



Department of Behavioral Healthcare,
Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals



CLOSING THE ADDICTION  TREATMENT GAP

PRESS RELEASE

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Rhode Island Kicks Off National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, Unveils Annual Recovery Quilt

WEST WARWICK, RI – Today, members of the Rhode Island alcohol and drug addiction recovery community, surrounded by their families, friends, state legislators, health care providers, and fellow advocates, will kick off National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (“Recovery Month”) with the official unveiling of the annual Recovery Quilt.

“National Recovery Month is an exciting time for the thousands of Rhode Islanders who have achieved long-term recovery, along with their families, friends, and supporters,” said Craig Stenning, Director of the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals (BHDDH). “This month also provides important opportunities for our state to showcase the effectiveness of treatment and celebrate those in recovery who are living healthy and productive lives.”

For more than twenty years, states across the nation have celebrated Recovery Month by working to improve the lives of millions of Americans in need of treatment, celebrating individuals who have achieved long-term recovery, and acknowledging those working in the field who provide treatment and recovery services. The 2010 national theme, “Join the Voices for Recovery: Now More Than Ever!” raises awareness about the increasing stress level in society, and the impact that it has on the onset and relapse of mental health and substance use disorders.

This morning’s kickoff event will include the unveiling of the annual Recovery Quilt. The Recovery Quilt Project, started in 2006, is comprised of over 100 individual squares prepared during the previous year by Rhode Islanders in recovery, their family members and friends. Vantage Point, a West Warwick-based agency that provides intervention, education, prevention, and counseling for individuals, couples, and families, sponsored and assembled this year’s quilt.

“Unveiling the Recovery Quilt is a great way to kickoff Recovery Month in Rhode Island,” said Kathy Carty, PhD, Vantage Point. “The compilation of all the squares is a powerful demonstration of the impact of substance use disorders and recovery on Rhode Islanders from all walks of life.”

The new quilt, along with previous years’ quilts—sponsored by agencies such as Phoenix House, The Kent Center, and The Providence Center—will be on display at the kickoff event.

Despite the number of individuals in long-term recovery, addiction treatment still remains out of reach for many Rhode Islanders. According to a recent report from the Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap (CATG) Coalition, a collaboration of nearly fifty diverse stakeholder groups, approximately 100,000 Rhode Islanders suffer from addiction, but only 1 in 8 gets the care they need to fight this disease.

“Addiction is a chronic, relapsing disease that can be treated successfully over time, with patient dedication and community support,” said Nick Zaller, PhD, Project Lead for the Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap Initiative. “Recovery Month is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate those who have achieved long-term recovery, and encourage those struggling with substance use disorders to seek the help and care they need to fight this disease.”

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About National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month:

Recovery Month is presented by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA’s) Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Recovery Month is an essential element of one of SAMHSA’s 10 Strategic Initiatives that focuses on public awareness and support. The goal of this initiative is to increase public understanding of mental health and substance use disorder prevention and treatment services, achieve the full potential of prevention, and help people recognize and seek assistance for these health conditions with the same urgency as any other health condition. For more information, visit www.recoverymonth.gov.

About the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals (BHDDH):

BHDDH is a state agency that is committed to assuring access to quality services and supports for Rhode Islanders with developmental disabilities, mental health, and substance abuse issues, and chronic long term medical and psychiatric conditions. BHDDH’s mission includes addressing the stigma attached to these disabilities as well as planning for the development of new services and prevention activities. For more information, visit www.bhddh.ri.gov.

About the Rhode Island Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap (CATG) Coalition:

The Rhode Island CATG Coalition is a collaboration among nearly 50 diverse stakeholder groups—including emergency department doctors, child welfare advocates, religious leaders, educators, treatment centers and providers, prevention advocates, and other health care organizations—to expand access to drug and alcohol treatment in Rhode Island for all who need it. The CATG Coalition is supported through a generous grant from the Open Society Institute (OSI) of the Soros Foundation. For more information, visit www.closesthegapri.org.