

Up to the Minute

OACBHA UPDATE

March 26, 2008

REPORT PREDICTS OHIO BUDGET SHORTFALL WILL HIT WORST CASE SCENARIO

Earlier this year, the Office of Budget and Management announced that \$733 million in mid-biennium budget cuts were necessary in order to prevent the state from ending the current biennium in the red. This led to the announced closure of two state psychiatric hospitals, state agency staffing cuts, a Keno gambling proposal, and other cost-containing measures. However, according to a report recently released by the Center for Community Solutions, Ohio should be taking action to close a \$1.884 **billion** shortfall that assumes recession, not just a \$733 million shortfall that assumes slow growth. The article also discusses possible solutions, including: using the state's \$1 billion rainy day fund; postponing scheduled tax reductions in income taxes and tangible personal property taxes (TPP); eliminating "carryback" deductions; and eliminating some of Ohio's 146 tax breaks. To read the report, visit: <http://www.communitysolutions.com/images/upload/resources/sbmv4n3.pdf>.

ADOLESCENTS USING HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS TO GET HIGH

According to data from the 2002 to 2006 National Household Survey on Drug Use and Health, an average of 593,000 adolescents ages 12-17 use inhalants for the first time each year. Younger adolescents most often inhale household products such as glue, shoe polish, or toluene (29.6%); gasoline or lighter fluid (25.7%); and spray paints (24.4%). The survey found that older adolescents were more likely to use nitrous oxide (43.4%) or whippets (59.3%). For more information on this survey please visit: www.oas.samhsa.gov/2k8/inhalants/press.htm.

PROPOSAL PUT FORTH TO KEEP CAMBRIDGE PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL OPEN

The Ohio Civil Service Employees Association and certain local government officials have put forth a proposal to keep the psychiatric hospital in Cambridge open. In response to Governor Strickland's announcement that the hospital would have to close due to budget cuts, the union and other local officials have proposed reducing approximately 44 administrative staff positions in the hospital while still leaving enough staff and nurses to provide services to clients. The Strickland administration is still moving forward with the announced hospital closure plans for Cambridge and in Dayton. Chairman Jay Hottinger (R-Newark) of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee stated that members from both parties are considering adding language to an upcoming capital bill to ensure that the hospitals remain open.

STATE FUNDING DROPPED FOR PAROLED SEX OFFENDER THERAPY

As of March 3, 2008 the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction stopped paying for therapy for paroled sex offenders as part of a \$71 million reduction in their budget. The state is trying to shift responsibility for paroled sex offender counseling to the department's Adult Parole Authority beginning in May. Sex offenders on parole would then be able to go to their county adult parole office for treatment and counseling. To read this article in its entirety please visit: http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2008/03/24/z-apoh_therapy_0324.ART_ART_03-24-08_B3_UU9NTL7.html?sid=101.

PROPOSED MEDICAID COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT RULES IN CLEARANCE

Rules have been posted and made available for public inspection and comment that would change how providers are reimbursed for community behavioral health services and would phase out the current reconciliation process in the Medicaid program. The rules are in the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Clearance review process between now and April 8th. To view the proposed changes, visit <http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/clearances/public/index.aspx> and scroll down to Ohio Health Plans: Providers-Community Access.

For more information about behavioral health issues in Ohio please visit:
www.oacbha.org

To remove your name from our mailing list or for questions or comments,
please e-mail kthomas@oacbha.org