

September 6, 2013

## Mental Health and Wellness Commission

Presenter: Millie A. Paterson, LMSW, CAADC, MBA  
119 E. Sanilac Ave, Suite 8, Sandusky, MI 48471-1184

I am in private practice here in Sandusky, with Halusia Witkowski, also an LMSW. We have both worked at Sanilac CMH as Contract Therapists. I had worked with Sanilac CMH for over 10 years and Halusia for 4.5 years until our contracts were ended in February of this year.

We are aware of the momentum and in depth discussions for each Board to live within the "per member per month" funding allocation, and "pay for performance" issues. Additionally, the cost per service by program is an issue for all CMH's. Balancing budgets against allocated Medicaid funds becomes a challenge. In order to remain competitive, CMH's must get costs per service by program down.

So, I want to speak with you about an current and existing policy called "Self Determination". The following is taken from:

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH, Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, SELF-DETERMINATION POLICY & PRACTICE GUIDELINE, October 1, 2012

**FREEDOM:** The ability for individuals, with assistance from significant others (e.g., chosen family and/or friends), to plan a life based on acquiring necessary supports in desirable ways, rather than purchasing a program. This includes the freedom to choose where and with whom one lives, who and how to connect in one's community, the opportunity to contribute in one's own ways, and the development of a personal lifestyle.

**AUTHORITY:** The assurance for a person with a disability to control a certain sum of dollars in order to purchase these supports, with the backing of their significant others, as needed. It is the authority to control resources.

**SUPPORT:** The arranging of resources and personnel, both formal and informal, to assist the person in living his/her desired life in the community, rich in community associations and contributions. It is the support to develop a life dream and reach toward that dream.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** The acceptance of a valued role by the person in the community through employment, affiliations, spiritual development, and caring for others, as well as accountability for spending public dollars in ways that are life enhancing. This includes the responsibility to use public funds efficiently and to contribute to the community

through the expression of responsible citizenship.

In 2012 at CMH, we were advised in a meeting of all professional staff that a new position had been created to promote this State Policy of Self Determination. The go-to-guy, Dean Earnsberger, was introduced, for any assistance on Self Determination (attached brochure). Halusia and I sought counsel from him in February of this year due to a change in our status. CMH changed contract companies for their therapists which effectively ended our contracts. I met with The Executive Director and he gave me a positive indication that we could continue to work together through another formal agreement, under the premise of Self Determination. Thus in February of 2013, myself and Halusia, started the process to open an office, and continue seeing previous clients in a private practice setting. We had a positive response from our supervisor, the doctors, staff and the individuals we all served. I assure you we did the due diligence through the NASW Code of Ethics as well as the Licensing Guidelines. We had believed that a cooperative agreement would benefit all involved. Most importantly, a seamless transition for clients that would reduce costs for CMH. (See attached letter to Jim Johnson).

Implementation never occurred creating conflict and confusion for clients as well as staff. We believe in the State Policy for Self Determination. It's a viable, productive, cost cutting alternative to traditional services. There have been allegations made against our license as a result of our advocacy for this existing policy. I was discouraged to attend today. An investigator showed up Wednesday of this week, to discuss our alleged breaches in the General Rules of Conduct.

Best practices can be cost effective and empower clients with choices for providers.

This Commission has a responsibility to inform the Governor that there is an existing policy in place, Self Determination, that can make a difference in peoples lives and in the State's budget. The State of Michigan has a responsibility to insure that all local CMH's adhere to existing policies.

Thank you.

## Whom to hire

You can pick the people you want to give you the services and supports you need. You can hire a staff member you already know, or you can ask CMH to help you find a qualified person. Using a special agreement, you can make your own contract with the person you choose. That is part of determining your own life - just like deciding where and with whom you want to live.



## The First Step

Call your case manager or supports coordinator at your local CMH.

### **Lapeer Co. CMH**

1570 Suncrest Drive  
Lapeer, MI 48446  
(810) 667-0500 (Voice/TTY)  
[www.county.lapeer.org/CMH](http://www.county.lapeer.org/CMH)

### **Sanilac Co. CMH**

227 East Sanilac Avenue  
Sandusky, MI 48471  
(810) 648-0330 (Voice)  
(810) 648-4327 (TTY)  
[www.sanilacmh.org](http://www.sanilacmh.org)

### **St Clair Co. CMH**

3111 Electric Avenue  
Port Huron, MI 48060  
(810) 985-8900 (Voice)  
(888) 225-1973 (TTY toll free)  
[www.scccmh.org](http://www.scccmh.org)

### **Thumb Alliance**

#### **Customer Service**

(810) 987-6911  
Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
(888) 225-4447 (Voice toll free)  
(888) 225-1973 (TTY toll free)  
[www.scccmh.org](http://www.scccmh.org)

The artwork in this brochure was created by artists who receive public mental health services. It is used with permission and cannot be copied.

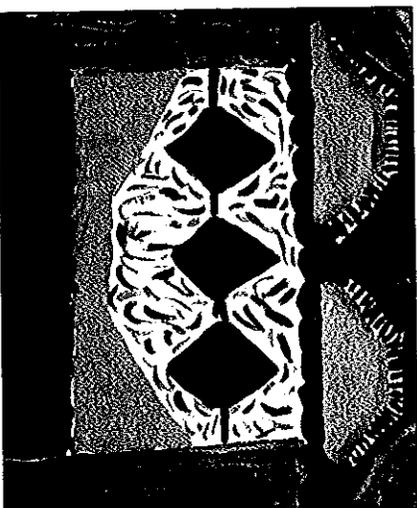
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## Self-

## Determination

*Freedom  
Authority  
Support  
Responsibility*



**THUMB ALLIANCE**  
**Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan**



Your link to public services for mental health & substance use disorders in Lapeer, Sanilac and St. Clair Counties

**[www.scccmh.org](http://www.scccmh.org)**

Millie Paterson, LMSW, CAADC  
Halusia Witkowski, LMSW, ACSW

Jim Johnson, LMSW  
Executive Director  
Sanilac County Community Mental Health  
217 E. Sanilac Ave., Sandusky, MI. 48471

February 24, 2013

Dear Jim,  
I want to take this opportunity to summarize an opportunity that has presented itself. The opportunity to actualize "self determination", for yet another group of individuals utilizing services, at Sanilac CMH.

The benefits for CMH:

- reduction in overhead expenses
- reduction in labor hours
- reduction in contract costs

The benefits for individuals served include the cornerstone of this principle:

- Freedom
- Authority
- Responsibility
- Support
- Confirmation

The benefits for existing staff:

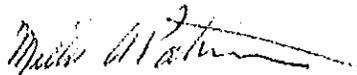
- manageable caseloads
- an added referral destination
- confidence in a quality service

We bring to you:

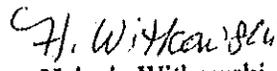
- knowledge of your policies and procedures
- the ability to navigate within your software
- understanding of your operational expectations
- over 40 years combined treatment experience
- ability to provide services to Medical Marijuana Card holders
- ability to provide services based on LOCUS, locally, versus Lexington
- familiarity with existing individuals and their transition plans
- proven relationship with supports coordinators, and their expectations
- offices within a block of your main office

We are hopeful to realize this opportunity for all involved, especially the people we serve. We have enjoyed our relationship with CMH, and hope to continue in this new venue.

Sincerely,



Millie A. Paterson, LMSW, CAADC



Halusia Witkowski, LMSW, ACSW

c: John Mitchell, DO Medical Director

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