

Department of Mental Health

ANNOUNCING A SERIES OF PUBLIC FORUMS

“Community First and Our Future”

The Department of Mental Health will hold a series of public forums throughout the state to discuss and gain input on the Department’s vision and goal of Community First and the future of the public mental health system.

The forums will be led by Commissioner Leadholm and Area leadership staff. We hope to engage in conversation about the changes the Department has experienced fiscally and organizationally and most importantly about our commitment to Community First and how the new DMH hospital aligns with our goals. The redistribution of DMH continuing care beds statewide presents us with options to consider within the constraints of our budget. It is critical that the mental health community participate in the discussions around these options as the Department prepares to open the new hospital in 2012.

The Department’s Community First initiative strengthens consumer choice; is family-focused and driven by client outcomes; achieves person-centered care; and relies on the development of an extensive peer workforce. Enhanced ability to move through the community and inpatient systems of care is another hallmark of Community First. The following guiding principles inform Community First:

1. Individuals with mental illness are empowered to live with dignity and independence in the community.
2. Consumers have access to a full range of quality services and supports to meet their mental health needs.
3. The Department continuum of care enables individuals to live, work and participate in their communities.
4. The Department system of care is consumer-centered and recovery-oriented.
5. Services are flexible, recovery-based and person-centered and support consumer choice.
6. Individuals transitioning from institutional settings to the community are supported in the most appropriate manner.
7. Limited resources are used and managed effectively.

We invite everyone interested in the Department’s work and the delivery of mental health services to join the conversation. The forums are open to all stakeholders – staff, consumers, providers, DMH citizen board members, advocates, state agencies and members of the Legislature – with the hope to solicit your ideas and have a shared understanding around the Department’s Community First initiative and the future of public mental health care in Massachusetts.

We will hold public forums on the following dates and locations:

Department of Mental Health
“Community First and Our Future”
A Public Conversation
December 2010 Public Forums

Date	Time	Location
Monday Dec. 6, 2010	6 to 8 p.m.	UMass Dartmouth Woodland Commons 285 Old Westport Road North Dartmouth, MA 02747
Thursday Dec. 9, 2010	6 to 8 p.m.	Boston University School of Medicine 72 East Concord Street Boston, MA Room L110, first floor (Parking Garages and limited on-street parking are available.)
Tuesday Dec. 14, 2010	6 to 8 p.m.	Northern Essex Community College Lecture Hall A 100 Elliott Street Haverhill, MA
Wednesday Dec. 15, 2010	6 to 8 p.m.	Worcester State University Student Center Blue Lounge 486 Chandler Street Worcester, MA