

Up to the Minute

OACBHA UPDATE

April 2, 2008

MEDICAID BUY-IN A REALITY

After many years of advocacy efforts and an administrative implementation delay, Medicaid Buy-In for workers with disabilities is a reality effective April 1, 2008. The Medicaid Buy-In program allows adults with disabilities to earn more than would otherwise be possible and still have Medicaid coverage. In return, participants “buy into” the Medicaid program by paying premiums based on income. Approximately 7,000 Ohioans are expected to qualify for the program. For more information or to apply for the program, visit <http://www.ifs.ohio.gov/ohp/mbiwd.stm>.

COLLEGE CAMPUS NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH ANTI-STIGMA CAMPAIGN

Last week the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Ad Council announced a program to deliver their National Mental Health Anti-Stigma public service advertising campaign directly to colleges and universities across the country. The campaign is aimed at 18 to 25 year-old adults and is designed to reduce the stigma around mental illness by encouraging young adults to support friends with mental health issues.

In 2006 SAMHSA estimated that 24.9 million adults over the age of 18 were living with serious psychological distress, an indicator of a possible mental illness. In the adult population serious psychological distress is highest among 18 to 25 year-olds, and yet this age group is the least likely to receive treatment or counseling. The Ad Council and SAMHSA have distributed 450,000 campus packs, including brochures and materials for students, to more than 200 colleges and universities during the fall 2007 semester. To read more about this campaign please visit: www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/advisories/0803273627.aspx.

NEW OPTION TO COVER SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN CREATED

Governor Ted Strickland signed an Executive Order this week creating a state-funded Children’s Buy-In Program which allows uninsured special needs children in families with incomes exceeding 300% of the federal poverty level (\$63,000 a year for a family of four) to apply for health care coverage. Under the program, families with children under the age of 19 can pay monthly premiums ranging from \$250-\$500 a month to participate in the program. To qualify, the child also must be unable to obtain insurance because of a pre-existing condition, must have lost insurance for exceeding the lifetime benefit limitation, or must have access only to insurance that is more than twice the cost of the buy-in program. Families can apply online at www.ifs.ohio.gov/ohp/cbi. For families below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), the Strickland administration intended to expand the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Medicaid program from the current 200% FPL to 300% FPL. The Bush administration rejected Ohio’s request. The Strickland administration appealed the decision and submitted a new request with a more modest Medicaid expansion.

For more information about behavioral health issues in Ohio please visit:

www.oacbha.org

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