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Calling all GSAs!

With our recent migration to digital communications, PCS is hoping to reconnect with Good Samaritan Award honorees. If you could please forward this email to one or more of these extraordinary individuals, we would appreciate your help!

Dear Ami,

Welcome to the first digital edition of the Pastoral Counseling Services (PCS) newsletter. We are so excited to have successfully made the transition to digital enews, not only because it means applying more funds towards providing services, but also because it is a faster, greener way to communicate with you!

Thank you for making this journey with us and we look forward to keeping you up-to-date on our organization, services and community offerings, as well as our perspectives on industry topics and trends for many months to come.

PCS, ACA and You

What is Affordable Care Act (ACA)?

In healthcare, much discussion, speculation, and confusion is happening around healthcare reform. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is making great changes in healthcare generally and in behavioral health specifically. The four major areas addressed by the ACA are insurance reform, coverage expansion, delivery system reform, and payment reform. New protections that are in effect have been welcomed by most consumers and providers: insurance companies cannot deny coverage; preexisting exclusions are banned; annual and lifetime limits on coverage are prohibited; and coverage has been extended for children up to age 26.



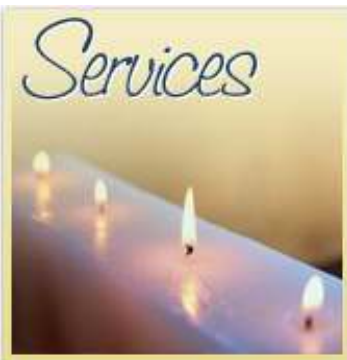
If you are a PCS Good Samaritan Award honoree, please be sure to use the link directly underneath this text to join our enews mailing list. *Thank you!*

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No one knows what the final product will look like as the Executive Branch, Congress, states, and the citizenry work on this major overhaul. The overall goals of the ACA are to improve quality and manage costs by focusing on and early intervention, improving the management of chronic health conditions and finally reducing errors and waste in the healthcare system. Few would argue with these laudable goals.

What Does This Mean To You?

What does this have to do with PCS, clients, providers, and our colleagues? I will comment on two areas. First, early intervention and preventative care are central to behavioral health. The relationship of medical issues such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, ulcers, and other disorders often co-exist with mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. Often, the mental health disorders are not treated or undertreated. PCS clinical staff has seen what many studies have demonstrated that effective psychotherapy can have a positive effect on medical issues.

Second, you will hear much discussion about "healthcare homes" in the ongoing discussion. Since mental and medical health often interrelate, communication between multiple providers is essential. Healthcare homes will be a more intentional relationship between various providers. PCS clinical staff already consults with other healthcare providers when indicated and authorized by our clients. It appears more organic and official connections between mental and medical providers will be happening with the ACA.

The highest value is providing the highest quality of care to our clients. Escalating healthcare costs, the number of uninsured and underinsured, and the high incidence of "preventable deaths (e.g. heart disease, diabetes, etc.)" have initiated the major reforms that are coming down the pike. PCS will monitor the complex process of reform. We will also be working to position ourselves to be able to continue to provide the highest quality of mental healthcare available to our clients.

Seeking Good Samaritans

Pastoral Counseling Services is now accepting nominations for the 2013 Good Samaritan Awards. Each year, PCS asks community members to recommend qualified candidates for this prestigious award. Help us to recognize those individuals who pursue extraordinary measures to strengthen communities and improve life in New Hampshire. Nominations are due March 11th. Nominate a Good Samaritan today!

[Click here to download the official 2013 Good Samaritan Awards Nomination Form!](#)

Pastoral Counseling Services has roared into March like the proverbial lion! We have scheduled two major events that we ask you mark your calendars for now because you will not want to miss them.

First, we will host our annual seminar on Friday, May 17 at the Puritan Conference Center in Manchester, NH. The topic will be The Fragile Pact: Couples in Treatment, and the speaker will be our very own Doug Stephens, Ed.D, MSW. This seminar will host psychotherapists from 9am-12pm (approval pending for 3 Category I CEUs) and religious professionals from 1pm-4pm.

Then, PCS is proud to announce the 18th Annual Good Samaritan Awards banquet on October 1, 2013 at the Manchester Country Club. More details to come for this event, as we are currently accepting nominations for this year's honorees. Please consider submitting a nomination for a Good Samaritan who deserves recognition for pursuing extraordinary measures to strengthen communities and improve life in New Hampshire.

Grace & Peace,

Dr. David B. Reynolds
Center Director
Pastoral Counseling Services, Inc.

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