

STRATEGIC PLAN

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF ESSEX COUNTY, INC.

I. Values

Any long-term plan must be consistent with the values of the organization. Those values determine the philosophy and guiding principles by which the organization operates. These are the core values to which MHA is committed:

- Promoting mental and physical health and the treatment of emotional and mental disorders.
- Removing the stigma associated with emotional and mental disorders.
- Providing quality mental health services in healthy and safe environments to the Essex County community without regard to ethnicity, race, age, sexual orientation or ability to pay.
- Treating individuals with mental illness with respect and dignity while encouraging their wellness and recovery. Understanding and supporting the important role that families and loved ones play in promoting wellness and recovery.
- Providing safe and affordable housing for individuals with mental illness.
- Providing a leadership role in advocating for the mental health needs of the community, fighting the corrosive effects of stigma and attacking barriers to treatment wherever they appear.
- Operating MHA in a fiscally and strategically sound manner, including periodic strategic reviews.
- Hiring superior quality staff, providing high quality professional development and training, and encouraging continuing education.
- Advocating for individuals with mental illness.
- Demonstrating to staff that they are valued by including them in appropriate decision making

II. Mission

*THE MISSION OF THE MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF ESSEX COUNTY, INC.
IS TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH, WITH THE INTEGRATION OF PHYSICAL HEALTHCARE,
TO IMPROVE THE CARE AND TREATMENT
OF INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS, AND TO REMOVE THE STIGMA
ASSOCIATED WITH EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL DISORDERS.
AS A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION, WE ACCOMPLISH OUR MISSION THROUGH
ADVOCACY, EDUCATION, PREVENTION, EARLY INTERVENTION, TREATMENT AND SERVICE.*

III. Vision

1. To become highly visible and widely recognized as a premier provider, independently or through partnerships (including potential affiliations and mergers), of a complete continuum of mental health and addiction services to adults, children and families. A complete continuum includes the integration of physical healthcare.
2. To continue to be the leading advocate for individuals with mental illness as well as for the general mental health needs of the community. MHA will be a leader in the campaign to remove the stigma associated with emotional and mental disorders.
3. To continue to provide services in a fiscally sound manner and have a more diverse and stable source of funding.
4. To thrive in a fee for service and managed care environment while maintaining the mission of the organization.

IV. Organizational Strengths, Weaknesses and Threats

Organizational Strengths:

- Provision of high quality services to individuals with severe and persistent mental illness

- Market leader in primary service area for community-based services for individuals with mental illness
- Strong and experienced administrative and Clinical leadership
- Quality staff throughout entire organization
- MHA is well prepared for the Fee for Service environment e.g. electronic clinical records, sound financial and clinical management
- MHA has a strong Information Technology infrastructure
- Strong and active Board of Directors
- Stable demand for services
- Focus on primary customer (i.e. mental health consumers)
- History and reputation as a quality provider and advocate within the mental health community
- Providing service without regard for ability to pay
- A highly qualified and culturally diverse staff
- A well-coordinated interdepartmental team approach to providing services
- MHA provides opportunity for significant career and clinical development.

Organizational Weaknesses

- Lack of service breadth and depth in the area of children's services
- Competition for staff with governmental and private sectors.
- Limited Board diversity
- Development of Board leadership
- Limited workforce e.g. numerous staff perform multiple jobs
- Entry-level staff turnover
- Lack of substance abuse licensure

Organizational Threats

- Dependence on state (DMHAS) and federal funding (i.e., Medicaid and Medicare)
- Entrepreneurial for-profit activity, e.g. for-profit partial cares, private therapists
- Dependence on limited funding sources, e.g. United Way, private funding

- Uncertain political and economic climate
- Stagnant reimbursement rates
- Change in funding environment from a contract based system to a fee for service model followed by a case/capitation rate model.
- Deteriorating Cash position

V. Opportunities

- Paradoxically, while moving to a Fee for Service system is a threat, it is also an opportunity.
- Expansion of children’s mental health services
- Mental health services in the schools
- Stigma busting
- Education/raising awareness through community education and programs such as mental health first aid
- Expansion of existing services that serve individuals with mental illness
- Mental Health services in the criminal justice system (education and services)
- Geriatric mental health services (education and services)
- Housing for individuals with mental illness
- Substance abuse services
- Expansion of counseling services
- Enhancing MHAEC’s recognition
- Providing services to Armed Forces personnel returning from combat areas
- Incorporating more peer support into the provision of services. i.e. hiring more qualified individuals recovering from mental illness.

VI. Three Year Plan

1. Continue to expand advocacy for individuals with mental illness.
2. Continue development of mental health services to at-risk children and adolescents, and individuals with mental illness.

3. Emphasize wellness, recovery and the integration of physical and mental health in all MHAEC services, while working with consumers to increase their independence.
4. Continue to increase awareness of the MHAEC and of mental health issues, eradicate stigma, and provide community education.
5. Enhance the financial strength of the agency by establishing programs, such as major gifts and planned giving, which will increase the agency's endowment. Diversify and increase fundraising resources by developing external relationships and partnerships with foundations, agencies, corporations and individuals.
6. Become a successful Fee for Service and managed care provider of mental health services.
7. Develop a Board of Directors that is more representative of the community MHA serves.

VII. Implementation

The following criteria should be analyzed in determining what specific, new programs should be implemented. (Note that the criteria are intended to be applied in the order listed.)

- A. Vision and Mission: The program must be within the vision and mission of the MHAEC.
- B. Market: The program should meet the needs of the marketplace
- C. Effectiveness: The program must improve the circumstances of individuals with mental illnesses and emotional disorders.
- D. Financial: The program must be financially supportable.
- E. Agency Capability: MHA must have or be able to acquire the appropriate knowledge base and expertise to perform the work.
- F. Agency Infrastructure: MHA must be able to operate the program without undue burden to its personnel.
- G. Agency benefit: The program should enhance the stature and visibility of MHA in the community.
- H. Competition: Can MHA perform the service at a competitive level within a reasonable period of time?

This Strategic Plan was formulated with the input of internal and external stakeholders, including but not limited to; our consumers, their families, the Strategic Planning Committee, the Board of Directors, Staff, Public funding sources, Private funding sources, Public oversight entities and Community partners.

Reviewed and adopted by
Board of Directors
May 16, 2016