



Ohio Department of Mental Health

30 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3430

December 31, 2008

#C-11-09-09

To: ADAMH/CMH Boards
Provider Organizations Serving Adults with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness
Mental Health Stakeholders

From: Sandra Stephenson, MSW, MA
Director

Subject: Implementing the Medicaid Buy In for Workers with Disabilities Program in Ohio's
Publicly Funded Mental Health System

I am writing to provide information about the Medicaid Buy In for Workers with Disabilities (MBIWD) program, and to invite your participation in efforts to implement this program in Ohio so that it is effective for adults with severe and persistent mental illness served in our system. MBIWD is a program that became effective in April, 2008, and allows adult (ages 16 – 64), disabled Medicaid recipients to work and retain Medicaid eligibility. Working individuals who enroll in MBIWD will no longer have to pay a spenddown or a patient liability, but may have to pay a premium.

Staff of ODMH have been working with representatives of the Ohio Council of Behavioral Healthcare Providers, OACBHA, Mental Health Advocacy Coalition, ODJFS, Cerebral Palsy of Ohio, COVA, Employment CWG and the Ohio Job and Family Services Directors' Association to develop information and training materials about the program and its unique impact on Ohio's mental health system. A number of these representatives developed the Power Point presentation attached to the email transmitting this memorandum. This is an excellent resource for you to use to begin to understand MBIWD better, if you have not already received information about the program.

ODMH and the organizations cited above are planning local and regional webinar and other training events to begin in January, 2009. Invited participants in those events will include ADAMH/CMH Boards, providers serving adults with severe and persistent mental illness, County Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) representatives, and representatives of the Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC). The purpose of these events will be not only to provide information, but also to foster and support local and regional collaboration among the behavioral health, human services, and employment services delivery systems. We would see constructive working relationships among ADAMH/CMH Boards, behavioral health provider organizations, CDJFSs, and BVR Offices as essential for making this program effective.

We are requesting that ADAMH/CMH Boards and provider organizations serving adults with severe and persistent mental illness begin working with their local CDJFSs to establish communication and dialogue about the best methods to implement MBIWD locally. It may also be important to include the area BVR Office in these discussions. It will be important to establish key contact people in each of the local organizations who will be able to troubleshoot and problem solve when issues arise. You will want to make certain to identify key staff in neighborhood service or opportunity centers where the local job and family services system is organized with decentralized delivery sites. Putting these

mechanisms in place will help avoid problems that may otherwise impede consumer access to this critical program. Also, forging these relationships now will make the local and regional webinar and other training events all the more effective when they begin in January. It will be helpful for Boards and provider organizations to review the Power Point presentation prior to meeting with CDJFS representatives. Also, attached to the email transmittal is a record of county by county enrollment to date. You can use this information to see where your local area stands in terms of enrollment. There are some outliers that need to be addressed.

If you have questions about the content of this memorandum or about follow up activities, I would encourage you to contact one of the persons listed below:

- Liz Henrich, Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities, 614.224.1111, ehenrich@oacbha.org
- Teresa Lampl, Ohio Council of Behavioral Healthcare Providers, 614.228.0747, OCLampl@aol.com
- Rick Tully, Ohio Department of Mental Health, 614.728.9784, tullyr@mh.state.oh.us

Thank you for your attention in this matter.