



Commissioner's Commissioner's quarterly newsletter to providers **Quarterly**

Summer 2008



To improve the lives of New Yorkers by leading a premiere system of addiction services through prevention, treatment and recovery.

David A. Paterson, Governor • Karen M. Carpenter-Palumbo, Commissioner

www.OASAS.state.ny.us



Dear Colleagues:

In just a few weeks, the OASAS provider system will take a historic step on behalf of the 110,000 people we serve on any given day and the nearly 35,000 New Yorkers working in the field of addiction. OASAS Regulation 856 requiring programs to develop tobacco-free policies by July 24, 2008 is a momentous change in culture for the health and well-being of those we serve.

This regulation will enable individuals we serve including field staff to adopt a tobacco-free lifestyle which will enhance their recovery and ultimately save lives. Despite the fact that fewer New Yorkers use tobacco (18.2 percent), the addiction population continues to use tobacco at a disproportionate rate (88 to 92 percent). We believe this monumental regulation will have an impact on reducing the number of New Yorkers who continue to smoke resulting in greater success for recovery, and enhanced health and wellness. The research is clear. By eliminating triggers like smoking, we will increase the overall recovery rates for our patients and extend their lives.

I am pleased to announce that preliminary reports show that **70 percent of OASAS providers have either partially or fully implemented a tobacco-free policy.** Congratulations to all of the providers and staff who have already integrated a tobacco-free policy into their program. We appreciate the work that has taken place and/or is underway to adopt a tobacco-free program.

On July 24, 2008, we will celebrate and share what the field has accomplished since the regulation was announced last year. As we move forward to promote the overall health and wellness for those in recovery, we hope that you will use this date as a day to celebrate the accomplishments of your program, your staff, individuals served and the community at large.

Please know that I would welcome hearing about your accomplishments, what is working, as well as what is not working. I congratulate you and all of the individuals that are working to address this critical health issue. I appreciate your hard work and know this is the right thing to do to save New Yorkers lives and enable New Yorkers the greatest opportunity for total recovery.

It is our hope that the information updates which follow this letter will help to keep you informed of the work we are doing at OASAS in partnership with you. We plan to begin monthly electronic newsletters to you by the fall, which we hope will minimize the number of e-mails you receive from us because we know how quickly the inbox can fill up.

Enjoy these summer weeks and months ahead as we reap the benefits this time of year brings. Keep up your dedicated work and know that everything you do affects a life in need of your help.

Sincerely,

Karen M. Carpenter-Palumbo
Commissioner

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Raising Awareness On Key Issues

OASAS wins two national awards for problem gambling

The National Council on Problem Gambling honored OASAS with two prestigious awards – the Government Award presented to Commissioner Karen M. Carpenter-Palumbo and the Media Award presented to the agency for OASAS' recent campaign on problem gambling. Commissioner Carpenter-Palumbo was nominated for the Government Award by Jim Maney of the New York Council on Problem Gambling, and received a letter of support from Gov. David Paterson. The media campaign included a PSA on underage problem gambling and adult campaigns on the Web, radio and transportation in urban markets of the state.



NY One of 10 States Selected for Veterans Policy Academy

New York is one of 10 states selected by the federal government to participate in a national conference and policy academy to assist veterans and their families regarding mental disorders such as traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorders, substance use disorders, homelessness, suicide, domestic violence and co-occurring disorders. The 11-person team from New York will be led by Tom Nightingale, associate commissioner for treatment services. Other team members are Michael Seereiter, Governor Paterson's office; Leesa Rademacher, OMH; Col James D. McDonough, Jr., Division of Veterans' Services; Col. Curtis B. Williamson, Division of Military and Naval Affairs; Bruce Herman, Department of Labor; Linda Kelly, DOH; Ronald Solarz, Samaritan Village; Roger Ambrose, Jefferson County Community Services; Katie Moshier, Gold Star Widow and CEO of the Captain Timothy J. Moshier Memorial Foundation and George Basher, VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York. The team will attend the [Returning Veterans and Their Families Strategic Planning Conference and Policy Academy](#) from Aug. 11-13.

Blaisdell ATC Nurses recognized by *Advance for Nurses*

We applaud our important nurses throughout the system and their recent annual recognition during National Nurses Month in May. Also, we'd like to congratulate the Blaisdell ATC nurses on being recognized in the Greater New York, New Jersey, Metro area issue of "*Advance for Nurses.*" This is exactly the type of coveted recognition that will help make ours a profession of choice!

Recovery Month In September - Dates To Save

[New York's first statewide Recovery Conference](#) is just one highlight of [September Recovery Month activities](#). A conference brochure outlining speakers and workshops is upcoming. The Conference, Sept. 14 and 15, will include Addictions Professionals Day on Sept. 15 when we will honor the CASAC, CASAC Trainee and CPP of the Year.

New York is one of 10 states selected by the federal government to participate in a national conference and policy academy to assist veterans and their families.

Please encourage all in recovery to share their stories with the **Real People: Real Stories of Recovery** initiative. OASAS wants to gather hundreds of stories of recovery to foster the recovery movement in New York. Stories can be submitted anonymously or with names to Stories@oasas.state.ny.us. We plan to highlight hundreds of stories on our Website. OASAS will also highlight 12 stories at New York's first Recovery Conference as part of an annual media campaign.

Sept. 16 marks the **5th Annual Run for Recovery** at the Empire State Plaza. Registrations for team relays will begin soon.

Artwork and poetry is wanted for the **5th Annual Recovery Arts Festival**, which will run the entire month of September on the concourse of the Empire State Plaza in Albany.

Provider Partnerships

Workgroup Updates

Technology – Regional forums are being planned for this fall on the Technology Collaborative, which continues to explore how to improve IT practices that will improve our services to the people we serve on three fronts: the Provider level; the LGU level; and internally to OASAS. Three members of the OASAS staff are also serving on the Department of Health's Committee on Privacy and Security.

Administrative/Regulatory Relief Workgroup will meet again Sept. 23. At the June meeting, the workgroup agreed to create a program to assist with the development of counselor competencies. Subcommittees were formed in the areas of patient rights, inpatient rehabilitation and residential services, in addition to the work in progress related to outpatient services. These groups will guide OASAS and the Field in development of model case records and competency resources for program supervisors and line staff; make recommendations to streamline paperwork across all applicable regulations; and develop guidelines for provider self-evaluation. Additional details can be found on the OASAS website under "Commissioner's Message"; and Co-chairs Alexis Gadsden and Chuck Monson remain open to new members and/or ideas from the Field.

Talent Management - Latest efforts being undertaken include institution of a peer review process for clinical supervision among OASAS providers; establishing Talent Management Centers to help promote careers in addictions; designating an Internet URL to serve as the focal point for Talent Management activities; surveying the field to compile comparative data on salary and benefit packages; sharing information with providers in employee retirement and pension planning options; and sponsoring seminars for Human Resource managers on implementing concepts/policies to enhance recruitment/retention efforts.

News In The Field

Four providers were selected for awards in response to the 2008 Planning Supplement-100 Beds for Veterans. **Horizon Village, Inc., Samaritan Village, Inc., 820 River St., and St. Joseph's Rehabilitation Center, Inc.,** will each receive funding for 25 beds.

Prevention Network of Syracuse and Genesee/Orleans Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse of Batavia, were selected to receive awards under the OASAS 2008 Regional Prevention Resource Centers: Statewide Coalition Project Planning Supplement.



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Maureen Campanie from BRiDGES Madison County Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Inc., Philip Rose, Prevention Network Onondaga County and Sally Yageric from the Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, were notified on behalf of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Underage Drinking Enforcement Training Center that their workshop proposals have been accepted for presentation at the upcoming 10th Annual National Leadership Conference. This year's Conference will take place in Nashville, Tennessee Aug. 21 - 23.

The Center for Problem Gambling in Saratoga has developed a collaborative working relationship with the Saratoga Gaming and Raceway. Collaborative efforts include making available brochures on problem gambling and having all floor employees where a bracelet with the statewide problem gambling helpline number on it to assist players who may need help.

OASAS released an RFP to fund problem gambling prevention services across the state. OASAS expects to fund up to 53 new problem gambling prevention providers and establish a pool of candidates to draw on as future funding for this purpose becomes available. OASAS also issued a new RFA Planning Supplement to expand problem gambling treatment services to an additional eight counties.

Thirty constituent groups representing a diverse group of stakeholder agencies and organizations met with Commissioner Carpenter-Palumbo on May 9. This meeting was the second in a series to inform and gather input on the agency's budget, state legislative agenda, federal priorities and program initiatives. As the agency budget and legislative agendas are being developed, the next meeting to receive input will be held jointly on Sept. 18 with the ASAP Board of Directors.

Prevention providers, local government, schools and community coalitions also met May 9 with the Commissioner to discuss current prevention policy and direction. The meeting resulted in the identification of future priorities for prevention and agreement on the importance of OASAS and the prevention field working collaboratively to move the prevention agenda forward. Future meetings will be scheduled on a regular basis to continue the dialogue to enhance statewide prevention efforts.

More than 175 providers attended the most recent "Gold Standard Partnership and Dialogue on Treatment Forums" in New York City. The forums provide continuous learning that meets the specific needs of providers in each region. These sessions are co-sponsored by OASAS and the Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers of New York State, Inc., (ASAP). Sessions to date in Suffolk County, Nassau County, New York City and the Finger Lakes region covered topics such as quality improvement, Medicaid audit readiness, tobacco-free programming, clinical supervision and evidence-based practices.

ASAP's Board of Directors visited OASAS on June 18 and met with the OASAS Executive Team to discuss the pending tobacco-free regulation, the 2008 legislative agenda, fiscal planning and other issues, including a report on the progress of the Methadone Transformation Advisory Group (MTAG).

Senior officers of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. met this spring with Commissioner Karen M. Carpenter-Palumbo in an historic meeting at the General Services Office in Manhattan. During the meeting, discussion focused on how the two organizations might increase their efforts to work cooperatively to better serve people with alcohol-related problems in New York State.

Inter-Agency Collaboration

Edgecombe — The former Edgecombe Correctional Facility, now operating as a joint initiative for treatment with OASAS, the Department of Correctional Services and the Division of Parole, opened on April 21 and is rapidly growing. While OASAS staff are currently operating the treatment component of the facility, Odyssey House was selected through an RFP process to take over the treatment programming by late summer or early fall 2008. The cutting-edge program is designed to provide treatment for parolees who violate the substance use provision of their conditions of parole as opposed to returning them to prison. Upon completion of the maximum 30-day program, patients are immediately linked to ongoing treatment through an outpatient provider.

OASAS-OCFS Plan of Cooperation — OASAS and OCFS signed a comprehensive Plan of Cooperation that represents a consensus framework between OASAS and OCFS, and will include providers, local government and consumers as implementation efforts are underway. It outlines eight broad areas where the two systems can work together to improve substance abuse, juvenile justice and child welfare issues.

As a partner member of the Governor's Children's Cabinet, OASAS would like to draw your attention to two important links we've posted on our [Web site](#). The first is a link to the "Babies Sleep Safest Alone" public education campaign from the Office of Children and Family Services. This effort is aimed at preventing and reducing dangers to infants from "co-sleeping."

The second banner links to the Department of Health Web site where you can find important information on the **Child Health Plus and Medicaid** insurance benefit programs. As a major provider of services to adults, children and families in New York State, it is important that all of the more than 1,550 OASAS Prevention, Treatment, Recovery providers make this valuable information available to those we serve.

The Inter-Office Coordinating Council meets July 11 in Albany and will be Webcast. The meeting will include welcome remarks by IOCC Commissioners from OASAS, the Office of Mental Health and the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, an overview of People First Progress Report, outline of the Mental Hygiene Planning Committee report and timeline, appointment process for County Directors of Mental Hygiene and discussion of Mental Hygiene agencies Five-Year Plan collaboration.

Health, Wellness and Medical Direction

As the **July 24 implementation date** for the tobacco-free regulation draws near, The Professional Development Program, University at Albany has awarded six regional trainers for the statewide tobacco-free training. The trainers are Cicatelli Associates, Outreach Project, The Council on Addiction Prevention and Education of Dutchess County (CAPE), BRIDGES-Madison County Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, DePaul/NCADD-RA, and Professional Development Program, University at Albany.

For details and this month's **Wellness news**, check out the July edition of the [OASAS Wellness Newsletter](#) on the OASAS website.



Do you have medical questions? — OASAS Medical Director, Dr. Steven Kipnis, will begin a question and answer column in upcoming OASAS newsletters. Questions can be emailed to Dr. Kipnis at stevenkipnis@oasas.state.ny.us. In addition, OASAS will host a statewide Medical Director conference call in September. More information will follow.

Remember to Guard Against Heat — The summer season produces the risk of dangerously high temperatures in facilities without air conditioning. [OASAS provides guidelines](#) regarding how to recognize, treat and protect against heat-related problems among patients and staff.

More OASAS Updates

OASAS Strategic Mapping — Over the past few months, there have been several advances and developments related to our OASAS mission to improve the lives of New Yorkers by leading a premiere system of addiction services through prevention, treatment, and recovery. The OASAS Executive team completed a strategic mapping report, which is a roadmap of destinations to illustrate the vision of where the agency should be at the end of our journey. This report is organized into five categories – **mission outcomes, provider engagement, leadership, talent management, and financial support.**

OASAS Strategic Mapping



The 2008 legislative session for OASAS was one of building relationships and the passage of much of its department legislation. OASAS is committed to continuing the dialogue on a statewide “Social Host” proposal that reached the Legislature this session. The bill, which was passed in the Senate and reached the Assembly Codes Committee, would amend the Penal Law to prohibit any person who is over the age of 18 and who owns, rents or controls a private residence to permit the consumption of alcoholic beverages by any person under the age of 21 who is present at any party, gathering or event on the premises of such person.

In all, eight proposals were approved for submission to the state Legislature and six were passed by both houses. They include:

Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2008 (Article VII Budget bill)

Elimination of the Medicaid sanction for persons who are not in compliance with alcoholism and substance abuse identification and treatment requirements.
The permanent transfer of responsibility for the state’s activities and oversight of problem gambling service from OMH to OASAS.



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Awaiting Governor's Signature

- Expands the scope of the Interagency Geriatric Mental Health Planning Council to include geriatric chemical dependence and veterans issues.
- Revisions to the Statewide Central Registry mandated reporting requirements to clarify that for persons who are credentialed by OASAS are mandated reporters.
- Amends Chapter 168 to bring the Underage Alcohol Consumption Advisory Council under the control and guidance of OASAS.
- Changes the composition of the NYS Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Advisory Council to include nine consumer representatives, 10 representatives of providers of services, and seven representatives of public and private payors. Within those categories, the Council would also include representation for prevention and gambling services.

The next meeting of the NYS Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services will be held on Aug. 20 in Albany. At the last meeting in April, agency staff provided an extensive overview of medication assisted treatment and proposals related to methadone treatment. Highlights of the meeting included a presentation on the work of the Methadone Transformation Workgroup and a presentation by Dr. Kipnis on the use of buprenorphine and other medications in treatment. The Council also reviewed proposed regulatory changes and applications for certification.

Field Office Realignment — Due to the high importance of our Field Office operations, this integral component of our system of care needs to be directly aligned with the Executive Office. Deputy Commissioner Caggiano-Siino took direction of this operation effective April 1, with internal management consistent with the previous structure.

New Policy Unit

OASAS now has a new Policy Unit to manage the development of solid, well-researched, substantial policies congruent with our role as national leader in the field of addictions. The unit will be phased in over the coming months and will operate under the direction of Fred Meservey. The unit will address issues as they emerge and is now focused on the cost of treatment versus criminal justice and gender-based treatment.

Fiscal — For the third consecutive year, OASAS received additional support from the Executive and State Legislature.

- Legislature approved all of the Reinvestment initiatives that were included in the Executive Budget submission.
- The cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for providers was extended for three years (through March 31, 2012), with the 2008-09 COLA at 3.2 percent.
- Gambling services are now permanently with OASAS (effective April 1).
- Medicaid Sanction legislation – Under Welfare Reform Act, if a person refused or left treatment the individual would lose his/her Safety Net Assistance and their Medicaid. OASAS, in collaboration with DOH, proposed the elimination of the law that took away someone's Medicaid.
- Hospital-Based Detox – reimbursement reform was approved and over a four-year phase, hospital detox payments will be reduced from \$1,300 per day to approximately \$900 per day. These reforms are effective Dec. 1, 2008.

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