

Mental Health
2009 Issues Briefing
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Mental Health Summit Update:

The league continues its representation at the state-wide Mental Health Summit. During 2008 the MHS has:

- Organized two mental health rally's—spring in Springfield and fall in Chicago.
- Continued to lobby for the group's priority issues and related legislation.
- Monitored, reported and took action on several critical issues: inpatient mental health issues such as the recent Tinley Park closing and downsizing at Chester; lack of sufficient operation funding; children and adolescent; veteran services, housing, and criminal justice. Note: According to Illinois Dept. of Human Services Tinley Park MH Center Closure Tentative Timeframe, the deadline for the commission to issue an advisory opinion is January 21, 2009.

Mental Health Summit 2009 Initiatives:

Currently the group is working on advocacy priorities which will include an array of choices to concentrate its efforts:

- Infrastructure--maintaining access to psychotropic medications, supporting federal human services infrastructure initiatives, maintaining current inpatient hospital capacity.
- Legislative issues—creating an integrated mental health legislative agenda and urging legislators to support the entire package.
- State funding issues—Supporting state revenues (increased taxes), double funding for mh services, etc.
- DMH/State bureaucracy issues—increase timeliness of payments to mh service providers, etc.
- Other issues: Insurance; consumer/advocacy; justice system; and mental health code reforms.

As of this writing the summit has not selected its top priorities to work on. Please visit www.lwvil.org/mentalhealth/asp in February for an update.

Overview of additional 2008 activities:

- Attended the Illinois Mental Health Code: Understanding the Legal, Clinical, and Social Implications on May 20th in Chicago sponsored by Division of Mental Health, Illinois Department of Human Services and co-sponsored by Mental Health Services and Policy Program of Northwestern University. Program focused on understanding the changes in the new civil commitment standards in Public Act 95-602 recently passed.

Sent action alert to grassroots advocates on 5/20/08--ACTION NEEDED: Major effort needed to generate as many e-mails, personal phone calls, and meetings with House representatives from your respective service areas urging them to: SUPPORT AT LEAST 3% COST OF LIVING/COST OF DOING BUSINESS INCREASE FOR ALL PRIVATE HUMAN SERVICE PROVIDERS IN FY 09; SUPPORT COST OF

LIVING/DOING BUSINESS EACH YEAR BEGINNING IN FY10 BASED ON THE EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

Legislative News: Governor signed SB 1103 in November, 08 and is now PA 95-1001. After line items veto's of approximately \$55 million about \$150 million was left available for appropriation showing restoration to FY 2008 levels for Mental health, Substance Abuse, DD rates, community youth services, DCFS foster care and preadmission post discharge screening.

For information on the criminal justice system and the mentally ill, see the Criminal Justice report. For information on Children's Mental Health, see the Children's Services report.

I am always interested in hearing about mental health activity with other local leagues! Please e-mail me at issues@lwvil.org if you need information or assistance.