

## Up to the Minute

OACBHA UPDATE

**March 12, 2008**

### **HOUSE PASSES PARITY BILL**

Last Wednesday, the U.S. House passed the *Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007*, a comprehensive mental health and alcohol and drug abuse parity legislation (HR 1424). The vote was 268 to 148, with 47 Republicans joining 221 Democrats in support of the measure. Many insurers and employers still support the Senate bill over the House version. Attention now shifts to House-Senate negotiations to reconcile their chambers' versions of the parity legislation.

### **SECOND CHANCE ACT PASSES SENATE**

The *Reducing Recidivism and Second Chance Act of 2007* was passed by the Senate on March 11, 2008. The passage of this act is an important step in realizing that community-based services can stop the cycle of incarceration that has been a problem nationwide. The bill that was introduced by Senators Biden (D-DE), Specter (R-PA), Brownback (R-KS), and Leahy (D-VT) in March of 2007, reauthorizes the Adult and Juvenile Offender State and Local Reentry Demonstration Program. This program is used by states to create programs focused on housing, jobs, addiction treatment, mental health treatment, and services for families and children of incarcerated people. The President is expected to sign the bill into law in the next few weeks. To read the language of the bill in its entirety, please visit: <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?c110:1:./temp/~c110W5E8WT::>

### **STATE BY STATE SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) released a new report providing analysis of substance use and mental health problems in each state. The state estimates of substance use are based on the 2005-2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health and includes estimates of underage drinking, use of illicit drugs, serious psychological distress, major depression, and tobacco use. Although there were wide variations among the states, no state was immune to these problems. Underage drinking ranged from 21.5 % in Utah up to 38.3 % in Vermont. Utah had the highest percentage of adults reporting serious psychological distress in the past year (14.4%), while Hawaii had the lowest at 8.8%.

Ohio reported 7.93% of people 12 or older used illicit drugs within the past month. Of all states, Ohio had the seventh highest percentage illicit drug use in the past month. Eleven percent of Ohioans age 12 and older reported serious psychological distress and 8% reported having at least one major depressive episode. To view this article, please visit: <http://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/advisories/0803061256.aspx>

### **TWENTY PERCENT OF SOLDIERS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN REPORT MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS**

A report completed by a team of mental health experts who traveled to Iraq and Afghanistan shows that 15% to 20% of all soldiers fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan show signs of depression or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). For soldiers on their third or fourth deployment, the rate is about 30%. The team of mental health experts also found that soldiers are more willing to seek mental health care, though in some remote parts of Iraq and Afghanistan accessing this care is difficult. The army is considering deploying more mental health workers into combat areas to increase the ratio of mental health workers-to-troops. To view this article in its entirety, please visit: [http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2008-03-06-soldier-stress\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2008-03-06-soldier-stress_N.htm)

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

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