



*The Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force is the voice of the community on issues related to the quality and responsiveness of mental health and substance abuse disorder services.*

May 2017

Dear Mental Health Task Force Member,

This is the Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force's 13th year of education, advocacy and collaboration. We thank you for your partnership and participation in the Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force, and ask for your continued support. Our new membership year begins August 1. If you are currently a member, thank you for your past support and please renew your membership. If you or your agency are not currently members, we warmly invite you to join!

The MMHTF was formed in 2004. It includes participants from over 40 organizations and community members who work collaboratively to identify issues faced by people affected by mental illness, facilitate improvements in services, give consumers and families a strong voice, reduce stigma, and implement recovery principles.

We invite your partnership as we continue to move forward with our three-year plan including the following priorities: The MMHTF will:

- Use careful research and analysis to aggressively advocate for programs and policies that will improve mental health and substance use disorder services in Milwaukee County.
- Focus its efforts on strategies that will expand access to the full continuum of integrated mental health and substance use services to advance recovery and independence for all populations in Milwaukee County.
- Engage all parts of the Milwaukee community in a sustained, meaningful way at all levels of Task Force operation including membership, working groups, special initiatives and governance.

**We need your support to sustain our important work – please join or renew your membership.** Your membership will support our work as a positive force for systems change, cover a portion of staff costs to coordinate the task force, and ensure our programs are open to all. This includes:

- Educating the community about public policy and other key issues impacting people with mental illness, such as our briefing on the *2017 – 2019 State Budget and Federal Health Care Reform*, Forum on Peer Run Respite, training on voting rights, and listening session regarding inhumane treatment in the jail.
- The value of the Task Force was recognized by policy makers who included a designated position for the MMHTF Chair on the Milwaukee County Mental Health Board. To support this role, the Task Force conducts an annual survey on priorities for mental health services, briefings on county and state budgets, sponsors meetings with elected officials and policy makers, candidate forums, and development of position papers and budget analysis. Task Force leadership also serve on state councils and committees to bring a Milwaukee perspective.
- Continued work and updates from community leaders on efforts to address mental illness in the criminal justice system, including medical and mental health care for detainees, support for the Crisis Intervention Training program which has trained law enforcement, and active engagement with the new MacArthur Foundation Grant which will advance systemic change to divert more people with mental illness from the criminal justice system.
- Task Force administration including updating our *Mental Health Task Force Directory*, maintaining the web site and listserv, coordinating forums and other meetings with elected officials, developing task force position papers and legislative testimony, writing funding proposals, and serving as the fiscal agent.

We welcome organizational members as well as “community supporters” - individuals who want to support the task force. All members will be recognized and honored in task force materials and at our September 12 Forum which will feature a focus on diversity as well as presentation of the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Karen Avery Award will be presented. *Save the date and stay tuned for details!*

Please support the work of the task force with your membership donation and continue to work with us to facilitate improvements in service, give consumers and families a strong voice, reduce stigma, and implement recovery principles. Please return the enclosed form with your check by July 31, 2017. Thank you for your partnership.

*Mary Neubauer*

*Kelly Davis*

Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force Co-chairs