents with a break.

Individual Respite also serves families involved in New York State's Bridges to Health program and Office of Mental Health Waiver programs. Teen Challenge offers a curriculum-based, skill-building, support group for 14-19-year-olds with SED, including regular community service. MHADC also provides summer camp scholarships for children with SED and these scholarships are currently available.

### **Teen Challenge**

Teen Challenge is one of two transition programs for young people preparing for life after high school. Eligible youth, aged 14-19, meet in dynamic weekly groups to work through evidence-based life skills curricula. They also perform regular community service activities and enjoy monthly recreational activities. The goal is to prepare them for life as young adults and to integrate them into their communities.

### **Young Adult Transition Program**

Young adults, aged 18-25, with a mental illness, are offered a rich program of weekly life skills training, including wellness self-management and job skills. Participants can also take part in community service, internships, and develop affiliations in the business and retail community. The Young Adult Program was funded in 2014 by the Dyson Foundation. The program has been successful and received grants and funding from additional sources to continue through 2015.

### **Adult Advocacy**

MHADC's Adult Advocacy Program has expanded from providing information and advocacy to offering peer support groups. We also have added a family support component because we heard from so many families who needed help finding resources for 18-25-year-old adult children who had "graduated" from the children's mental health system and were having difficulty engaging the adult system or had never been involved in any mental health program at all.

### **Compeer**

Compeer pairs adults with community volunteers for weekly activities and companionship. There are social events for these teams, those on our waiting list, volunteers, and advisors. Those on the waiting list also receive a weekly phone call from Compeer's coordinator. In 2014, we continued to strengthen our program designed especially for veterans, CompeerCorps. Volunteers are needed and receive training designed to help ease isolation, build trust, and offer support.

### **Court-Appointed Special Advocates**

CASA volunteers are trained citizens who advocate for children at risk for foster care placement and monitor foster care cases involving abuse or neglect. The aim is to ensure that children in foster homes are well treated and that their cases progress through the system promptly. MHADC's CASA is part of a nationwide network that sets standards for quality and performance, and a state organization that provides support and pass-through funds when available. Dutchess County Family Court judges speak publicly about the value of CASA and the importance of maintaining its funding.

# ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Jennifer Nelson, Director of Finance and Human Resources



The ongoing transition to health homes, along with the growth of the clinical component at PROS, were a few challenges for billing as well as opportunities for the continued advancement and success of MHADC. Staff work hard and the results show in smoother operations and improved recordkeeping.

Other administrative developments include implementation of new electronic medical records and migration of data, and the successful implementation of an electronic payroll and attendance service. Technological advances such as these help us keep up and stay ahead of the curve with an ever-changing federal and state health care environment.

## Why a bell?

***Cast from the shackles which bound them, this bell shall ring out hope for the mentally ill and victory over mental illness.***

In 1950, the National Mental Health Association (now Mental Health America) chose a bell as its symbol. The association's leaders had worked in state mental hospitals during World War II. Shocked at

the treatment they saw—including patients chained to walls—they vowed to improve the lives of all who suffered from mental illness.



Volunteers collected metal restraints from hundreds of hospitals across the country. They shipped them to the McShane Bell Foundry where they were dropped into a crucible and cast into a 300-pound bell. The 1953 photo at left shows Maryland Governor Theodore McKeldin and Mrs. A. Felix DuPont at the foundry.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Program Expenses

MHADC's Care Management program uses funds to help ensure that our clients have what they need to succeed.

Mel's Place utilizes every resource available to help people stay off the streets and get them back on their feet.

### For example, some 2014 costs:

Food.....	\$39,371
Hygienics.....	\$24,924
Clothing.....	\$22,626
Improving or saving a life.....	Priceless

## Statement of Support, Revenue & Expenses For Year Ending December 31, 2014 Figures are pre-audit

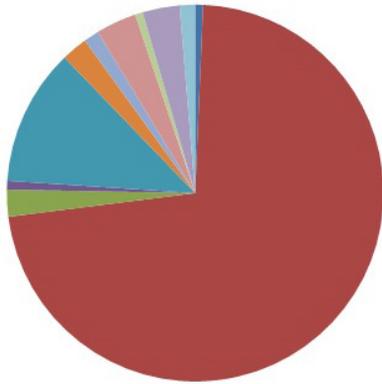
### Public Support & Revenue

United Way Donations	\$9,554
County Contract Reimbursement	\$2,624,633
Program Income	\$42,096
Special Events	\$39,568
Membership Dues/Donations	\$8,916
Interest Income	\$7,414
Grants/Contract Reimbursement	\$121,153
Medicare	\$29,475
Medicaid	\$4,397,459
Deferred Medicaid Revenue	\$371,119
<b>Total Public Support &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>\$7,651,387</b>

### Summary

Total Expenses	\$7,619,902
Excess of Support	\$31,485
Fund Balance 1/1/14	\$436,631
Fund Balance 12/31/14	\$468,116

MHADC receives funds from Dutchess County Dept. of Mental Hygiene, Dutchess County Division of Youth Services, Dyson Foundation, NYS Office of Mental Health, NYS Dept of Education, NYS Office of Children & Family Services, United Way, federal grants, private donations and memberships.



- CASA
- Care Management
- Children's Respite
- Compeer
- PROS
- Education
- Family Support
- Mel's Place
- Young Adult Transition
- Supported Housing

## Program Services & Additional Expenses

CASA	\$50,613
Care Management	\$5,426,929
Children's Respite	\$173,052
Compeer	\$56,582
PROS	\$881,016
Education	\$168,228
EMERGE	\$99,721
Family Support & Advocacy	\$179,978
Mel's Place	\$262,058
Supported Housing	\$240,658
Young Adult Transition	\$48,488
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$7,587,323</b>
<b>Association Expenses</b>	<b>\$32,579</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$7,619,902</b>

## 2014 MHADC Board of Directors

Paul Ackermann, Treasurer

Sarluta Anderson-Davis

Yolanda Armstrong-Rubin

Sakima Brown

Judy Canham, RN

Veronica Cavalla, RN, MSN, Secretary

Debi Duke

Arlene Elderkin

Joseph Ellman, President

Harriet Fein, Honorary member

Teresa Gasparini, Vice President

Julie Gutierrez

Daria Hanssen, Ph.D., LCSW-R

Benjamin Hayden, Ph.D., Honorary member

Larry Hughes

Thomas Kelly III

Robert E. Martin, LCSW-R

Uma Satyendra



## A Message from our Board President

Dear Friends,

As I complete my term as president of the Board of Directors, I would like to recognize members of the Mental Health America of Dutchess County family responsible for our many accomplishments over the past 2 years, including:

Dedicated staff members who each contribute a high level of care and commitment, so that those in the community suffering from mental illness are able to experience the relief and improvement they desire.

Volunteers who selflessly provide to this organization programs that may not otherwise be possible. Examples include Compeer volunteers who give their time to be with people with mental illness who are often isolated and CASA volunteers who meet with members of families separating or divorcing, providing reports to help inform the case judge in a decision on custody.

The thoughtful leadership of our Executive Director, Andrew O'Grady, whose vision is fueled by his desire to eliminate the stigma and suffering associated with mental illness.

Members of our Board of Directors, who work to ensure MHADC's long-term organizational health and success.

Our individual and organizational friends who generously donate funds that allow us to maintain and expand vital programming so many rely upon.

As a result of the combined efforts of each group's members, Mental Health America of Dutchess County experienced another successful year that included a positive independent financial audit, confirming that our sound fiscal position continues.

Sincerely,

Joseph Ellman, MS, MPA  
President





**Mental Health America of Dutchess County**  
253 Mansion Street, Poughkeepsie 12601 • 845-473-2500

**Beacon Wellness Center**  
249 Main Street, Beacon 12508 • 845-831-2124

[www.mhadutchess.org](http://www.mhadutchess.org) • [info@mhadutchess.org](mailto:info@mhadutchess.org) • [events@mhadutchess.org](mailto:events@mhadutchess.org)