



NEW YORK STATE
OFFICE OF ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES
Addiction Services for Prevention, Treatment, Recovery
Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor
Arlene González-Sánchez, Commissioner

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Dear Friends,

Last week, nearly 700 advocates were briefed on Governor Cuomo's legislation to create a new Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs. I want to sincerely thank all of you for your support in attending and assisting us in spreading the word on the Justice For Special Needs Campaign. The Governor and I are committed to ensuring that those we serve, especially the most vulnerable, receive the appropriate quality of care throughout the human services system.

Sincerely,

*Arlene González-Sánchez
OASAS Commissioner*

Governor Andrew Cuomo Announces First in the Nation Reforms to Protect People with Special Needs and Disabilities

On May 8, 2012, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo unveiled new legislation to establish the strongest standards and practices in the nation for protecting people with special needs and disabilities.



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Governor Cuomo's legislation will create a new Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs, an initiative that will transform how the state protects over one million New Yorkers in State operated, certified or licensed facilities and programs.

The Justice Center will have a Special Prosecutor and Inspector General for the Protection of People with Special Needs who will investigate reports of abuse and neglect and prosecute allegations that rise to the level of criminal offenses. It will also include a 24/7 hotline run by trained professionals, a comprehensive statewide

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OASAS Mission:

*To improve the lives
of New Yorkers by
leading a premier
system of Prevention,
Treatment, Recovery.*

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database that will track all reports of abuse and neglect and a statewide register of workers who have committed serious acts of abuse who will be prohibited from ever working with people with disabilities or special needs.

"This is about safeguarding the civil rights of the more than one million New Yorkers with disabilities and special needs who for too long have not had the protections and justice they deserve," Governor Cuomo said. "The creation of a Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs will give New York State the strongest standards and practices in the country for protecting those who are often the most vulnerable to abuse and mistreatment. I urge the Legislature to speedily pass this bill and give people with special needs and disabilities a new level of protection and service in our state."



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To read the full press release, visit the [Governor's website](#).

If you would like to get involved or learn more about the Justice Center, visit www.Justice4SpecialNeeds.com.

Note: The Governor's legislation was developed, in part, from recommendations outlined in The Measure of a Society: Protection of Vulnerable Persons in Residential Facilities Against Abuse and Neglect, a special report prepared by Mr. Clarence Sundram, the Governor's Special Advisor on Vulnerable Persons. A copy of this report is available on the [Governor's website](#).

Governor Cuomo Announces Statewide Coalition to Support New Justice Center

On May 10, 2012, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced that the grassroots coalition formed to support the Governor's proposed legislation to reform how New York State protects people with special needs and disabilities has grown with more than 100 advocacy groups from across the state now signed on.



www.justice4specialneeds.com, a website where groups and New Yorkers can learn more about the Governor's proposal. The site has



Governor
Andrew M. Cuomo



Commissioner Arlene González-
Sánchez



1-877-8-HOPENY
Find Help for 1-877-846-7369
Alcoholism, Drug Abuse, Problem Gambling

Available
24 hours / 7 days
Toll-free, anonymous and
confidential

an action center where visitors can e-mail family and friends about the initiative, submit a video testimonial about the issue, share with fellow New Yorkers on Twitter and Facebook, and stay in touch with the Governor's office about the issue.

"Change in Albany only happens when the people make it happen," said Governor Cuomo. "This legislation will make sure that New York leads the nation when it comes to the treatment and protection of people with special needs and disabilities. Now we need New Yorkers to make their voices heard so that Albany will pass our legislative proposal to create a new Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs."

To read the full release, visit the [Governor's website](#).

Several OASAS providers (listed below) are amongst the group that has agreed to participate in the Coalition for the Protection of People with Special Needs.

- New York Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers, Inc. Friends of Recovery - New York
- Therapeutic Communities Association of NY Coalition for Community Services
- Addiction Treatment Providers Association
- Committee of Methadone Program Administrators, Inc (COMPA)
- Phoenix House, Inc.
- Hope House, Inc.
- Odyssey House, Inc.
- Acacia Network
- Camelot of Staten Island
- Outreach Project
- St. Joseph Rehabilitation Center
- Liberty Management
- Samaritan Village
- Cornerstone Facilities Treatment Network
- Citizen Advocates, Inc.
- Credo Community Center for the Treatment of Addiction
- Dynamic Youth
- Council on Addictions of New York State
- Greater New York Hospital Association

Statement from Governor Cuomo on Unanimous Senate Passage of Legislation to Create The Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs

"I commend the Senate for unanimously passing legislation that will help give more than one million New Yorkers with disabilities and special needs the protections and justice they deserve. Now both the Senate and Assembly need to work towards a final agreement so we can create the Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs this year. New Yorkers who have been the victims of abuse or

mistreatment cannot afford any delay in action."

Additional news available at www.governor.ny.gov.

ASAP Board Meeting Held in Albany

On Tuesday May 1, OASAS Executive staff met with members of the Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers (ASAP) Board of Directors. The meeting was held to provide updates regarding some of the important initiatives impacting the field. Topics discussed included creation of the Behavioral Health Advisory Council, Administrative Single Set of Operating Standards, the Enhanced Oversight Initiative, and Prescription Drug Misuse. Commissioner González-Sánchez and the OASAS Executive staff appreciated having the opportunity to speak with representatives from the field and hearing their comments and insights on these issues.



OASAS Regional Coordinators Meeting Held in Albany



The Regional Coordinators meeting was held on April 26-27, 2012, in Albany, New York. This meeting included staff from both OASAS and OMH and is another important collaboration between the two agencies as they continue to work together on our system of care for the dually diagnosed. These

meetings provide staff with an opportunity to exchange information and solicit feedback that will be critical in helping to plan for integrated behavioral health services. Additionally, they help to foster a culture of collaboration between the agencies. During the first day of this meeting, topics discussed included training, regulations, clinical issues and culture. Presentations on the second day included scorecards, the changing role of field office, a perception of care demo and general discussions.

2012 Annual Problem Gambling Conference Held in Albany

The New York Council on Problem Gambling (NYCPG) held its annual statewide conference from May 9-10, at the Albany Marriott. On behalf of Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez, OASAS Executive Deputy Commissioner Kathleen Caggiano-Siino provided opening remarks to kick off the conference to an audience of 200 problem gambling providers, interested stakeholders and partners, as well as representatives from state and local government. The theme of this year's conference was, On the Horizon: The Future of Gambling and Problem Gambling in New York State. Each year, the conference provides the most up to date technology and trends in the problem gambling field from a national, state and local level and this year was no exception. The keynote speakers included: Mark Griffiths, Ph.D., Professor of Gambling Studies, International Gaming Research Unit, Psychology Division, Nottingham Trent University, UK; Lisa Athan, M.A., founder and Executive Director of Grief Speaks; Lisa M. Najavits, Ph.D., Boston University School of Medicine; and Keith Whyte, Executive Director of the National Council on Problem Gambling.

2012 Addictions Professionals Awards Program Announcement

In observance of National Recovery Month, New York State will pay tribute to the thousands of professionals who comprise its addictions services workforce. On September 20, the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) will acknowledge addictions professionals across New York State who provide exceptional services ranging from chemical dependence prevention, treatment and recovery, to problem gambling services for persons and communities in need.

Please help us celebrate the outstanding individuals who deserve recognition for their work in our field and are helping to make this a *"Profession of Choice."*

The **deadline** for submission of nomination forms is **Monday, July 16**. In the coming days, please consider submitting a [nomination](#) for a deserving addictions professional that you may know or work with for one of the following:

- CASAC of the Year
- CASAC-Trainee of the Year
- CPP/CPS of the Year
- Addictions Nurse of the Year
- Addictions Physician of the Year
- Licensed Psychologist of the Year in Addictions
- Licensed Clinical/Master Social Worker of the Year in Addictions
- Licensed Mental Health Counselor of the Year in Addictions
- Problem Gambling Counselor of the Year
- Problem Gambling Prevention Practitioner of the Year

- Certified Rehabilitation Counselor of the Year in Addictions

Recognizing a staff member or a colleague through this statewide nomination process is one of the highest compliments one can pay to a deserving professional in New York State's addiction field. Please join us in this important Talent Management effort and get involved in the 2012 Addictions Professionals Awards Program.

If you have any questions or comments, please send an email to APDNominations@oasas.ny.gov.

Conference of Local Mental Hygiene Directors (CLMHD) Holds Annual Full Membership Meeting in Saratoga Springs

The Conference of Local Mental Hygiene Directors (CLMHD) held their annual spring membership meeting at Longfellows Hotel and Conference Center in Saratoga Springs on Monday, April 30. The program included a panel of state agency leaders: Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez from OASAS, Commissioner Courtney Burke from OPWDD and Executive Deputy Commissioner Kristin Riley and Sr. Deputy Commissioner Bob Myers from OMH. The discussion covered a range of topics, including an update on Medicaid Redesign, how these changes will affect service delivery as well as the workforce, consolidated licensure process, and how the state and the Conference can work together moving forward. Additionally, Commissioner Sánchez affirmed her commitment to continuing our collaborative efforts with OMH and OPWDD to ensure our system of care is integrated, accessible and responsive to the needs of the whole patient, regardless of their disability or healthcare needs.

The Conference was established by State Mental Hygiene Law in 1976 to advance state and local policies, practices, laws, regulation and funding for the purpose of ensuring comprehensive, integrated and cost-effective systems of care to meet the needs of those persons and their families affected by mental illness, developmental disability and/or chemical dependency.

Call For 2012 National Exemplary Awards Applications

The National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) and the National Prevention Network (NPN) announce the CALL FOR APPLICATIONS for the 2012 National Exemplary Awards for Innovative Substance Abuse Prevention Programs, Practices and Policies.

The 2012 Exemplary Awards are intended to showcase "grassroots", evidence-based substance abuse prevention programs and strategies that have been evaluated and may be replicated by others. Applicants must be nominated by OASAS or another organization such as the NASADAD, NPN, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), Join Together, or the U.S. Military.

Applications and more information are available at the [NASADAD website](#). Anyone interested in being nominated by OASAS should review the [eligibility criteria in the application packet](#) and contact PatZoni@oasas.ny.gov. Application deadline to NASADAD is June 18, 2012.

O-STARS

If you know an exceptional individual who works or volunteers in the field of addictions and consistently performs at an outstanding level and makes a difference in the lives of New Yorkers, [submit your recommendation](#) today. For consideration as an O-STAR, please e-mail no more than two to three short paragraphs about the individual with a picture (JPG format) along with your contact information to communicator@oasas.ny.gov. Self nominations are accepted.

Otto Feliu, Director of Crouse Hospital's Chemical Dependency Treatment Services, received one of The Nyswander/Dole "Marie" Awards which were presented by Beny J. Primm, MD, Executive Director, Addiction Research and Treatment Corporation, Brooklyn, NY at The American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence (AATOD), Inc. on April 24, 2012 in Las Vegas, NV. The 2012 American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence (AATOD) National Conference recognizes outstanding contributions to Opioid treatment



by honoring the individuals with the Nyswander/Dole Award. These successful Award recipients have devoted themselves to improving the lives of patients in our treatment system. Dr. Vincent Dole and Dr. Marie Nyswander were the first recipients of this Award in 1983. The Association has been responsible for bestowing this honor since the first Regional Conference of 1984 in New York.

The following excerpt appeared in the conference program:

**Otto C. Feliu, MS, Crouse Hospital Chemical Dependency
Treatment Services, Syracuse, New York**

For over 30 years, Otto Feliu has been the director of Crouse Hospital Chemical Dependency Treatment Services. He also holds a Governor's appointment to serve on the NY State Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services and has served on the Board of Directors of the Committee of Methadone Program Administrators of New York State, Inc. Recognizing that addiction affects the entire

family, he is facilitating the implementation of an evidence-based cognitive behavior support group model for family members of patients with substance abuse disorders. Mr. Feliu has been instrumental in ensuring that patients who participate in Drug Court in Onondaga County are allowed to remain in medication assisted treatment.

As a clinician, educator, administrator, activist, and community leader, Otto has continued to strive for greater awareness and understanding of the disease of addiction.

Otto was one of nine distinguished addiction professionals nationally and internationally to receive this award in 2012. A complete [list of awardees](#) are located on the AATOD website.

Additionally, under the leadership of Otto Feliu, Crouse Hospital has recently implemented the Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) services in their Urgent Care Services which are a part of the hospital's Emergency Department. SBIRT is a Medicaid reimbursable service in New York State and is part of the Governor's Medicaid Redesign initiatives.

OASAS Medical Corner

Dr. Steven Kipnis, OASAS Medical Director

The OASAS Medical Corner is an ongoing part of each edition of the Communicator newsletter. It is intended to provide timely information regarding educational events, new research and/or updates that can lead to better performance by the field. [Addiction Medicine](#) is a dynamic and relatively new specialty and this column will help to filter some of this information.

Light Alcohol Drinking Increases Risk of Breast Cancer

Seitz et al in their article (Epidemiology and Pathophysiology of Alcohol and Breast Cancer) in Alcohol and Alcoholism March 2012, conducted a meta-analysis of data on light alcohol drinking. The research revealed that a significant increase of the order of 4 percent in the risk of breast cancer is already present at intake of up to one alcoholic drink/day. Heavy alcohol consumption, defined as three or more drinks/day, is associated with an increased risk by 40-50 percent. This translates into up to 5 percent of breast cancers attributable to alcohol in northern Europe and North America for a total of approximately 50,000 alcohol-attributable cases of breast cancer worldwide.

Alcohol increases estrogen levels, and estrogens may exert its carcinogenic effect on breast tissue. Other mechanisms may include acetaldehyde, oxidative stress, epigenetic changes due to a disturbed methyl transfer and decreased retinoic acid concentrations associated with an altered cell cycle.

Conclusions: Women should not exceed one drink/day, and women at elevated risk for breast cancer should avoid alcohol or consume alcohol occasionally only.

New York State Department of Health Encouraging Health Care Facilities to Pre-Book Private Stock Influenza Vaccine

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) is encouraging health care facilities to pre-book their private stock influenza vaccine now from their vaccine distributors in order to ensure that a sufficient amount of vaccine will be available to protect their employees and vulnerable patients for the 2012-2013 influenza season. Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for all persons aged 6 months and older. Four formulations (the traditional "flu shot", the high-dose flu shot for patients and employees aged 65 years and older, the intradermal flu shot, and the nasal spray) will be available.

For more information on [distributors and influenza vaccine availability](#), please visit FluSupplyNews.com.

Parent's Edition of the Underage Drinking Not a Minor Problem Campaign Recently Aired New Radio PSAs



OASAS aired two new radio public service announcements (PSAs) as part of the Parent's Edition of the Underage Drinking: Not a Minor Problem Campaign on several radio stations in upstate New York during the month of April. The 30- and 60-second Public Service Announcements consists

of a conversation between two parents talking about the seriousness of underage drinking and the need to have conversations with their teen children. The PSA voiceovers direct listeners to the TALK2Prevent.com website. If you would like to [listen to the spots](#) or learn more about the campaign, visit TALK2Prevent.com.

OASAS Receives AVA Award for New Video on Medication-Supported Recovery

OASAS recently received a 2011 AVA Honorable Mention Award for our five-minute video entitled, [Medication-Supported Recovery: Prescription for Recovery](#). The video features patients and staff explaining the benefit of addiction medications.



Production was done as part of a campaign to rebranded medication-assisted treatment to focus on "recovery," and emphasize the sustaining aspect of addiction medicine, similar to the use of medications in the treatment of other chronic diseases. OASAS utilized a SAMHSA Technical Assistance grant to fund development of the campaign, which in addition to the video, included a phone "ap" to optimize access to the OASAS Addiction Medicine website for cell phone users and a Medication-Supported Recovery [poster](#). Numerous workshops and presentations are planned for this year as well.

Geriatric Mental Health Alliance of New York Conference to be Held in Albany on May 14

This Geriatric Mental Health Alliance (GMHA) of New York Conference will take place on Monday, May 14, 2012, at the Marriott Hotel located at 189 Wolf Road in Albany, New York. The conference will focus on "*Building Integrated Physical and Behavioral Health Care for Older Adults*" stressing the need for coordination of care to address mental health, substance abuse and co-occurring disorders among older adults. The conference will provide valuable information on how mental health reforms will impact older adults. Additionally, it will provide updates on innovative demonstration programs established pursuant to the Geriatric Mental Health Act of New York to build and sustain integrated care for older adults in the new healthcare environment.

If you would like to attend, [register online](#). Further information is available directly by emailing [Greg Holzheimer](#) at the GMHA or by calling him at 212-614-5753.

OASAS Designates Two Statewide Nurse Executives

Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez, placing the highest priority and value on the expertise of our nurse practitioners, has announced to the [OASAS New York State Nurse Advisory Panel](#) that Michele Falkowski, a Registered Nurse 3 at the Creedmoor ATC and Mike Williams a Nurse Administrator for the Dick Van Dyke ATC will serve in the role as downstate and upstate nurse executive.

These two designated professional nurses who work within the OASAS Addiction Treatment Center (ATC) system are to serve statewide and will collaborate with other stakeholders to guide and strengthen nursing services. OASAS currently employs 180 nurses directly through the ATC's and at least 1,572 working in Provider facilities. These skilled professionals will consult on policies related to nursing practice and procedures for the delivery of nursing care, provide technical assistance to the field, and work with both the Nurse Advisory Panel and the Executive team as an advisor.

OASAS wants to acknowledge and recognize all our nurses statewide, who serve in the addictions field for their caring dedication, commitment and tireless efforts to promote and maintain the health

of those we serve.

New York State Clinical Records Initiative (NYSCRI) Forms to be Available Soon



As part of the New York State Clinical Records Initiative (NYSCRI), OMH and OASAS offer a standardized, compliant and integrated clinical

case records form set, on a voluntary basis, for their local licensed non-inpatient programs. As is commonly known, regulations change periodically. Since the form set was unveiled in the Fall 2010, several significant changes to regulations have taken place which directly impact the New York State Clinical Records Initiative. These include several changes to the Joint Commission standards which usually occur every six months and are also typically joined by an additional change as well as significant modifications within OASAS regulations (particularly Outpatient Part 822). One important change will be the inclusion of all of OASAS' PAS-44 and PAS-45 reporting elements, which will streamline some of their reporting duties.

Thirty-eight providers and OASAS/OMH staff who have been working for months as part of our Review and Implementation Team (RIT). Since the end of November 2011, over the course of four intensive days and follow-up meetings, the RIT Compliance Team has been assessing the regulation changes, reassessing current regulations in effect, and reorganizing our Compliance Grid to further clarify the specific regulations upon which NYSCRI is built. Our Forms/Manuals team has done the same since January 2012 and its work is nearing the end. Once all the changes have been made and finally approved by our Oversight Team, within the next few months, we will release an updated form set.

Consistent with the spirit of NYSCRI being voluntary, providers are welcome to use the forms currently in use, though once updated, the MTM site will host the newer versions. For those providers that use a NYSCRI Certified Vendor, the expectation is that the vendor will incorporate the necessary changes as part of their agreement with our certifying partner, MTM Services.

We expect the significance of these changes to be atypical. However, with any project which values continuous quality improvement, we recognize that these updates may mean some extra work by our Certified Vendors as well as for providers using the updated forms. We ultimately intend that this effort will assist providers to save time on documentation; allow more face to face time with individuals being served; enhance person-centeredness and clinical effectiveness; all while supporting compliance.

May 14-20 is National Alcohol and Other Drug-Related Birth Defects Week

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) has designated May 14-20, 2012, as National Alcohol and Other Drug-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week.

When parents abuse alcohol or drugs, the consequences can be devastating for their children. Children of alcoholic or drug-dependent parents can suffer neglect, developmental hindrances, and emotional and physical abuse.

People who abuse substances can also damage the health of their unborn children. For example, a woman who smokes marijuana during pregnancy can put the fetus at risk for a host of dangerous problems, such as low birth weight, developmental difficulties, and even drug addiction. Similarly, a woman who drinks alcohol while pregnant can cause heart defects, growth retardation, and serious neurological injury to the fetus (commonly known as fetal alcohol syndrome, or FAS). (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, 2007.)

Drinking just one alcoholic beverage per day while pregnant has been associated with increased risk of having a child with impaired growth. The potential for harm increases as larger amounts of alcohol are consumed. Even minimal alcohol consumption during pregnancy can increase the risk of hyperactivity, attention deficiency and emotional problems in the child. No safe level of alcohol intake during pregnancy has been determined.

To read the [full posting](#), visit the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence's website. Additional information can be found on the following websites: [NYS OASAS](#), the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and [NCADD](#).

Former Heavyweight Champion Attends OASAS Alumni Quarterly Meeting

Former heavyweight champion, Gerry Cooney, attended the OASAS Alumni Quarterly meeting, held on April 19, 2012. Mr. Cooney used his life experience and personal Recovery story to encourage Alumni members from 20 treatment programs about their Recovery and their ability to give back to others. Mr. Cooney is a major supporter of charitable works and Recovery. Known as "Gentleman" Gerry Cooney, Mr. Cooney ended his presentation by demonstrating a few



boxing moves with his will opponent, Willie Townes, the Coordinator of the OASAS Alumni Initiative, and taking pictures with all the of the attendees.

**Save the Date: 2012 Recovery Rally and 9th Annual
Fine Arts Festival**



Friends of Recovery New York (FOR-NY) is holding the *5th Annual New York Celebrates Recovery Rally* on September 23, 2012, in Albany, New York. This is your opportunity to rally your friends, family and community to support Recovery. You can also become a Team Leader by assembling a group of five or more individuals to come and celebrate with you.

The winners of the *9th Annual Fine Arts Festival* will also be awarded and their artwork will be on display. Stay tuned for more details about these events. For questions, call FOR-NY at 518-487-4305 or visit the [FOR-NY website](#).

For questions and/or comments about this newsletter, please send them to: communicator@oasas.ny.gov.