



# The Union Bulletin

Newsletter of Local 5051, HCRS Clinicians  
United Nurses & Allied Professionals

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*United Nurses & Allied Professionals, Local 5051*

*December 18, 2009*

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## **Mental Health Services and The Vermont State Budget**

*from your Union Chair, Joyce Dion*

On Dec 1st, The Rutland Herald reported that the Douglas Administration is considering nearly \$20 million in cuts to Mental Health services statewide. That figure includes \$10.5 million from the state's CRT program, \$2.7 million cut to adult outpatient and \$5.5 million statewide from children's services. Michael Hartman, Commissioner of Mental Health said that \$1.5 million of the proposed cuts to outpatient adult services would be diverted to increase the emergency crisis teams. We all know that, if these cuts come to fruition, this will be devastating to the services we provide and most importantly to our clients, many of whom are already vulnerable even with services in place. And it goes without saying that we also want to preserve our jobs because not only do our clients depend upon us but we depend upon our jobs.

***These proposed cuts are too large and overwhelming to contemplate without our union taking action. UNAP in Vermont statewide is 500 members strong, along with the coalitions we have built, we will be taking a very active stand for a more balanced approach to this budget crisis.*** We have a unique experience and point of view to share at the State House. Our members have front line experience with how these cuts will be experienced by our clients and we will work with you so that your and our voices

### **Union Member Meetings**

Keep up to date with what is happening in our union. Join us for a monthly Union Member meeting at one of our sites--Brattleboro, Springfield and Hartford. Those who may attend are full dues paying members. Union Members are welcome to attend any one of the site meetings based on your personal preference and convenience. Hartford Site meets monthly, Springfield and Brattleboro will normally alternate in their meeting months.

#### **Local 5051 Officers and Representatives**

Joyce Dion, LICSW, Chairperson, 802-763-8241  
Coleen Lawlor, LICSW, Vice Chair, 802-463-8746  
Kim Hartell-Britt, LMFT, Treasurer, 802-296-6909  
Susanae Glovacki, LICSW, Bratt, 413-773-3014  
Ron Recchi, LICSW, Bratt, 802-348-9855  
Ann Tarmay, MSW, Springfield, 603-826-3264  
Patricia Corrigan, PhD, Sprfld & Hrtfrd,  
603-298-6851  
Holly Strahan, MA, 802-296-8350

#### **Hartford Site Meeting for Union Members**

**Thursday, Jan 7th at West Lebanon YAMA starting at 4:45.**

**Brattleboro Site will host a Member Meeting by Conference Call, Wednesday, Jan. 20th at at 7:30 p.m. Call in number is 877-783-2009, pass code is 124730**

## **Mental Health and Vermont State Budget** (continued from first page)

will be heard. Our union will work to provide you with the information to be knowledgeable and the opportunity to be active without being overwhelmed. We invite you to write letters, call or speak to legislators at home or at the State House. We will provide you with current information and with the tools, post cards, phone numbers, addresses to get involved and speak to what you know on your clients' and on your own behalf.

In the State House, our local works with three different coalitions. Through our own UNAP Vermont Council, we work with well respected lobbyists to develop and promote issues which are specific to our own local and to our UNAP in Vermont as a whole. We also work with the AFSME locals at the Howard Center and at the Lamoille County Mental Health. In this coalition we focus on mental health issues in Vermont. And we also work with One Vermont, a large coalition, which allows us to participate in broad issues of concern and work to support a range of structures and services which support Vermonters.

## **Our Union At Work**

### **Grievances**

There are a number of grievances pending at the moment that have been filed on behalf of several union employees. One in particular, that is relevant to all employees, is the class action grievance we recently filed challenging HCRS' attempt to pass along to us changes in our medical insurance coverage announced by MVP. It is no coincidence that after filing the grievance and after we met with management by conference call that HCRS has agreed to sign a rider with MVP that will provide that even if the changes proposed by MVP become reality, HCRS will pay for the cost of such changes in full. This means that there will be no change in the coverage we negotiated this past summer, and no additional out of pocket expenses.

In another grievance, HCRS gave a written warning to an employee alleging that the employee's productivity numbers were too low and that the employee submitted paper work in an untimely fashion. Nearly all of us have been there at one time or another. As a result of filing a grievance on that employee's behalf, the written warning was dismissed. Unlike the non-union employees, we have a grievance procedure and union representation, which enables us to successfully challenge when HCRS disciplines us.

There are a few other grievances that are pending. One involves HCRS' effort to cut an employee's pay and another has to do with HCRS discriminating against a union employee. We'll let you know how things work out.

Finally, we recently represented an employee who was called to attend a meeting where HCRS was/is investigating the employee for alleged misconduct. Unlike non-union employees, union members have a right to union representation at such meetings and, in addition, must be told that they have that right before the meeting. This employee was represented by the union and so far, there has been no discipline. We remain committed to representing all union employees in such meetings to make sure union employees are treated fairly and get appropriate representation and counsel. Unlike non-union employees, these are our legal rights under the contract.

## **Meet Our Council**

Patricia Corrigan moved to New Hampshire 3 years ago after living in Santa Barbara, California for nearly 40 years. Patty found it to be quite an adjustment! "Buying snow tires, swimming in freshwater ponds, gardening without watering all the time, and exploring so many amazing woodlands in all the seasons." In California, Patty taught grade school for 9 years, pursued her Master's in Family Therapy

during the heyday of Family Systems Theory and in 1992 completed her doctorate in Clinical Psychology. Patty recognized the importance of having a union because she grew up in a union family. "As our benefits, and even our union became jeopardized, I came to understand that I needed to do what I have always encouraged my clients to do--that is, to advocate for one's own interests."

*May yours be a happy and healthy holiday season.*

*With best wishes,*

*Joyce, Coleen, Kim, Susanae, Ron, Ann, Patricia and Holly*