

Tobacco Grant Announcement
November 3, 2006

On October 11th, the Ohio Tobacco Prevention Foundation (OTPF) awarded ODMH and ODADAS a 2 ½ year grant for \$1.125 million to promote tobacco cessation efforts aimed at increasing the overall health and wellness of individuals in Ohio's behavioral health care system. This collaborative initiative reflects increasing awareness by OTPF, ODMH and ODADAS of the disproportionately high rate of tobacco use among individuals with mental illness and substance use disorder (75% vs. 23% in the general population) and the high health toll caused by tobacco use (an average of 14 years of potential life lost due to smoking according to the CDC, 2002).

Preliminary findings from a pilot study conducted by ODMH and ODADAS demonstrated that it is possible to reduce tobacco use among both behavioral health consumers and clinicians by implementing tobacco-related agency policies and a treatment approach that focused on overall health and wellness. In agencies that implemented these tobacco cessation efforts, the rate of tobacco use dropped from 71% to 58% among consumers and from 20% to 16% among agency staff. The current grant will be used to expand cessation efforts statewide through partnerships between State Departments, Coordinating Centers of Excellence, community behavioral healthcare organizations, consumer advocacy groups, local health advocacy groups, academic institutions, and other stakeholders.

According to Dale P. Svendsen, M.D., Medical Director of the Ohio Department of Mental Health:
"Smoking, heart disease, obesity and diabetes are epidemic among persons with serious mental illnesses. Significant knowledge to address these co-occurring disorders is available. In my opinion, recovery focused behavioral health care today should include wellness approaches that address overall health. The statewide Tobacco Cessation Project is an exciting new initiative which will contribute to overall health and recovery for persons with mental health and/or substance abuse disorders."

January 2007 through June 2007 has been designated as the planning phase, with statewide expansion commencing in July 2007. For further information, please feel free to contact Dushka Crane-Ross, Ph.D., Program Administrator, Office of Clinical Best Practices at crane-rossd@mh.state.oh.us