

**ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
COALITION FOR RECOVERY**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2010-2011**



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### **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

For the past ten years, the Allegheny County Coalition for Recovery has been a leading voice to increase awareness that people “*can and do recover*” from behavioral health challenges. It has been a regional leader in promoting the use of recovery practices and principles by practioners. Toward these ends, Coalition members have conducted public awareness events, staffed information tables at conferences, conducted dialogues with a variety of stakeholders, and developed an array of tools to be used by people in recovery and practioners of the art and science of healing.

The newest publication, *A Decade of Transformation*, illustrates many of these tools. This beautiful, full-color booklet demonstrates a legacy that has significantly advanced the recovery movement in Allegheny County. All the efforts mentioned above have contributed to Allegheny County being one of Pennsylvania’s leaders in transforming its service delivery system.

This past year has been one of the most productive in ACCR’s history. Strong leadership at the committee level and a strategic plan which has helped frame the work of the committees, have contributed to this success. Ultimately, it is the work of our valuable volunteer members that enables the success of every project. Without all of their support ACCR would not have accomplished nearly as much nor had the impact that it has had.

ACCR looks forward to the next 10 years with the intention of remaining a strong voice for recovery, wellness, and system transformation in the region. Developing strong, new leadership remains one of the important tasks in continuing to be that voice. ACCR has set high standards for itself in developing leadership, standards it has not always lived up to, but it has not shrunk from this challenge. With all involved, ACCR will strive to meet this challenge and grow with new ideas and energy. Leading by example is one of the most powerful ways to promote recovery and system change. In doing so, ACCR will continue to negotiate that fine line between promoting recovery, which is a process, and accomplishing the tasks that lead to system transformation.

## **CHILD & FAMILY RECOVERY & RESILIENCY COMMITTEE**

The hardworking members of the Child and Family Recovery & Resiliency Committee have added another year of high productivity. This year they were frontier explorers. They crossed the boundary of behavioral health services from which their award winning Recovery/Resiliency Toolkit (2010) came and moved into the world of juvenile probation.

The Committee's hard work paid off in the fortunate recruiting of three people from the Human Service Administration Organization (HSAO). One was a person with personal lived experience of recovery with mental illness who is also a multi-generational family member, two staff members from HSAO joined: one of whom has experience as a youth mentor and advocate, and the other works with behavioral health within the juvenile probation system.

With these crucial insights into various experiences of life and work added to the long-standing group of members the Committee was able to adapt last year's Recovery/Resiliency Toolkit to train juvenile probation officers. This sustained effort led to a training that incorporated the Probation Officers' daily experience and shed a new light on youth violence and delinquency from a recovery and wellness perspective. The Committee trained two classes of probation officers and has received requests for more in the coming year.

## **CONSUMER-PROVIDER COLLABORATIVE**

The Collaborative continued with its dialogues with people in recovery and psychiatry residents. These well-received and enlightening dialogues are now scheduled for twice a year. Two members of the Collaborative traveled to San Francisco this fall to video tape a dialogue as part of the SAMHSA *Recovery to Practice* Initiative with psychiatrists from different specialties. Several promising dialogues are in the planning stage with various faith-based providers within the community and through collaborations between the academia of local theological seminaries and area hospitals.

## **EDUCATION**

The Education Committee focused its efforts on a project which addressed the ACCR goal of ensuring that practitioners communicate respectfully with persons receiving their service system to recognize their strengths and talents. To achieve this goal the Education Committee, along with our partners at Community Care Behavioral Health, developed the *Words Matter* brochure. *Words Matter* is designed to

highlight the need for practioners to ensure that respectful communication becomes a standard throughout the system by emphasizing the use of person-first language. In developing the brochure, the Education Committee conducted several focus groups with a variety of stakeholders. This feedback helped the Committee to refine the brochure and make it more useful to providers. The Education Committee is piloting the use of the brochure with area agencies and is helping them identify tangible ways of measuring improvement in this indicator of recovery-orientation.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

The Membership Committee took a new direction this year and moved into the conference circuit. Practioners, people receiving services, ACCR supporters and family members all took to the big Pink Booth and showed all of ACCR's products and enthusiasm to 425 attendees at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumers' Association. The 2011-2012 budget is set for more recruitment at area gatherings in the spring and fall conference seasons.

## **PUBLIC AWARENESS**

*Recovery Fest 2011* was the highlight for the Public Awareness Committee in 2010-2011. The festival sought to increase participation of people with lived experience in ACCR. Chaz Kallem from the Pittsburgh Pirate Charities delivered an inspirational message to participants about recovery and overcoming adversity. The Recovery Fest also provided stakeholders with an opportunity to come together for education, fellowship and networking.

## **QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**

A new direction was taken by the Quality Improvement Committee. Over the last ten years this workgroup has completed products related in various ways to its white paper, *Guidelines for Developing a Recovery Oriented Behavioral Health System*. This year, during the strategic planning that accompanies the budget process, the 25-year life expectancy disparity and chronic health conditions for people receiving services in this system loomed large. The Committee members of QI decided that they wanted to do something tangible regarding the quality and longevity of life of those receiving services in the community mental health system.

Within a truly amazingly brief amount of time the core of 9 people of this committee produced a person-centered toolkit designed to equip people to be successful in addressing life-style changes that can add years to

their lives. The 21-item kit includes such items as a relaxation CD, a tape measure, a pedometer, smoking cessation tools and a workbook to increase self-esteem to name only five of them.

No accounting of this extraordinary effort can approach completion without mention of the collaborative partnership with Community Care's Connected Care™ project as well as assistance from the OBH System Of Care Initiative (SOCI) helped tremendously with focus groups and the outcome measurement tools that will be included out with every one of the 500 toolkits.

The Quality Committee has teamed up with the Single Point of Accountability Initiative (SPA) to utilize its toolkits in a combined wellness training for service recipients and all levels of staff at each Service Coordination Unit that participates in the SPA program.

### **STEERING**

In addition to its usual duties of overseeing the fiscal operation of ACCR, sharing information about the work of the committees, and refining its payment process so members are paid in a timely manner, the Steering Committee undertook three main projects this year:

- Planning the Ten Year Anniversary Celebration,
- Establishing a process by which new leadership can grow and develop at the committee level, and
- Collaborating with the System of Care Initiative staff to collect outcome measures on projects.

In partnering with the System of Care Staff, two seminars were held, for ACCR members to learn more about defining outcomes, collecting data, and using data to communicate to stakeholders. In addition, Sarah Thurston of SOCI worked with many ACCR committees directly to define outcomes for projects and formulate methods for collecting data to evaluate the success of the project. While ACCR still has much room for progress in this regard, this is an exciting step in its growth as an organization. Using information in this way will enable ACCR to improve the quality and success of its projects which hopefully will mean improved services and outcomes for people with lived experience.

### **WEBSITE**

The Membership Committee responded to dozens of inquiries regarding information on the committees that came in through the website form. This has provided ACCR with some high quality individuals who have joined the Coalition. Progress has been made on the redesign project and will be rolled out in 2012.

*The Allegheny County Coalition For Recovery would like to thank its sponsors for making our Tenth Anniversary Celebration possible through their generosity*



❧ *The Allegheny County Office of Behavioral Health for publishing  
A Decade of Transformation*

❧ *Community Care for  
The Catered Dinner  
The Trophies and Favors*

❧ *Allegheny Health Choices, Inc. for  
The Florist*



*A special thanks to Marianne Baugher from Community Care for giving of her significant talents and the generosity of her many hours of work in designing A Decade of Transformation*



*ACCR would like to express its appreciation to the hard-working people who labored to make the Tenth Anniversary Celebration a special event*

❧ *Dinner and Décor  
Meg Park, Denise Macerelli, Sherry Shaffer*

❧ *Program  
William Boyce, Victoria Livingstone, James Kindler, Nneka Hawthorne*

❧ *A Decade of Change  
Wes Sowers, Jessica Strong, Marianne Baugher*