



# WEST CENTRAL NEWS

December 2019/ Issue III

## 2019 WCBH Legislative Forum

On a brisk and snowy December morning, WCBH hosted its annual Legislative Forum. It's our opportunity to discuss what's happening in the NH legislature that affects our ability to treat those living with mental illness, and share with legislators what will help us to better serve our clients.

Some issues of note:

- Medicaid reimbursement rates have not been raised since 2006, and are about 58% lower than the amounts paid by commercial carriers. 85% percent of our clients are Medicaid-eligible.



---

24/7 Emergency Help for Those  
in Crisis  
**800-542-2578**

---

- New Hampshire has the largest relative increase in mid-life mortality in the U.S. at 23.3%. The increasing death rate is due, in large part, to rising rates of suicide, drug overdoses, and liver disease. [Journal of the American Medical Association](#), Nov. 2019.
- Medicaid pays about 48% **less** for mental health services for children than for adults. For the same amount of

time, and often for the same types of services!



Polly Campion, NH State Representative for Grafton District 12 (left), and Michael Cryans, NH Councilor for District 1 (right), attended WCBH's Legislative Forum.



Brian Sullivan, NH Representative for Sullivan District 1 (left). Roger Osmun, Ph.D., WCBH's President and CEO (right), explains how Medicaid reimbursements affect the services community mental health care providers, like WCBH, can offer..

## Vocational Services

Did you know? Meaningful activities like employment often expand a person's self worth and bring a sense of purpose to life. We offer vocational services as part of our Supported Employment Program. Our Vocational Specialists help clients reach their work goals to find employment or stay employed. Some common work goals include: getting a GED, enrolling in college or training classes, part-time work, full-time work, self-employment, finding transportation, and learning how to speak with employers about mental illness.



Here's what one client had to say:

*"Working has helped further my recovery more than any other single thing I have done -- more than therapy, case management, or medication alone. My job helps me stay focused on something other than illness."*

---

## **Challenge Met!**

### **Thank You to Our Donors and to The Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation**

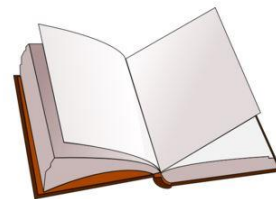
We did it!!! Last month, we announced that **The Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation** offered to match WCBH Annual Appeal donations up to a total of \$25,000. We're now gratefully acknowledging everyone who donated in November and December. We met the match! This will allow us to continue to offer compassionate and expert care to adults, families, and children in need.

There's still time to contribute to our Annual Appeal. If you just haven't gotten around to it, make today the day! Please click on the button below to give online, or by mail to: WCBH, 9 Hanover St. Suite 2, Lebanon, NH 03766. Thank you!

[Donate to Support Those in Need](#)

---

**Looking For a Little  
Holiday Reading,  
Perhaps?**



Did you know West Central participates in research studies? Or that our own current and former clinical staff author and publish papers that make a difference to mental health providers around the globe? That's right, WCBH may be small, but our impact in the world of mental health is significant.

Have a look at our newly created [Publications of Interest](#) page in the "About" section of our website for the first of many scholarly research articles: "[Adolescents' Use of Digital Technologies and Preferences for Mobile Health Coaching in Public Mental Health Settings](#) ." Enjoy!

---

## Staff in Action - Sandy Orndorff



Sandy Orndorff, Administrative Assistant for the WCBH Administrative office in Lebanon, has held her position for 22 years! In addition to answering phones and greeting visitors, Sandy coordinates our Child Impact

Seminars, which we offer in Claremont, Lebanon, and Newport. Sandy also helps with our Mental Health First Aid Program by entering evaluations and making sure attendees receive their certificates. She also distributes copies of this Newsletter to our clinics.

Sandy's favorite thing about her job is talking to callers and visitors. She likes "taking care of people in my own way." You can reach Sandy at [sorndorff@wcbh.org](mailto:sorndorff@wcbh.org).

## **New Hampshire Ranks 2nd in the U.S. in Number of Children Affected by Opioid Abuse**

A recent study published by the United Hospital Fund and Boston Consulting Group found that 51 out of every 1,000 children in NH have been affected by opioid use. This includes children exposed to opioids *in utero*, as well as children living in homes where opioid use is a problem. The only state with a higher rate was West Virginia, where 54 out of every 1,000 children are affected.

At WCBH, we treat people with substance use disorder (SUD) every day. Approximately 29 percent of people with mental illness in the United States also have a substance use problem. In Claremont, we have an office devoted solely to treating SUD, and we treat SUD as a co-occurring disorder at our other "Adult" locations. Whether you're trying to beat alcohol, opioids, or something else, WCBH can help.

Want to make an appointment? Call (603) 542-5128

---

## **Looking for a Little Help During the Holiday Season? We're Here When (or if) You Need Us**

Holidays can be a special time, full of family, fun, and joy. However, many people experience stress, anxiety or depression during the season. It's especially important for those living with



a mental health condition to take extra care of their physical and mental health during this time.

Holiday blues are normal. Expectations are high and the days are short. Allow yourself to let go of a few things and try to be truly present for the important moments. Take time to celebrate all the things you do. Don't worry about the things you haven't managed to do. Get your sleep, put your phone down, take a walk, drink moderately (if you do drink), and don't beat yourself up about eating that second piece of fudge at the office party.

Remember, while the holiday blues are normal, they should pass. Symptoms lasting more than two weeks are a cause for concern and should be evaluated by a healthcare professional. If someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, do not leave that person alone. These thoughts require a call to a doctor for immediate evaluation and/or Emergency Room visit.

In need? Call our  
24/7 Emergency Services Help Line  
(800) 564-2578

---

**It's Not Too Late  
To Change Someone's Life**

Symptoms of mental illness in ourselves or those we love often make us feel powerless -- or ashamed. At WCBH, we're changing that.

Children, families, adults, and elders comprise our local client community. Since 1977, we've offered services to those in crisis, delivering more than \$600,000 in charitable care last year. But there are far more people who need our compassionate and expert clinical care. You can help. We hope our work inspires you to support us.



Please give as generously as you can. We can build a future where our services are available to all, and the stigma of mental illness is eliminated.

[Donate to Our Annual Appeal](#)

## Sharing This Newsletter Might Save a Life!

With best holiday and New Year's wishes, this newsletter goes out to all WCBH staff, our Board members, and our many friends and supporters. Please share it broadly with your friends and family so people remember our name and the work we do as this region's community mental health and substance use clinic. **When people in need know who we are, they'll contact us *when they need help*.**





## **We're Here When You Need Us**

West Central Behavioral Health serves clients in the Upper Valley and Sullivan County, and has offices in Lebanon, Claremont, and Newport, NH.  
WCBH is a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) organization.