

NHPF Forum Session
Meeting Announcement



**The New Freedom Vision:
Transforming the Mental Health
System**

A DISCUSSION FEATURING:

Michael F. Hogan, Ph.D.
Director
Ohio Department of Mental
Health
and
Chairman
President's New Freedom
Commission on Mental
Health

Charles G. Curie
Administrator
Substance Abuse and Mental
Health Services Administration
and
Member
President's New Freedom
Commission on Mental
Health

**Monday,
September 8, 2003**

11:45 am — *Lunch*

12:15–2:15 pm — *Discussion*

**Reserve Officers Association
of the United States**

One Constitution Avenue, NE
Congressional Hall of Honor —
Fifth Floor
(Across from the Dirksen Senate
Office Building)

To register:

Please call Marcia Howard at
202/872-1392 as soon as
possible.

**For additional information
on this topic:**

*Achieving the Promise: Trans-
forming Mental Health Care in
America*, President's New
Freedom Commission on Mental
Health, available at [http://
www.mentalhealthcommission.gov/
reports/reports.htm](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov/reports/reports.htm).



The New Freedom Vision: Transforming the Mental Health System

The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health submitted its final report, *Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America*, on July 22, 2003, recommending a fundamental reorientation of mental health care services.¹ Between the committee's creation on April 29, 2002, and the recent delivery of its final report, the commission reviewed research literature and comments from more than 2,300 consumers, family members, providers, administrators, researchers, government officials, and others. In its interim report, the committee expressed concern that the current system of mental health services is fragmented and fraught with unmet needs and barriers to care. The final report provides specific goals for repairing this system and articulates a vision for a new, consumer-focused mental health system.

As recounted in the report, mental illnesses carry serious health and financial costs. In the United States, Canada, and Western Europe, mental illnesses rank first among illnesses that cause disability. Each year 5 percent to 7 percent of American adults have a serious mental illness and 5 percent to 9 percent of children experience a serious emotional disturbance. Almost \$71 billion was spent on treating mental illnesses in the United States in 1997, and these costs were predominately publicly funded, with 57 percent of mental health expenditures financed by public sources. The annual indirect economic impact of mental illnesses is estimated to be \$79 billion due to lost productivity. The commission report also highlights unnecessary institutional care; gaps in care for children, adults, and the elderly; barriers to care; and lack of a national priority for prevention

SESSION OVERVIEW

This meeting will explore the recommendations made in the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health's final report, *Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America*. It will examine the range of barriers persons disabled by mental illness face in accessing high-quality mental health care and will consider the policy changes required to reorient mental health care towards consumer needs.

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of mental illnesses and suicide in today's system. The commission calls for an evolution of the system into a community-based, consumer- and family-centered partnership oriented toward the hope of recovery in which every American enjoys easy access to advances in research and technology, evidence-based or current treatment practices, and local support services.

SPEAKERS

Speakers for the session are **Michael F. Hogan, Ph.D.**, director of the Ohio Department of Mental Health, who served as commission chairman, and **Charles G. Curie, M.A., A.C.S.W.**, a commission member and the administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The session will begin with an overview of the final report and discussion of the vision, goals, and policy recommendations set forth within it. The speakers will explore the wide range of policy topics raised in the report, including mental health disparities and culturally competent care, advancement of demonstration projects and public-private partnerships, realignment of federal programs to improve access and accountability, and implementation of a national campaign to reduce the stigma of seeking care.

KEY QUESTIONS

- To what extent do current federal policies hinder persons disabled by mental illness from engaging in full and independent lives through disincentives for both community-based mental health care and employment?
- What changes are needed to reduce fragmentation across health, education, social welfare, and correctional programs? What initial steps can federal agencies take to better align their programs and policies?
- How can medical treatment and support services, such as vocational rehabilitation, housing assistance, and respite care be better coordinated?
- How can state-level accountability be ensured while providing greater flexibility within and across federal funding streams?
- What is the appropriate role of federal policies and programs in achieving the transformed mental health care system described in the commission's report? To what extent are additional resources required to further these goals?

ENDNOTE

1. New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, *Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America, Final Report*, DHHS Pub. No. SMA-03-3832, Rockville, Md., 2003, 4.