

## Will the 2015-17 Budget Silence the Community's Voice in Mental Health?

### REGIONAL MENTAL HEALTH BOARDS



#### What are the Regional Mental Health Boards (RMHBs)?

- A visionary grassroots structure created 40 years ago by the Connecticut legislature and still relevant today.
- Connecticut's system for involving all stakeholders in planning and monitoring mental health and addiction services.
- The community's voice in oversight, coordination, and evaluation of the behavioral health system.

#### What will Connecticut *LOSE* if the 5 Regional Mental Health Boards are De-Funded?

→ If Governor Malloy's 2015-17 budget is adopted, the five Regional Mental Health Boards (RMHBs) will be eliminated on July 1, 2015.

##### ① Needs Assessment & Planning for Behavioral Health Services

- **The RMHBs help leverage \$23M in federal funding.** The RMHB and Regional Action Council (RAC) needs assessments, and our participation in the Planning Council, are required in the state application for federal funding.
- **The RMHBs are vital to Connecticut's behavioral health planning.** Together with the RACs, we collect the regional information and develop priorities required by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services plan.
- **The RMHBs respond to local, regional, and state needs.** RMHBs develop community partnerships and funding to forge solutions to a full gamut of issues: young adult needs, transportation, wellness, and health equity.

##### ② Evaluation of the Behavioral Health Service System (*State Statute 17a-483-4*)

- **The RMHBs are responsible for evaluating state-funded services for adults with mental illness and addiction.** We provide independent and external oversight representing all constituent groups.
- **The RMHBs inform and influence best practice, policy, and access to services.** Our work helps public officials assess the impact in their communities of rapidly changing models of care, funding levels, and emerging needs.

##### ③ Equal Representation of Stakeholders

- **The RMHBs provide a structure for grassroots engagement.** Our Catchment Area Councils (CACs) offer common ground for consumers, family members, and providers to work together in support of their communities.
- **The RMHBs ensure outreach and consensus building** among diverse segments of the population. We coordinate countless initiatives, projects, opportunities, and meetings each year for our community members.
- **The RMHBs empower people and families living with mental illness,** enabling them to advocate effectively for themselves, for others, and for improved services for all.

##### ④ Community Education & Engagement

- **The RMHBs provide and coordinate Mental Health First Aid training, Community Conversations, and other presentations** to raise community awareness. We highlight emerging issues, best practices, and models of care.
- **The RMHBs provide information, resources, and linkages** to community members, providers, and town leaders. Our resource guides, newsletters, and TurningPointCT.org website for young people are highly sought after.
- **The RMHBs connect people to services.** We serve as the point of entry for many people seeking or reluctant to enter services. We help those who are lost in the system. We provide mental health screenings.

#### "The Best Bargain in the System" (*quote from a DMHAS official*)

- **The RMHBs produce results and touch thousands of lives on a low budget.** With an average of 2 staff members each, and ~500 dedicated volunteers across the state, we make a difference for individuals, families, and systems.
- **The RMHBs represent an impressive return on investment.** The \$584,000 in state funding to the RMHBs helps bring in \$23 million in federal funding for mental health and addiction services.

**NO other structure represents the community's voice and provides independent oversight!**