THE DOCTORS BAG: BUILDING PROGRAMS & EXPANDING SERVICES

BY SHARON K. WILLIAMS

The Bureau of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Services’ (BADA) mission statement is one that Dr. Stephanie W. Perry promotes everywhere she goes. This doctors bag is to reduce substance abuse, promote prevention, reduce high-risk behaviors and ensure that treatment services are available for all who need it. A task that is not taken lightly by her or the BADA Staff. “Through our existing programs we’ve been able to meet our mission, to make services more accessible and comprehensive throughout the State”, Perry says.

She took over the Bureau about three years ago during some turbulent times in the alcohol and drug field…Managed Care, Welfare Reform, Prevention program evaluation, data sets and a need for more funds to deliver as many quality services as available to Tennesseans in need. A daunting task even for the best of us. Dr. Perry is as close to “grace under fire” as any professional I’ve met.

Perry and her 33-person staff are making inroads in the Volunteer State with the Bureau’s four new programs:

K Unit Rate Method of Reimbursement for Treatment providers; (implemented 2 1/2 years ago)

K Central –Intake substance abuse treatment portal of entry program; (implemented nearly 2-yrs ago)

K Alcohol & Drug Addiction Treatment Fund for indigent multiple DUI offenders and ; (implemented 1 year ago)

K Co-Occurring Disorders Project that includes two publications; (implemented 15-months ago)

Perry feels that partnering with other State Departments can keep the channels of communication open and cites the Central Intake program as an example. She expressed a sense of pride when describing BADA’s first formal partnership with the Dept. of Human Services and the Families First Program. Perry says they are looking at having assessments done on females going through the Families First program and making appropriate placement or referral into State-funded service provider programs.

Perry’s extensive medical background has enabled her to know the value of prevention services. From her work nationally, Perry feels that future of prevention services is in “Science-Based” programming. That attitude helped BADA land a Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) Community Needs Assessment Project Grant recently. Perry hopes that the results from the Needs Assessment will allow Prevention Director Marvin Cox and the rest of their staff to “evaluate the existing system and make recommendations for a Statewide Prevention Plan.”

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SEASON’S GREETINGS!, FELIZ NAVIDAD!, MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

The Staff at the TN. Statewide Clearinghouse/TN. Alcohol & Drug Association wish all of our friends, customers, and vendors the happiest of holidays!!! The offices of the TSC will be closed December 22, 23, and 24th. The TSC is located in the Dr. R.S. Gass State Laboratory Building. The TSC will re-open on Monday December, 27th.

The TSC joins the National Commission against Drunk Driving to remind everyone that the Month of December is National 3D Prevention Month. The December holiday season is traditionally one of the most dangerous for motorists. Drive with your headlights on Friday December 17th for “Lights on for Life Day” to show your support for this life-saving campaign. Last year one person died every 33 minutes and one person was injured every two minutes.
FROM TADA’S PRESIDENT…..

This is an open letter written on behalf of the Tennessee Alcohol & Drug Association (TADA) dated November 8, 1999. To Mr. Evelyn Robertson, Jr.,

Title 33 Revision Commission
Cordell Hull Building, 3rd Floor
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Chairman Robertson:

I am writing this letter as the current president of TADA. We the membership of the Tennessee Alcohol & Drug Association are taking this step in order to go on record in opposition to having the Bureau of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Services transferred back to the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (DMHMR). Many of us have worked in the field of alcohol and drug abuse long enough to have been a part of the system when the Bureau of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Services was a part of DMHMR. We were not happy with the lack of attention, specifically to alcohol and other drug issues, at the time and we have reason to believe the situation would be no better now than it was in the past. Many of us worked hard at that time to have the Bureau of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Services moved out of the DMHMR and into the Department of Health. We currently see no justification or reasonable rationale for moving the Bureau back to the DMHMR.

This past year the Governor proposed the idea of restructuring the Department of Health with mental health, Mental Retardation and Alcohol & Other Drug Abuse Services being three equal bureaus of the Department of Health. The non-mental health members of our association supported this idea. The mental Health members strongly opposed the idea and were able to continue Mental Health and Mental Retardation as a separate department. We feel strongly that the alcohol and other drug abuse issues should receive much more attention than they have gotten and we do not feel that they got the deserved attention from the DMHMR or the Mental Health agencies. Alcohol and other drug abuse issues were recently ranked as a top five public health issue in almost every county of the state during a survey that was completed by the Department of Health. Where we have worked in the field of alcohol and other drug issues, at the time and we have reason to believe the situation would be no better now than it was in the past. Many of us worked hard at that time to have the Bureau of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Services moved out of the DMHMR and into the Department of Health. We currently see no justification or reasonable rationale for moving the Bureau back to the DMHMR.

By now you are probably wondering what is Title 33 and what does all of this mean, so I turned to Vicki Pillow, Administrative Asst. of the Title 33 Revision Commission in the Cordell Hull Building, Nashville. (615) 253-3051

Vicki: Title 33 is the State Laws found in the TN. Code Annotated for Mental Health/Mental Retardation State Services. These laws cover contractual agreements, grants, Mental Health facilities and services, powers and duties of commissioner, and the rights of clients just to name a few.

Sharon: How long has it been since there has been a revision to Title 33?

Vicki: Sharon, the laws have not been updated since the 1970’s.

Sharon: The Title 33 Revision Commission was formed to update these laws, how long have they been meeting?

Vicki: The Commission has been meeting since November of 1998, and hopes to have the recommendations to the Sundquist Administration by the end of January

Sharon: What is the focus or goal of the Revision Commission?

Vicki: Our goal is to bring Title 33 up to-date, revamping the language of it, etc to include such things as TNCARE, Community Mental Centers and so on. The Majority of services currently included in Title 33 are for Institutions and not for community-based services that are being offered now. Another goal is to have the draft Legislation on the Dept. of MH/MR website by Christmas. (www.state.tn.us/mhmr)

Hopefully, you will strongly consider the desires of non-mental health agencies that serve the needs of Tennessee citizens who have alcohol and other drug abuse problems as you consider your recommendation to the legislature and the Governor.

Should you have any questions, we would be happy to speak with you individually, have you attend one of our association meetings or address the Title 33 Revision Commission. Please keep us informed of the committee’s position on this issue as your meetings progress.

Respectfully,

Reve E. McDavid
President

Just What is Title 33?

*Alcohol and drug abuse issues were recently ranked as a top five public health issue in almost every county of the state during a survey that was completed by the Dept. of Health says Reve McDavid, TADA’s President.

From the desk of TADA’s President….
RESEARCH AND SCIENCE BASED – THE NEW “SPEAK” FOR THE FIELD

The substance abuse field is known for having its own language that seems to change fairly regularly. As we head towards the year 2000 and beyond here’s a few more new terms that professionals will need to add to their repertoire. “Science-Based Prevention”, “Research-Based Treatment”, “Best Practices”, “Bi-Directional Models”, “Community-Based Research”, “Social-Marketing”, “Cultural Competency”, “Substance-Related Disorders”, “Multi-Site Approaches” are sure to be terms that will have to be included in future grant proposals, public speaking, and in dealing with the political crowd.

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A needs assessment for treatment is also planned. Dr. Perry expressed a sense of pride in BADA’s on-going Programs:

K HIV/AIDS Outreach
K Evaluation
K Training
K Prevention Programs
K Treatment Programs
K Statewide Clearinghouse

She says BADA plans to maintain those programs and is looking forward to growth of the four new programs, and the addition of three new ones for the coming year. Perry wants to see agency partnerships continue to ensure a continuum of care for individuals statewide in need of substance abuse services.

TSC PUTS “PREVENTION ON THE MAP” AND IN THE MINDS OF THE MEDIA

It was a hot day in May, 1996, the phone rang like it always does, but this call was different. It was the first call for help on the TN. REDLINE for Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral on the drug MDMA/Ecstasy. From that day on the TSC Staff began to track and do research on the substances now known nation-wide as “Club Drugs”. That first call was from Smyrna in Rutherford County, about 25-miles from Nashville. Alarm bells go off for us in the referral business when a caller says…. “I took this stuff and I don’t know anything about what it is, and what it is supposed to do to me….can you help me?” I guess I’ve been around long to know that that means we have the potential for a future problem on virtually any “new” or non-traditional drug. (e.g. designer drugs, etc) Over the next several months calls trickled in with questions about effects of Ecstasy, Rohypnol (Roofies) and GHB (other club drugs) from Nashville, Clarksville, Franklin, Westmoreland, Tullahoma, Hendersonville, Lebanon, Dickson and Mt. Juliet. Most of the “Club Drug” calls originally came from small or rural communities at first. I guess this is when the news reporter in me just kicks in, After some research and follow-up with National sources the first ‘Information Drug Alert” from our office was issued in 1996. This alert was on “Herbal Ecstasy”, Special K, and several other substances. The “Alerts” are broadcast faxed statewide to members of the media, Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services and others interested in being on the cutting edge. Within a year, calls for information and help where coming from Knoxville, Memphis and other Tennessee cities and from states like Florida and Illinois. By 1998 professionals like counselors and emergency room personnel began calling for “Club Drugs” info because folks had begun showing up for treatment or in the Emergency Room high on some of the substances that we were trying to alert the public to.

The TSC takes our job of prevention very seriously as we head into our 20th year of service in 2000. We truly feel that “putting prevention on the map” by any means necessary is the only way to alert the citizenry about a potential drug problem. When I hold the media’s feet to the fire and ask them [although we are not funded to do this extra step] to help get the word out that this drug, that most of broadcast faxed statewide to members of the media, Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services and others interested in being on the cutting edge. Within a year, calls for information and help where coming from Knoxville, Memphis and other Tennessee cities and from states like Florida and Illinois. By 1998 professionals like counselors and emergency room personnel began calling for “Club Drugs” info because folks had begun showing up for treatment or in the Emergency Room high on some of the substances that we were trying to alert the public to.

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Special thanks to the ones who listened when I called Melissa McDonald, News Director at the TN. Radio, Network, Jerry Dahmen, News Director WSM AM & FM and WWTN radio, Mike Machak, Reporter WSMV-TV, Tracy Gallien, Asst. News Director, Christy Lowe, Reporter WKRN-TV, and Patrick Hennessy, Promotions Director, WLAC AM & FM.
ON YOUR DATE BOOK…..

Want to list your upcoming conference, training or event in the TADA Times Date book? Please fax them as far in advance as possible to: Editor, TADA Times, 615.262.6144.

Yes To Kids 2000 Conference, Feb. 21 & 22, 2000, Marriott Convention Ctr., Franklin

1st S.E. Conference on Violence, Trauma, and Abuse, Sheraton Downtown, March 8—10, 2000, Nashville

Spring Retreat 2000, TN. Professional Assistance Program, April 6-7, 2000, Gatlinburg Park Vista

The National Gains Ctr. For People with Co-Occurring Disorders in the Justice System Conference, April 26—18, 2000, Miami, Fl.

Drug Use, HIV, Hepatitis “Bringing It All Together” Conference, May 7—10, 2000, Baltimore, MD