

eCommunication

From the Director

The TAC has experienced a flurry of technical assistance and training activity in recent months. In late February/early March, TAC staff, in collaboration with the National Council on Aging, provided training to substance abuse, mental health, and aging network providers in Seattle and Spokane, Washington. *Get Connected!* Toolkit training was conducted, along with a new workshop offered by the TAC: Increasing Provider Comfort Levels in Working with Older Adults. Through this workshop, TAC staff provided information regarding health literacy and interacted with participants through role play to enhance provider comfort in addressing mental health and substance abuse issues.



IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 TAC Update
- 2 States Served
- 3 New TAC Member
- 3 The Importance of Sleep for Older Adults
- 4 Gero-Psych Initiative
- 6 News from Our Federal Partners
- 7 Calendar
- 8 Contact Us

This exciting opportunity came about as a result of the TAC's September pilot test of state planning with Washington State. As followup to the meeting, Washington put together a team composed of substance abuse, aging, and mental health representatives who now meet regularly to identify and address older adult behavioral health planning and response issues, such as workforce development. The TAC applauds Washington's ongoing efforts to successfully meet the behavioral health needs of older adults in their communities.

In early March, 21 representatives from Connecticut, Maryland, and Ohio attended an all-day state planning event in Baltimore, Maryland. In preparation for the meeting, SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) teleconferences were conducted in advance of the meeting with over 50 key informants in the three states. Each team spent the day reviewing integrated findings from the calls and identifying critical next steps in older adult planning that can be implemented within their states. We look forward to our next round of state planning!

The mission of the **Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center** is to enhance the quality of life of older adults by providing training and technical assistance to health care agencies and providers regarding health issues common in late life. TAC priorities include the prevention and early intervention of substance abuse, medication misuse and abuse, mental health disorders, and co-occurring disorders.



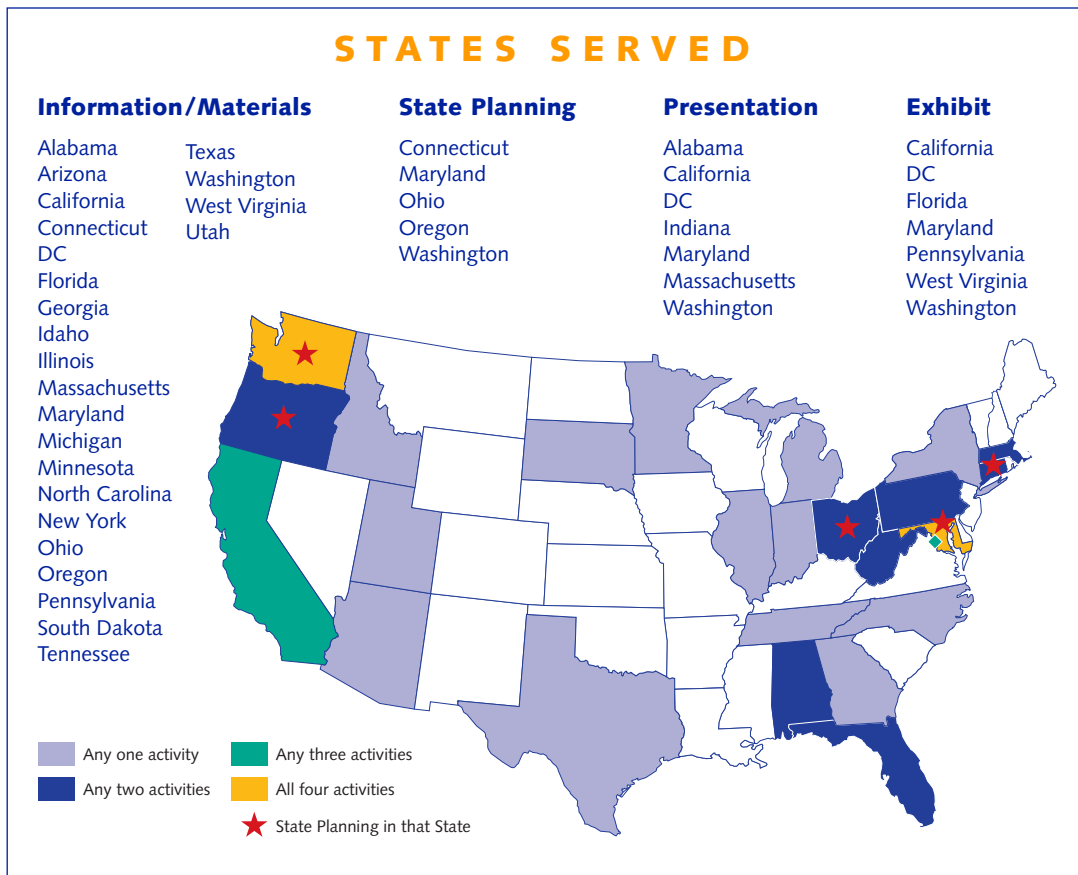
TAC Update

SAMHSA's Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center had a very busy winter. Staff attended and exhibited at the 58th Annual Scientific Meeting of The Gerontological Society of America and fielded technical assistance requests from a dozen states. In December, the TAC was pleased to attend and exhibit at the 2005 White House Conference on Aging where mental health and depression issues were among the top ten resolutions to be sent to Congress and the President. Working closely with the National Council on Aging, we are continuing to respond to requests to present the *Get Connected!* Toolkit trainings in order to meet the needs of substance abuse, mental health, and aging service providers across the country. Through the exhibits and conferences,

e-mail, 800-number, and ongoing support and technical assistance, the TAC has responded to the needs of 25 states and territories.

Planning for the next state training is underway, and the TAC is working with the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and the Administration on Aging to plan trainings for states and territories over the next four years.

We are looking forward to new partnerships and collaboration in 2006 with states, organizations, service providers, and individuals to support the efforts in prevention and early intervention of substance abuse, medication misuse/abuse, mental health disorders, and co-occurring disorders among older adults.





The TAC Welcomes a New Member to the Team!

Ms. Megan Martin recently joined the Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center (TAC) and will be coordinating the TAC's State planning and resource development efforts. Ms. Martin is a Research Associate with experience in health promotion, education, and the provision of technical assistance for community-based substance abuse and mental health organizations, consumers, states, and the Federal government. She holds a BS from the Pennsylvania State University in Biobehavioral Health and is pursuing an MBA at Hood College. It is our pleasure to welcome Ms. Martin and we look forward to the experience and talents she offers in fulfilling the mission of the TAC.

The Importance of Sleep for Older Adults

Getting enough sleep should be a top priority for all Americans, including older adults. It is important to know that the National Institute on Aging reports that chronic insomnia occurs in about one-third of the elderly population, and it is not a normal consequence of aging. Further, lack of sleep can diminish an older adult's quality of life. The International Longevity Center (ILC) stresses that sleep could be as important as nutrition, exercise, and social engagement to the health of older adults.

A recent Gallup survey of 1,003 adults age 50 and older examined sleep and healthy aging in older adults. Just over half of older adults reported being unable to get a good night's sleep seven days of the week and 20% of older adults get less than six hours of sleep each night.

Why do older adults lose sleep? For many older adults, worry contributes to their inability to sleep. Be aware that being a caregiver who either raises grandchildren or cares for elderly parents or a chronically ill friend can contribute to worrying and an inability to fall asleep and stay asleep.



The good news is that most older adults recognize the importance of sleep to their good health and 45% of older adults realize that they need more sleep today than when they were young. As a result, many older adults do seek help for sleep disorders. For some, there is concern about the use of a sleep aid to help them fall asleep including issues such as long-term effects, addiction, and the feeling of not being well rested as a result of taking sleep medications. It is important to consult with your doctor if you are experiencing sleep problems and if you use a sleep aid; be aware of the possible interaction with other medications and alcohol.

A good night's sleep is important for both physical and mental good health!



Featured Program

Gero-Psych Initiative

Beginning in 2001, the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health initiated the Gero-Psychiatric Initiative, which operates in five predominantly rural areas. The intent of the grant was to focus on three main areas: systems integration, mental health services/consultation, and training/education. The initiative is based upon evidence-based treatment outcomes including access to expertise in geropsychiatry and clinical geropsychology and the collaborative care model. The program employs Gero-psychiatric Specialists who meet the state's certification requirements as Qualified Mental Health Professionals (QMHP) and have at least two years experience in providing direct services to individuals over 60 with mental health needs. The Gero-psychiatric Specialists are based in comprehensive community mental health centers and work on enhancing mental health and aging staff competencies in geriatric mental health and increasing the integration and responsiveness of the mental health systems to older adults. The Gero-psychiatric Specialists have direct access to a board-certified psychiatrist for

a minimum of ten hours per month. Data on the scope of activities is collected monthly by the Division of Mental Health.

The project has expanded to include such activities as the development of a peer-support model, development of caregiver supports in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Aging, and authorship of a mental health and aging manual that is currently being used in trainings for a comprehensive audience (mental health, aging and long term care providers) throughout the entire state. The Gero-psychiatric Specialists have shared their expertise at functions such as the statewide Mental Health and Aging Coalition, statewide Mental Health and Aging Conference, and training of Case Coordination Unit (CCU) managers in the Illinois Department of Aging. While they have developed the program within their specific geographic location, their collective expertise has been utilized for statewide influence. The specialists are also speakers at these forums and manuals are distributed to each agency. An Older Adult Substance Abuse Task Force networks with

CONTACT US

For more information on this program, please contact:

Charlotte Kauffman, MA, LCPC
Service Systems Coordinator

Illinois Department of
Human Services

Division of Mental Health

100 S. Grand Ave. E., Harris II,
2nd Floor

Springfield, Illinois 62762

Phone: 217-558-4180

Email: DHSBHO@dhs.state.il.us

Fax: 217-782-2406

mental health and substance abuse agencies to analyze services for older adults.

A report analyzing substance abuse services to older adults was disseminated within the state.

The specialists broker services for the most complicated cases thus preventing functional decline, hospitalizations and transfers to a more restricted setting, thus meeting the overall state goal of placing those with disabilities in the least restrictive setting.

The program received a 2005 national award of excellence from the American Society of Aging.



Gero-Psych Initiative ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Including, but not limited to...

- Keeping older adults out of nursing homes and hospitals, thus saving the state resources
- Coalitions that have been formed are working and resulting in an increased number of appropriate referrals
- Establishment and modeling of a comprehensive system for the growing populations of older adults
- Training with mental health and aging staff
- Developed fact sheets, newsletter and statewide mental health and training manual
- Received 2005 Healthcare and Aging Award from American Society of Aging (only mental health program to be recognized)
- Asked to present as an evidence-based practice program at the National Association for State Mental Health Program Directors Older Persons Division 2005
- Quad Counties Coalition and WSIU (public television) won the Community Partnership Award from the National Community Outreach Association for joint work in broadcasting programs regarding older adult mental health
- Three of the specialists have developed a report of the Southern Illinois Substance Abuse and Aging Task Force

Areas of Service Involvement

- Enhancing the effectiveness of mental health service delivery, service system efficiency, and customer outcomes
- Increase availability and access of services to older adults
- Coordinating and improving services
- Services in the least restrictive, clinically appropriate setting
- Intervening early in the disease process
- Enhancing clinical competencies of health and social service workers
- Decreasing risk of hospitalization, loss of independence or premature long-term care placement
- Reducing social stigma
- Maintaining treatment gain and preventing an adjustment crisis and/or hospitalization for those recently discharged from psychiatric inpatient care
- Leading a local plan of action to promote integrated delivery of mental health services
- Assertive outreach
- Assessment and treatment planning
- Clinical consultation to providers
- Brief counseling, problem solving and personal support
- Linkage with a continuum of health, mental health, and social services
- Other DMH-funded core services as needed
- Physician and other medical services
- Assistance with securing basic necessities
- On-going home-based services
- Prevention and early intervention services
- 24-hour crisis response availability
- Collaboration with client's family/personal support network
- Training and educational events for a range of audiences
- Team-building training to aging and mental health provider networks
- Multi-disciplinary team approach shall be used with the Gero-psychiatrist acting as coordinator and the Gero-psychiatrist providing clinical leadership

We want others to know about your program! We invite you to submit information regarding the special work that your program is doing. Please send us the following: name of program, location, contact person and contact information, and a 50-word summary highlighting the program's mission and achievements!



News from our Federal Partners



Dennis O. Romero, M.A.

Acting Director

Center for Substance Abuse
Prevention

Mr. Dennis O. Romero is the Acting Director for the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Mr. Romero's role is to provide national leadership and direction in substance abuse prevention, set the goals and objectives of the Center, and participate in the formulation of strategies and guidelines needed to plan, implement, and manage national programs and projects. He also gives national presence by representing CSAP to members of the White House Committees, the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the news media to ensure an understanding of CSAP programs, objectives, and priorities. As Chief Operating Officer, he is responsible for development of strategic program plans and management of CSAP's internal operations. This includes management of CSAP's \$634 million annual budget, human resources, and program implementation and performance.

Mr. Romero brings a wealth of knowledge in creating and restructuring agency practices to better mesh with government requirements

(including HIPAA and EEO laws). Mr. Romero has extensive experience in the fields of mental health, chemical addiction, prevention, and program development, among others.

He served as Deputy Director of the Alcoholism Council of New York (ACNY), in New York City. In that capacity he assisted the Executive Director in the overall management of the organization, implementing the strategic plan and translating organizational goals into work plans. Mr. Romero created and established monthly reporting mechanisms; assisted program managers in developing evaluation tools and designed expansion strategies for applicable programs. He was also responsible for: assuring compliance with contracted agencies; conducting internal reviews of applicable programs; and preparing for applicable program audits. He was the community liaison developing collaborative partnerships with external organizations to increase capacity, with a focus on revenue enhancement for ACNY.

Mr. Romero served as the Assistant Director of Mental Health at the William F. Ryan Community Health Center in New York City, one of the nation's largest and most comprehensive community-based health organizations. As the Inpatient Programs Manager at the Ellis Hospital Department of Psychiatry, in Schenectady, NY,

he was directly involved with health care delivery systems, especially as they relate to managed care and quality assurance, Medicaid, and other issues of health care reform.

Mr. Romero has served on the board of many professional committees, advisory boards, and commissions (at the state and local levels) that address both local and regional issues related to the field of alcohol and substance abuse and prevention, as well as allied social and educational issues. In 1997, he received, by a public vote, the prestigious appointment to the New York State Board of Regents to the Committee of Professional Assistance Program under the Office of the Professions, where he served in many capacities including Chair of the Committee. He has been invited to offer reports and testimony before various committees both in his capacity as Deputy Director of the Alcoholism Council of New York, and as a member of the substance abuse prevention/treatment community.

Mr. Romero received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Philosophy and Psychology from Cathedral College and a Masters Degree in Counseling Psychology from Manhattan College. He received postgraduate training at the State University of New York (SUNY), Albany Campus.



Calendar

April 2006

"Natural Bridges: Preparing for an Aging South"

Southern Gerontological Society 27th Annual Meeting
April 5-8, 2006
Lexington, KY
<http://www.wfu.edu/academics/gerontology/sgs/>

National Alcohol Screening Day

Screening for Mental Health
April 6, 2006
<http://www.alcoholscreeningday.org>

World Health Day

World Health Organization
April 7, 2006
<http://www.who.int/world-health-day/2006/en/>

Successful Strategies for Generations of Change: A Roadmap for the Hispanic Community

National Hispanic Council on Aging
9th Annual Conference
April 7-9, 2006
Miami, FL
<http://www.nhcoa.org>

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) Legislative Briefing

April 11, 2006
Washington, DC
Contact: khertz@n4a.org

National Law and Aging Conference 2006

April 19-23, 2006
Arlington, VA
<http://aarpltp.grovesite.com/>

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) 6th Clinical Team Conference

April 21-23, 2006
Atlanta, GA
<http://www.nhpco.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=4202&openpage=4202>

National Aging and Addiction Conference "Alive and Kickin"

Hanley Center
April 28-29, 2006
West Palm Beach, FL
<http://www.hanleycenter.org/NAAC/>

National Alcohol Awareness Month

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
April 2006
<http://www.health.org/seasonal/aprilalcohol/>

May 2006

SAMHSA Older Americans TAC Expert Panel Meeting
May 9-10, 2006
Rockville, MD

National Women's Health Week
National Women's Health Information Center
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
May 14-20, 2006
<http://www.4woman.gov/>

"The Sun Shines Brighter at Home"

21st National Home and Community Based Services Waiver Conference
May 15-18, 2006
<http://www.nasua.org/waiverconference>

Older Americans Mental Health Week

Older Women's League
May 21-27, 2006
<http://www.owl-national.org/mentalhealthweek/index.html>

National Senior Health and Fitness Day

Mature Market Resource Center
May 31, 2006
<http://www.fitnessday.com/senior/index.htm>

World No Tobacco Day

Coalition for World No Tobacco Day
May 31, 2006
<http://www.wntd.com/>

Healthy Vision Month

National Eye Institute
May 2006
<http://www.healthyvision2010.org/>

National Arthritis Month

Arthritis Foundation
May 2006
www.arthritis.org

National High Blood Pressure Education Month

National Institutes of Health
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
May 2006
http://hin.nhlbi.nih.gov/nhbpep_kit/



National Mental Health Month

National Mental Health Association
May 2006
<http://www.nmha.org/may/index.cfm>

National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month

National Osteoporosis Foundation
May 2006
<http://www.nof.org/>

National Stroke Awareness Month

National Stroke Association
May 2006
<http://www.stroke.org>

Older Americans Month

Administration on Aging
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
May 2006
<http://www.aoa.gov/press/oam/oam.asp>



STAFF

OLDER AMERICANS

Substance Abuse & Mental Health
Technical Assistance Center

Lisa Patton, PhD
Project Director

Dianne McElroy, MA
Project Manager

Megan Martin
Research Associate

David Snipes, MS
Research Associate

Kerry Crawford
Research Assistant

Stephen J. Bartels, MD, MS
Scientific Co-Director

Frederic C. Blow, PhD
Scientific Co-Director

**Laurie M. Brockmann,
MPH, MSW**
Research Associate

Aricca D. Van Citters, MS
Research Associate

Garrett Moran, PhD
Corporate Monitor

CONTACT US

For more information regarding any of the topics in this issue or other questions and comments, please contact:

Dianne McElroy, MA

Project Manager

OlderAmericansTAC
@westat.com

1 888-281-8010

19955.0406.7765030101

www.samhsa.gov/OlderAdultsTAC/



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention