# **Community Support Journal**

# Montgomery County Community Support Program Committee Newsletter

October 2024

Volume 10

# Election Day is November 5, 2024 Voter Education Event held at SAAC

By: William Moody, CPS, HopeWorx

NORRISTOWN - Montgomery County residents interested in learning more about their voting rights, finding out more about candidates running in the 2024 Election and taking steps to register to vote attended a voter education event at the Montgomery County Senior Activities Center (SAAC) on October 15, 2014.

Jillian Roth, Community Activities Director at SAAC, Bill England from the PA Health Access Network and Advocate William Moody from HopeWorx, distributed information and answered many questions during the event which ran from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

England taught everyone the rules of running for office and answered many questions. All in all, it was an informative, fun time.

Some things to remember:

- The last day to register is October 21st.
- The last day to apply for a mail in or civilian absentee ballot is October 28th.
- General Election is November 5. All absentee ballots must be received by 8 p.m.
- November 12th is the last day to receive overseas & military absentee ballots.



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CSP Logo designed by Chris Ford

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# Civil liberties & The "AOT" Debate

From the September CSP Minutes By: Kathie Mitchell, CSJ Editor

Having someone committed to treatment be it in a hospital or to an outpatient program, flies against all values and principles of mental health recovery.

Yet it's a reality that Montgomery County citizens and mental health officials are grappling with in the face of changes to Pennsylvania's From Montgomery County Voter Services: There are multiple ways for Montgomery County voters to return their mail in ballots.

## By Mail

Ballots should be sent directly to Voter Services at the following address: 1430 Dekalb Street Rear, Norristown, PA 19401.



## Secure Ballot Drop Boxes

Montgomery County Board of Elections will operate multiple secure ballot drop boxes throughout the County to help voters meet the November 5, 2024 deadline. Residents can deposit mail-in ballots and absentee ballots at a secure ballot drop box as an alternative to returning their ballot by USPS mail.

Secure ballot drop boxes will be available for the upcoming November 5th election by October 4th, 2024. Ballot drop boxes, with the exemption of the ballot drop box inside of One Montgomery Plaza in Norristown, will be available 24/7.

Remember, you may only return your own ballot to a secure ballot drop box.

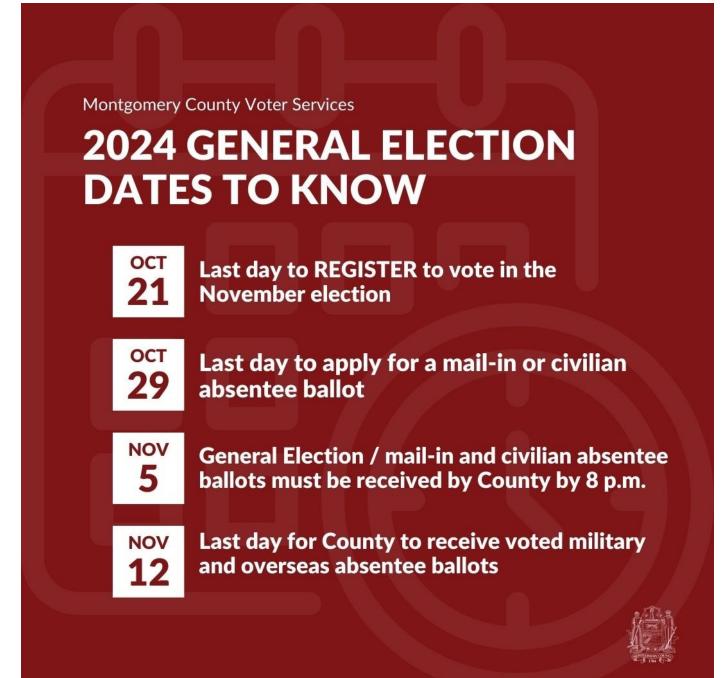
Ballots are collected from the drop boxes daily by County Security and stored securely at the Voter Services office.

Click Here for Map of Ballot Drop Boxes

For more information, please go to:

https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/753/Voter-Services





#### Volume 10 AOT from page one

commitment laws. With the addition of Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) in 2018 under the Mental Health Procedures Act, it can be easier to force someone into treatment because the criteria for involuntary commitment has become less strict.

"It means they took legal criteria to implement an outpatient commitment and they lowered if from a clear and present danger and now the standard is - an assumption that danger is possible," said Anna Trout, Director of Crisis and Diversion Services for Montgomery County, at the September CSP meeting.

Trout said the state also increased the "look back" criteria. In the past, the criteria to consider whether to commit a person to treatment was looking back 30 days into a person's past behavior. Under the new criteria, delegates can look back several years into a person's past when deciding whether or not to commit the individual to treatment.



The one caveat in the whole civil liberties debate is that the new criteria is

"optional" or at the discretion of each county In the state. Counties can opt in or opt out of the new law. Since the law was enacted, Montgomery County has opted out. Four counties have opted in.

Trout pointed out that there is no increased funding to implement AOT if a county opts in. AOT means providing more support services including peer support but the state hasn't made it clear how it works or how the county set priorities when they are existing wait lists.

"It includes peer support and that doesn't feel in line with our mission and vision for recovery," Trout said. "The goal is to do the right thing with the most information that we have."

Montgomery County utilizes the expertise of CSP members who are stakeholders in the system, as they design and develop new services. As in past years, the county is looking to CSP for their opinions on AOT since counties must make the decision each year on whether to opt in or opt out.

What's different this year is the county's justice system is in favor of AOT.

"Our local criminal justice system has taken a very keen interest in AOT as an alternative to incarceration," Trout said. "It's an added thing this year. Is there the option to implement partial AOT only used to divert from incarceration?"

Trout stressed that the criteria for 302 procedures to involuntary commitment an individual to a hospital have not changed. The changes were around outpatient commitments only. And - the county already has a process for outpatient commitments.

"We do already have outpatient commitments in the county," Trout said. "Exclusively they happen after an inpatient stay. There are people subject to outpatient commitments already. Sometimes they are hard to implement and are not very helpful. It depends on what services exist."

Tracey Riper-Thomas, Peer Support Coordinator for the county, asked if the county could opt out except for the forensic population.

#### AOT continued

"If AOT is opted in, someone can be handcuffed even if they're not in forensic system," Riper-Thomas said.

Vera Zanders, Deputy Administrator of Adult Mental Health, said crisis transportation is a big need. The county has one 305 psychiatric ambulance to handle all calls. If law enforcement transports, they are required to have that person in handcuffs.

"Increasing opportunities for people in crisis to be put in handcuffs puts us at odds with our philosophies in this county," Zanders said. "it could to lead to other actions. It's more time in front of a police officer and it can be very challenging for some people."

Trout said there is no good answer for that at this point and they are trying to help people before it gets to the point of police involvement. But that can be difficult if the new criteria is adopted. The new criteria on a petition for AOT is: a person is unlikely to survive safely in the community, the person showed a lack of voluntary adherence to treatment within the last 12 months; the person showed failure to adhere to treatment and had involuntary treatment, or in the last 48 months the person failed to adhere to treatment and it resulted in violent behavior to themselves or others.

"There's no requirement that treatment works," Trout said in response to a question about whether treatment always works.

Zanders explained that the Behavioral Health Court (BHC) is a diversion court where treatment is a part of what a person agrees to with the hope there is less time in jail. A Civil Commitment Court is a due process for a person doing through a commitment process and did not commit a crime.

Kathy Laws, CSP Tri-Chair, said the county BHC reports really great results.

"Do we have data around that? BHC is really run and coordinated by Supervision Services, a judge, the Office of Mental Health and Public Defender's Office. What are the recidivism rates and how many completed the court? It does look like people going thru the court do make good connections and they say we do have a good recidivism rate," Laws said.

Zanders said BHC has fast facts and would ask the Court to share that data.

Trout said some judges have gone to other counties and states to learn from counterparts how their systems work and they have heard some positive results. But Trout warned that they may not be hearing what it feels like to the person or their families.

Also, Trout said resources are limited as providers are underpaid and overworked. Sometimes judges don't understand why treatment isn't working. The county is paying attention to lawsuits and appeals and what comes down from the PA Superior Court and reeducating the court team and delegates.

Zanders added that the data used by the state for AOT was from the 90s and early 2000s, really before recovery practices were incorporated into the system.

"The goal is always to help engage individuals into support and have the individuals find the support that's best for them," Zanders said.

# GET THE FACTS BEFORE YOU VOTE.

# **USE GOOGLE TO**

1. Research who's running in your area.

2. Read up on what they stand for in issues that are important to you and your community.

3. Watch speeches and debates featuring the candidates.
4. Weigh your options and choose the people you believe in.
5. Vote!

# EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE

PROTECT OUR DEMOCRACY BY CASTING YOUR BALLOT.

HERE'S HOW.

1. Register to vote.

2. Find out where your polling place is. You can also explore absentee and early voting options.

3. Research about the candidates in your area and what they stand for.

4. Create a list of who you're voting for.

5. Cast your ballot and help shape our nation's future!

# Recovery Day Celebration at the Pennsylvania Capitol

#### By: William Moody, CPS, HopeWorx

HARRISBURG - I had the pleasure of attending the Recovery Day Celebration at the Pennsylvania Capitol in Harrisburg on September 24th.

Laconia Thurman and I joined other people celebrating Recovery for lunch, receiving give-a-ways and very useful tools to aid in recovery. The speakers were also people in Recovery and included two government

officials that talked about their struggle and how they found renewed confidence in themselves through recovery environments they put themselves in.

Then we heard from a father who had lost his child to addiction. His support of Recovery Day and his commitment to everyone's well being brought tears of encouragement to many in attendance. It was an empowering and courage filled day. We were very grateful for having the opportunity to attend this wonderful event.





William Moody, CPS, HopeWorx



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# New CSP Chairs Elected for 2024-25 Getting to know your leaders

**Tri-Chairs** - Jim Markey is staying on as provider tri-chair. I am currently the Assistant Director for the Ferns Peer Respite. I got into CSP, as a way to learn more about how I can support advocacy, and to share my lived experience to support others to learn and grow. I want to support others in growing into the best versions of themselves. Haniel Tracey is the new family tri-chair. Haniel is a Volunteer and Community Outreach Coordinator. Haniel joined NAMI Montgomery County in November 2023 as our Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator. Haniel currently resides in Delaware County, however she is familiar with what Montgomery County has to offer. Haniel is currently pursuing her Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at a CACREP Accredited Institution and has a deep passion and drive for service and advocacy surrounding mental health due to her personal experiences. Aside from mental health, Haniel has a passion for art, specifically spoken word poetry. Haniel looks forward to working with you to dismantle the stigma around mental health through overseeing the many programs and initiatives NAMI has to offer! Morgan Killian-Mosley is the new person in recovery tri-chair. Morgan has been an employee at HopeWorx for 8 years and is a former CSP treasurer. He came to HopeWorx because he wants to make sure that people using mental health services don't suffer like he has. I want things to be better for them. CSP is part of that and I'm honored to get a shot as one of the chairs.

**Advocacy Co-chairs** - **Akilah Williams** will stay on as co-chair of the Advocacy Subcommittee. She is the supervisor of AdvocacyWorx at HopeWorx, CSP co-chair for a year. She has been working in the advocacy field for the past 6 years and has seen people succeed with services and those who have not. I'm here because I want the system to be better, I want their voices to be heard and I want people to get the help they need. Anise Robinson is an employee of HopeWorx working as an advocate and a past subcommittee chair of CSP Community Outreach Subcommittee. I want to be on the advocacy committee because that's what I do and like people to advocate for themselves.

**Community Outreach Co-chairs** – Julie Whitmore is staying on as co-chair. Erin Villarose is the new co-chair. I am current supervisor of CST at HopeWorx new this year. I have been working in the field since before I graduated. Being involved in the community is really important to me and the whole point of life. I want to bring what I know and my passion to this committee.

**Conference Committee Co-chairs** – Harry Bowles, Operations Manager at HopeWorx, is the new conference committee co-chair. Harry worked on the conference the past 3 years, booking a lot of vendors and doing a lot of planning.

**Treasurer** – Justin Chamrin, formerly the person in recovery tri-chair, is now the new CSP treasurer.

# LEVERAGING OUR MOMENT TO BUILD THE PUBLIC AND POLITICAL WILL TO END HOMELESSNESS

# October 24, 12:00-1:30pm, Zoom

# **REGISTER NOW**

As we move forward in a <u>post Grants Pass</u> world, we see now more than ever the need to leverage this moment as the spotlight shines on homelessness. We have the solutions to end homelessness and create abundance for all and we have the opportunity to talk in a different way to bring the bystanders off the sidelines and into our vision of the future. Join TheCaseMade's, Mariel Ferreiro, as she dives into the ways we can build the will through Strategic CaseMaking.

#### Trainer

Mariel Ferreiro, Lead Facilitator, TheCaseMade (she/her/ella) is a community leader with subject matter expertise in immigration, homelessness, housing, and social services. She is an expert in nonprofit accounting and finance, nonprofit business structure, grassroots community organizing, facilitation and training, convening stakeholders, and trauma informed/centered community care. Mariel is an excellent problem solver, arranger and futurist.









# **CIC holds Wellness Wednesday Intro to WRAP**

## By Justin Chamrin, CSP Treasurer

On September 25, 2024 NAMI and Creating Increased Connections (CIC) held an Introduction to Wrap for 2 hours. We had 15 participants in this Workshop. Andy Kelly and Justin Chamrin were the Wellness Action Recovery Plan Facilitators. Fifteen people attended the workshop where the learned how to develop a meaningful successful Wellness Action Plan and how to make a Wellness Tool Box to interact with participants. The plan includes developing a daily maintenance plan when things are well or not going well. This was a community event.

We received comments back from our evaluations. Here's what participates said: Learned about there own wellness and self-care. People love participation was great. It was fantastic. Wellness Action Plan is good for Pandemics. It was good for talking and sharing information about Copeland Wrap. The open communication was really helpful and good. People loved the ideas, self evaluation and kindness of moderator and group.

# WRAP Is...

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) is a simple and powerful process for creating the life and wellness you want. With WRAP, you can:

- Discover simple, safe, and effective tools to create and maintain wellness
- Develop a daily plan to stay on track with your life and wellness goals
- Identify what throws you off track and develop a plan to keep moving forward
- Gain support and stay in control even in a crisis

The WRAP process supports you to identify the tools that keep you well and create action plans to put them into practice in your everyday life. All along the way, WRAP helps you incorporate key recovery concepts and wellness tools into your plans and your life.



Justin and Andy

WRAP definition from:

https://www.wellnessrecoveryactionplan.com/what-is-wrap/

# 13th Annual Benefit for The Brain



Benefit for the Brain celebrates the remarkable efforts and advancements in the area of treatment and recovery for mental illness. We are so excited for our 13th annual event, coming up on Thursday, November 21st!

Thank you to the amazing donors who have already contributed to our raffle baskets! We are so appreciative of <u>Scavenger</u> <u>Hunts by Let's Roam, Turkey Hill Experience, Urban Air Adven-</u> <u>ture, Oriental Trading, Bark Box, Oriental Trading,</u> and <u>Kendra</u> <u>Scott.</u>

**Benefit For The Brain** ward Minners 2024

Scientific Research Award

Dr. Elizabeth Thomas

Larry A. Real Award

Dr. Mark Morales

Impact Award

Tory Bright, BS



# Register for event: here.

# Behavioral Health Trauma-Informed System of Care Learning Collaborative



Discover new insights and strategies to enhance trauma-informed practices within the Montgomery County behavioral health system.

Featuring <u>Russell Lehmann</u> award-winning and internationally recognized motivational speaker, poet, author, and activist. He is known for his work in raising raw and transparent awareness about autism, mental health, and disabilities.

# October 28, 2024

9.30 AM - 1 PM

# Montgomery County Public Safety Training Campus

1175 Academy Drive Conshohocken, PA 19428







Offices of Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities/Early Intervention, Managed Care Solutions, and Drug & Alcohol





# **Montgomery County, PA**

# . Office of Aging Services

# www.montgomerycountypa.gov/AgingServices





Creating Increased Connections A program of Resources for Human Development



#### **Mutual Aid on The Move**

Join us for a time to work on our wellness together. Enjoy each other's company as we exercise together. Walking not required

EVERY 1ST AND 3RD FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

#### 11:00AM-1:30PM

MEETING AT KING OF PRUSSIA MALL FOOD COURT ON 1ST FLOOR PARK AND ENTER THROUGH THE ENTRANCE NEAR DICK'S SPORTING GOODS AND BONEFISH GRILL

> 160 N GULPH RD KING OF PRUSSIA, PA 19406



QUESTIONS: CONTACT KARLEEN.CAPARRO@RHD.ORG



Fun activities and games to close out the week. Different games and activities each week. A place to laugh and socialize with peers

EVERY 2ND AND 4TH FRIDAY OF THE MONTH 11:00AM-12:30PM

> ZOOM LINK <u>HTTPS://RHD.ZOOM.US/J/99810950596</u>

> > MEETING ID: 998 1095 0596



QUESTIONS: CONTACT MICHAEL.NELSON@RHD.ORG



# CREATING INCREASED CONNECTION S (CIC) **Creating Increased Connections** GROUPS A program of Resources for Human Development

## TAKING **BACKOUR** POWER

Taking Back Our Power is a peer support group for individuals with lived experience of sensory phenomena (like hearing things others don't hear) and unusual beliefs

# BEGINING MONDAY, AUGUST 12TH

MONDAYS 3:00PM-4:00PM **Hopeworx** 1210 Stanbridge St #600, Norristown, PA 19401

#### TUESDAYS 2:30PM-4:00PM

Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church

## THURSDAYS 1:00PM-2:00PM

**Trinity Reformed Church** Pottstown, PA 19464

# **CIRCLEOF** HOPE

Circle of Hope is peerto-peer led discussion group. Join us for lively conversation about how we are feeling, our

successes and challenges, our recovery, and how we maintain our wellness. Everyone is welcome.

COMPANEROS (AS)

**CON VALOR Y EXITO** 

CIC se enorgullece de ofrecer nuestro grupo de

nosotros para un conversación animada sobre

recuperación y cómo mantenemos nuestro bienestar. Todo lo que se dice en grupo es

confidencial y todos son bienvenidos.

**Pronto** 

cómo nos sentimos, nuestros éxitos y desafíos, su

#### WEDNESDAYS 10:00AM-11:30AM

Willow Grove Baptist Church 3600 Welsh Rd Willow Grove, PA 19090

#### THURSDAYS 10:30AM-12:00PM

**Hopeworx** 1210 Stanbridge St #600, Norristown, PA 19401

# LIVE ANOTHER DAY

#### TUESDAYS 12:30PM-1:45PM



Lansdale Library 301 Vine St Lansdale, PA 19446

Alternatives to Suicide groups are intended as non-judgmental spaces where people can share some of their darkest thoughts without being assumed to have an illness or being

assessed for involuntary interventions. Openly exploring these thoughts - and the feelings and experiences underneath them is often the key to moving toward something

different.

#### WOMENS IDENTITY AND EXPERIENCES GROUP

discusión Companeros Con Valor y Exito. Únase con This group was created for women as a safe environment to voice & openly share our life stories as



**WEDNESDAYS** 

3:00PM-4:30PM

women & to empower ourselves to https://rhd.zoom find greater meaning & purpose in US/j/83638683076 life.

For more information Contact Sheila.HallPrioleau@RHD.org 215-906-0453 www.ciconnections.org



Creating Increased Connections A program of Resources for Human Development

# Taking Back our Power

Taking Back Our Power is a confidential peer led support group for those who hear, see, feel, or believe things not shared by others. Anyone with these experiences is welcome to join.

Mondays 3:00PM-4:00PM

<u>Hopeworx</u> 1210 Stanbridge St #600 Norristown, PA 19401

Starting Monday, August 12th



Visit Our Website <u>www.ClConnections.org</u> <u>Questions Contact</u> Hugo.Lopez@RHD.org 484-374-0904



We are excited to announce our Advent Food Drive, where we come together as a community to make a positive impact on the lives of those facing food insecurities.





# **BRIDGES TO SUCCESS: KEYSTONES OF HEALTH FOR PENNSYLVANIA**

Join us for a key Medicaid update from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services!



# Friday, October 25 11:30am-12:15pm, Zoom



Valerie A. Arkoosh, MD, MPH Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Human Services **David Grande, MD, MPA** Special Advisor for Medicaid Innovation, Pennsylvania Department of Human Services

Section 1115 of the Social Security Act gives the federal government the ability to waive certain federal rules that govern Medicaid to allow states to design and evaluate new state pilot projects that promote the general goals of the Medicaid program. Section 1115 waivers are a major pathway for state Medicaid innovation.

In Pennsylvania, the Department of Human Services is proposing, *Bridges to Success: Keystones of Health for Pennsylvania*, which would bring new tools and federal resources to the Medicaid program to focus on social determinants of health in four main areas: Reentry Supports, Housing Supports, Food and Nutrition Supports, and Continuous Coverage for Children Under Age Six.

Join us on October 25 to hear from Secretary Arkoosh and Dr. Grande to learn more about this significant opportunity and its impact for our region and individuals served!



# O FAMILY BINGO <pO FAMILY BINGO</p> O FAMILY BINGO O FAMILY BINGO <

Get your daubers ready and mark your calendars for an evening filled with anticipation and fun!

# PRIZES FOOD FUN



Friday, October 18th 6:00 - 8:00 pm Doors Open at 5:00

Horsham Community Center
 1025 Horsham Road,
 Horsham PA 19044

50/50

RAFFLES

\$20 Per person \$10 Per Child (5 & up) 4/\$40 Family pack Includes 10 rounds of Bingo Additional cards \$10 each

# PAY AT THE DOOR

## **REGISTER HERE:**



Horsham

Brooke Glen









# **Subcommittee Reports from September 2024**

**Advocacy Subcommittee:** Discussed AOT letter and getting data about how BHC is working. Get some stories from individuals who experienced AOT to include in our letter. We talked how other states are resisting. Have draft of letter to present to CSP Committee at October meeting. Also need voting rights information at next meeting.

**Community Outreach** – Erin said they discussed a laundry program. Visit laundromats and give people money to do their laundry and talk with them. Looking for dates. A couple laundromats have been contacted and some said yes. Have stickers. Also sit outside grocery stores or community centers and have face-to-face conversations with people and tell them about CSP.

**Conference** – Tracey said we talked about potential dates. Checking with commissioners. Discussed food options – Mission BBQ or Manna on Main. Martha's Community Farm – any concerns about the venue?

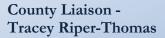
<u>CSP MEETING</u> <u>CALENDER</u> <u>2024-25</u> Meetings are held every third Thursday, monthly from 12: 00-2:30pm The next meetings will be:	
October	17
November	21
December	19
January	16
Meetings are held in person and via Zoom.	

# Montgomery County CSP Executive Committee

2024/2025 Tri-Chairs Provider Member: Jim Markey Person in Recovery: Morgan Killian-Mosley Family Member: Haniel Tracey

2024/2025 Sub-Committee Chairs Community Outreach: Julie Whitmore, Erin Villarose Advocacy: Akilah Williams, Anise Robinson Conference: Harry Bowles

2024/2025 Treasurer Justin Chamrin



## Fiduciary - HopeWorx, Inc.

1210 Stanbridge Street, Suite 600 Norristown, PA 19401 610-270-3685

## **CSP** Principles

- \* Consumer Centered/ Consumer Empowered
- \* Culturally competent
- \* Able to Meet Special Needs
- \* Community Based with Natural Supports
- \* Flexible
- \* Coordinated
- \* Accountable
- \* Strength Based

# Organizations who regularly send representatives to CSP:

Central Behavioral Health, AdvocacyWorx, Community Satisfaction Team of Montgomery County, Magellan Health Services, Montgomery Co. Department of Behavioral Health, Montgomery County Emergency Services (MCES), NAMI Montgomery County, Norristown Vet Center, Resources for Human Development, Salisbury Behavioral Health

## **Meetings:**

12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

3rd Thursday of each month HopeWorx 1210 Stanbridge St. Suite 600 Norristown, PA 19401 In person & Zoom

#### Kathie Mitchell, Newsletter Editor

Join our Mailing list! We have an email list as well as a regular mailing, to join:

Send an e-mail to: <u>pjohnson@hopeworxinc.org</u> Or send your contact info to this mailing address:

# **Community Support Journal**

#### CSP Mission Statement.

Montgomery County's Community Support Program (CSP) brings together individuals that receive mental health services, their family members, providers and the Department of Behavioral Health in an equal partnership to promote recovery and excellence in the delivery of community-based mental health services.

The committee strives to include a balance of people who use services, people who provide services, family members, and interested members of the community at large. The CSP initiatives continue to grow state, regionally and county wide. As the involvement increases CSP has become a place that feedback can truly be given to the county from individuals that receive services and information can be given that suits the needs and requests of those that attend.

#### CSP Subcommittees:

- \* Advocacy Subcommittee—Works on legislative, policy, communication, budget, voter education and other issues related to mental health services in the county, statewide and at the federal level when relevant. At the direction of the CSP Committee, the Advocacy Subcommittee gathers information on issues, plans advocacy events and creates a monthly newsletter to provide information to the stakeholder network as well as the community at large about the work of CSP. The newsletter also provides updates on new and changing mental health services provided in Montgomery County. The newsletter editor can be contacted at: <u>kathiemitchell8221@gmail.com</u>.
- \* Community Connections Subcommittee—Works on facilitating opportunities for people in the CSP community to be more involved in the Montgomery County community. This includes implementing the Community Connections grants, which provide funding for people to participate in a variety of activities. The committee also implements transportation grants that provide gas cards and SEPTA day passes to CSP community members. The annual CSP Poster Art contest is also organized by this committee.
- Conference Subcommittee The conference subcommittee will plan and fundraise for the annual Montgomery County CSP Conference.

We invite all peers, family members and providers/professionals to attend.

https://www.facebook.com/ montcopacsp/