

*Notice: the VPA Listserv is in operation. If you haven't already done so, sign up by e-mailing Steve Larose at: [slarose@vtmd.org](mailto:slarose@vtmd.org) Please tell other Vermont psychiatrists about the Listserv.*

## **VERMONT PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION**

### **Minutes of the Special Executive Committee Meeting**

November 27, 2006

**Members present or participating by telephone:** Drs. Barton, Brooks, Danielson, Deppe, Eyler, Fassler, Francke, Kalibat, McMains, Miller, Pierattini, Silverman, Simpatico and Weker; and Steve Larose, VMS

#### **Old Business:**

1. Vermont State Hospital Futures CON (Certificate of Need) process: At its November 17 meeting, the Executive Committee considered the need to articulate a VPA position on this issue, given that the public hearing process will begin shortly. Dr. Pierattini reported that he and Dr. Fassler, the VPA representative to the Futures committee, had met and arrived at an outline of a proposed VPA position. Dr. Fassler presented the outline, as follows:
  - a. Support the closure of VSH;
  - b. Support the development of more specific plans to replace VSH, which would be step 2 of the CON process (and which would include more details about a new unit at Fletcher Allen);
  - c. Support the integration of inpatient psychiatric services with general medical care;
  - d. Support the development of a full continuum of community based services; and
  - e. Support our colleagues who are working at VSH.

Dr. Fassler provided additional information, including that the director of the Department of Banking, Insurance, Securities and Health Care Administration (BISHCA) has just announced his retirement. He then moved, and Dr. Deppe seconded, that the VPA base its position in the conceptual CON process on the above five points.

Dr. McMains proposed as an amendment adding a point emphasizing the need for assuring parity of treatment resource. After discussion, the amendment was worded as follows: "Support parity with respect to specialized medical services comparable to access provided to those with other medical conditions." Dr. Fassler accepted the proposed amendment as a friendly amendment; the amended motion was then passed unanimously. The VPA position thus reads as follows:

- a. Support the closure of VSH;
- b. Support the development of more specific plans to replace VSH, which would be step 2 of the CON process (and which would include more details about a new unit at Fletcher Allen);
- c. Support the integration of inpatient psychiatric services with general medical care;

- d. Support parity with respect to specialized medical services comparable to access provided to those with other medical conditions;
  - e. Support the development of a full continuum of community based services; and
  - f. Support our colleagues who are working at VSH.
2. Reinstating the Commissioner of Mental Health: Dr. Barton's motion of the November 17, 2006 Executive Committee meeting was brought forward, namely that the VPA supports the reinstatement of the position of a commissioner of mental health. The committee discussed the pro's and con's of various positions, including: the benefits of having the broader vantage point and resources of the Department of Health; the relative lack of power that a Deputy Commissioner of Mental Health has compared to a Commissioner of Mental Health; and the possible advantage of having the VPA focus on articulating principles of mental health leadership without commenting on the specific issue of the Commissioner/Deputy Commissioner structure. The motion was defeated. It was the sense of the Committee that Dr. McMains develop a set of principles for the Executive Committee to consider, including such issues as clarifying who speaks for the Division of Mental Health to the legislature.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan L. Weker, M.D.

The next VPA Executive Committee will be held on Friday, December 15, 2006 at 1:30 p.m. at the Vermont Medical Society, 134 Main St., Montpelier. All VPA members are warmly invited to attend regardless of whether they are members of the Executive Committee.