

ABOUT THE CONSUMER/ SURVIVOR MOVEMENT

The mental health consumer/survivor movement began almost thirty years ago, perhaps not coincidentally, at the time of the beginning of deinstitutionalization. Former mental patients began to meet together in groups without psychiatric professionals.

These former patients shared their feelings of anger at their abusive treatment and hope for independent living. They began organizing to fight for their rights and to provide support for each other.

A new civil rights movement began. Initially, this social change movement concentrated on direct political action and organized in autonomous, grassroots groups, connected only by one newsletter and once an annual conference, in campgrounds and universities. In time, as our activities grew, we sought and received funding, mainstreamed so as to reach the millions of mental health consumers who knew nothing about empowerment, and centralized, such as beginning statewide organizations.

Today there are self-help, mutual support groups throughout the country, statewide client advocacy organizations in the majority of states, training conferences, such as the annual Alternatives Conference, and countless county and state consumer conferences.

Additional resources include national technical assistance centers, the beginning of research by clients about self-help and mutual support initiatives, substantive client involvement in policy-making and program development and implementation, clients as providers and managers in the mental health system, an advance in rights protections and a proliferation of lawyers and others protecting our rights.

From experiencing oppression we moved to separatist empowerment groups and then to reentering society as equal partners working for social change - often literally reentering the very place in which we were hospitalized or treated.

CLIENT MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ Zip_____

County_____

Telephone () _____

E-mail_____

Please check the appropriate option:

The Network may may not give my name, phone number and address to members who want to network in my area. (If you check "may not," your name and contact information will not be given out without your permission.)

I am currently a mental health client or I have been a mental health client in the past.

Please check the appropriate boxes below:

- Please enroll me as a member.
- I am willing to donate my time and skills.
- Scholarship donation. \$_____ enclosed

Please return this completed form to:

CMHC, 1722 J Street, Suite 324, Sacramento, CA 95814



California Network of Mental Health Clients

*The Voice of the Mental Health
Consumer in California*



CNMHC

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WHO WE ARE

The California Network of Mental Health Clients (CNMHC) is a consumer owned and run organization whose membership consists of individuals with mental disabilities and affiliates.

CNMHC represents the voice of the mental health consumer and, as such, is a critical participant and stakeholder in all statewide mental health policy processes. CNMHC also lends critical support to self-help and mutual support groups and programs throughout the state.

CNMHC provides services statewide and locally. We provide direct consumers trainings, networking, conferences, policy advocacy, education, and information. CNMHC also provides vital training and education to individuals and systems that come in contact with individuals with mental disabilities.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

- ✓ Choice and self-determination in services.
- ✓ The need for mental health services that do no harm and protect and respect the rights of mental health clients.
- ✓ The need for social and rehabilitative community mental health services that address the real life needs of persons with psychiatric disabilities- affordable housing, income supports, jobs, friends, substance abuse issues.
- ✓ The need for client-run (peer) programs and mutual support groups- programs run totally by the recipients of the services.- as well as clients as providers within more traditional mental health programs.
- ✓ The need to end stereotyping and discrimination of people with psychiatric disabilities.

Overarching all of these principles is the need for our involvement in all decision making of the mental health system as it directly affects our lives, on every level of policy making and program monitoring.

2006-2007 PROJECTS

The California Network of Mental Health Clients is very active, focusing on self-help public policy, cultural competency. The activities are centered both regionally and statewide, as mandated by the clients of the state in an organizational plan. Regionally, each of the five Regions has developed a self-help project. The members of each region selected their project at the regional meetings held in May or June.

The CNMHC continues active statewide and regional participation in the following areas:

- ✓ Self-help and Mutual Support Groups
- ✓ Public Education and Policy
- ✓ Cultural Competency and Sensitivity
- ✓ Membership Outreach and Networking
- ✓ Employment and Career Development

Each of five regions will develop self-help projects within the areas of Self-Help and Mutual Support; Public Education and Policy; Cultural Competency and Sensitivity; Membership Outreach and Networking; and Employment and Career Development.

Far South Region: Training for self advocacy.

South Region: Focus groups on Accessing Mental Health Services for language and Ethnic Groups.

Bay Area Region: Media Outreach Project on Client Anti-Discrimination Message.

Central Valley Region: Train clients in telling their stories and compiling a book of consumer stories.

Far North Region: Peer Training Project video.

The Public Education and Policy Project:

- ✓ Produce CNMHC News Alerts
- ✓ Research, inform and educate about pressing mental health-related issues;
- ✓ Develop and implement the California Memorial Project (CMP)
- ✓ Holds an Annual Day at the Capitol for California's clients, including information-sharing and education.
- ✓ Ensure that clients are represented at all levels of the mental health system — planning, implementation and oversight;
- ✓ Promote maximum and meaningful involvement of clients locally and statewide in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the Mental Health Services Act.

The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Client involvement Project. Provide Education, training, and support to maximize client involvement and leadership in each county and region as well as statewide in all stages of MHSA planning, implementation, oversight, and evaluation, so as to provide a strong client voice throughout the State.

The Cultural Competency Project: Conduct a Diversity Outreach Project.

Develop one issue of the CNMHC Newsletter, the Cal Net Gazette.

The Trainee Program: will provide work and work training opportunities within the CNMHC office

Office of Self Help/ Technical assistance and Support Center provides training and technical support for self help development for client communities and the mental health community in general.

Hold a statewide Client Forum