

Mental Health Ombuds Services of King County

Ombuds Service Semi-Annual Report
October 2006 through March 2007

Submitted by:

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Introduction

The Mental Health Ombuds Service of King County is provided by Interchange Northwest, LLC through a contract with the King County Mental Health Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division (MHCADSD).

We provide support for people who are having difficulties with their mental health services or are having difficulty getting mental health services. We also provide information and referral services to all people in King County.

This is the report of Mental Health Ombuds Service activities from October through March 2007. This report provides information about program management, advocacy, outreach and education, other activities, and next steps.

Program Management

Staffing

The four ombuds staff provided a total of 1,532 hours of service, or an average of about 255 hours per month or 1.6 FTE positions, during this reporting period. This is about eight percent less than the previous six-month period (1,675 hours).

Month	Hours of Service
October	286
November	261
December	201
January	251
February	209
March	324
Total	1,532

Policies and Procedures

During this period, we will continue to expand our policies and procedures covering all aspects of mental health ombuds services. We will compile the complaint and grievance procedures for each of the contracted community mental health clinics. We will continue to compile information and resource material for people for mental health and other allied services in King County.

Advocacy

850 people contacted the ombuds office during this report period. The following summarizes hours of service and number of contacts by month. Contacts include people requesting information about accessing mental health and other community services, allied providers, and other individuals and groups who are interested in

community mental health services. Many of these people are satisfied with the information and ask for no additional support.

Month	Contacts
October	178
November	154
December	112
January	114
February	132
March	160
Total	850

We received a signed release of information to support 36 people during this reporting period. This is about 17% greater than the number of situations during the prior period (29). The following summarizes the complaints by type opened during the current reporting period (October, 2006 through March, 2007) and the prior reporting period (April, 2006 through September, 2006).

Cases Opened	4/06 – 9/06		10/06 – 3/07	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Quality/Appropriateness	10	34.6%	17	47.1%
Financial/Admin	-	-	6	16.7
Access	5	17.2	5	13.9
Consumer Rights	5	17.2	-	-
Housing	5	17.2	1	2.8
Dignity & Respect	2	6.9	4	11.1
Phone Calls Not Returned	2	6.9	-	-
Physician/Medical	-	-	2	5.6
Service Intensity	-	-	1	2.8
Total	29	100.0%	36	100.0%

We saw 32 situations resolved in the current period, up about 28% from the prior period (25). The following summarizes the cases closed by type of resolution.

Cases Closed	4/06 – 9/06		10/06 – 3/07	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Mediation/Conciliation	11	44.0%	10	31.2
Information/Referral	9	36.0	15	46.9
Not Pursued	5	20.0	7	21.9
Total	25	100.0%	32	100.0%

There was one grievance that was filed in the prior period that was resolved during this period. There were six situations that remained unresolved at the time of this report.

Access by Groups

The following summarizes data regarding access to special populations during this reporting period.

During this period, 54% of the people seeking support were women and 46% were men. Eighty-three percent of the people we worked with were enrolled in Medicaid.

Twelve percent of the people we worked with reported having a chemical dependency. About seven percent of the people we worked with reported having a developmental disability. About five percent of the people we worked with identified themselves as a gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, or transgendered person.

The following summarizes the people we supported during this period by their reported ethnicity.

Caucasian	70.7%
African-American	17.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.9
Hispanic	8.8

Consumer Feedback On Satisfaction with Ombuds Services

During this reporting period we attempted to contact twenty-six people about thirty days after their situation had been resolved to determine whether they were still satisfied with the outcome, to rule out retaliation and ask them about their satisfaction with ombuds services. We were not able to communicate with fourteen of those twenty-six people during this period.

We were able to connect with twelve people. Of those people, about 85% were satisfied with the outcome and the support they received from the Mental Health Ombuds Services staff. One person was dissatisfied with the outcome of issue and one person was referred back to ombuds services for additional support.

Outreach and Education

Advocates

- We met with members of the Consumer Advisory Group at the Mental Health Ombuds office. We discussed access to services, stigma, and the importance of networking between advocacy organizations.
- Mental Health Ombuds staff met with the Director of the Homeless Project at Antioch University and distributed brochures and NAMI Connections resource directory.
- We attended the monthly meeting of the mental health advisory board and distributed copies of the mental health ombuds report for the six-months ending 9/30/06.

- Ombuds staff participated in the Mental Health Advocacy Day in Olympia.
- Ombuds staff attended the King County Legislative Forum.

Community Mental Health Providers

- We distributed about 100 copies of the ombuds services posters to service providers.
- Distributed about 200 copies of the ombuds services brochures to service providers.
- We distributed about 200 copies of the ombuds services six-month report (April through October 2007) to mental health and allied providers.

Allied Providers

- We met with the staff at the Frye Apartments a supported housing program, at their regular weekly meeting to discuss community mental health and ombuds services.
- We met with supervisor and staff from Hammond House, a downtown women's shelter and discussed client rights and ombuds services.
- Ombuds staff participated in a panel presentation with Long Term Care Ombuds staff to two provider sessions at the DSHS/Aging and Rehabilitation Services Quality Improvement Forum. The session was with adult family home and boarding home providers. The second session was with skilled nursing home providers.

Other Activities

- We participating in "Take Your Daughter to Work Day" on February 26 and had two high school "student interns" help with information and referral during morning office hours.
- We attended the annual King County Legislative Forum hosted by the King County Parents Coalition and the ARC of King County.

Staff Training

- Ombuds staff attended the ombuds training provided by the Washington Institute.
- Two Ombuds attended the adult Cross Agency Systems Training (CAST).

RSN Meetings

- We participated in the annual site review for mental health Ombuds services conducted by KCMHCADS.
- We Met with Client Services staff to discuss the Ombuds portion of the federal EQRO survey.

Statewide Ombuds Activities

- We hosted a conference call for stakeholders interested in improving mental health ombuds services in the state. This conference call was a result of an agreement with the Community Transformation Partnership, which is a sub-committee of advocate organizations reporting to the Transformation Work Group, to identify if there were improvements that could be included in the System Transformation Initiative. There were nine participants.
- We attended the semi-annual Ombuds/QRT meeting in Moses Lake.

Transformation Work Group Activities

- Ombuds staff attended the System Transformation Initiative Community Forum sponsored by the DSHS/Mental Health Division.
- We met with a staff person with the Mental Health Transformation Work Group to discuss warm line services.
- We attended the monthly meeting of the Community Transformation Partnership We provided a report with staff from the WPAS on the ombuds services conference call.
- We continue to work with the staff and members of the Community Transformation Partnership to identify opportunities to improve mental health ombuds services throughout the state and to develop consensus strategies for future action.
- Ombuds staff attended the System Transformation Initiative Winter Community Forum.

Next Steps

The Mental Health Ombuds Service of King County will continue to provide support for people enrolled in the public mental health service system who are having difficulty with their services, or having a difficult time enrolling for services. We will focus on assisting people to resolve their disputes at the lowest level possible. We will continue to work to provide the highest quality ombuds services and advocate for all of the people in King County experiencing mental illness and their families.

During the next twelve months, we will visit each one of the community mental health providers working within the network and speak with staff about ombuds services, client rights, and dispute resolution.

During the next twelve months ombuds staff will complete the core staff training as required by the King County/Mental Health and Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services.