

# KANSAS MENTAL HEALTH COALITION

*.....Speaking with one voice to meet the critical needs of people with mental illness*

## Support Clubhouse Model Expansion

**Position:** Stabilize state funding for Clubhouse Model mental health services that support the Wichita Clubhouse Program (Breakthrough Club) and allows for expansion to communities across the state that determine both a need and capacity to develop Clubhouse model services for people with severe and persistent mental illness.

**The Problem:** Over the past 10 years a significant reduction in public funding for mental health services has had a very negative impact on how people with severe mental illnesses are being treated. The reduction of funding for community based services has left people with limited mental health supports. The trend must change and affordable, effective services like the Clubhouse model are needed. The Clubhouse Model utilizes the construct of a “working community” that provides support for people with mental illness. In the Clubhouse, all participants (members/clients, staff, board members, volunteers, employers) join forces to work towards the central goal of supporting recovery. This is done with collaboration from other clinical mental health professionals. The result of this positive energy allows people who have a mental illness to contribute to their local community and live a life filled with meaning and dignity. Unfortunately, there is no identified funding source for expanding successful clubhouse programs.

In the Clubhouse, all participants join forces to work towards the central goal of supporting recovery.

**Why This Matters:** In Kansas we are experiencing a mental illness crisis where people are being treated in substandard hospital situations and local jails. Fighting for the health and wellbeing of Breakthrough Club members is the passion of the ESS/Breakthrough Club organization. Our focus is on overcoming the barriers of living with a mental illness. Studies have shown that clubhouse members engaged in supported employment programs had competitive employment rates slightly under 50 percent, members earned higher wages and worked more hours than participants in other vocational programs.

**The Bottom Line:** Clubhouse Programs can be an essential part of the continuum of care for people with mental illness. The current State funding for the Wichita Clubhouse Program will yield positive outcomes, but that funding was diverted from other community based programs last year. If we are to continue the program and expand it to other communities, there must be stable funding.

**Need more information?** Drill deeper into this issue on the back of this page.

## The Rest of the Story about Clubhouse Model Programs in Kansas

Breakthrough Club, a program of Episcopal Social Services (ESS) in Wichita, KS provides services to consumers with mental illness utilizing the Clubhouse Model. While Breakthrough Club is the only Clubhouse organization certified to use this model in Kansas, over 300 clubhouses provide services throughout the world with 186 Clubhouses operating in the United States. Both Breakthrough Club locally and several Clubhouses throughout the county, have success data that demonstrates less than 6% of members need hospitalization and over 30% find employment. With adequate funding hospitalizations and the inappropriate use of jails can be reduced and meaningful employment can be increased for individuals with mental illness in Kansas.

The number of people who are inmates in the Kansas Corrections System has increased 126 percent since 2006. The joint report from the Treatment Advocacy Center and the National Sheriff's Association, published April 8, 2014, states, "Prisons and jails have become America's 'new asylums'. The number of individuals with serious mental illness in prisons and jails now exceeds the number in state psychiatric hospitals tenfold. In the Sedgwick County jail about one third of inmates take medication for a mental illness; people with mental illnesses are at greater risk of incarceration and of multiple arrests.

ESS/Breakthrough Club would like to increase efforts to help people with mental illness stay out of jail and not be admitted to a State hospital facility. **It is appalling that the lack of community mental health funding (in the State of Kansas) is causing people who live with mental illness to be caught in the criminal justice system, or waiting for disjointed mental health treatment.** Studies show that most people with mental want to work; they do not want to be left alone in the community without friends or mental illness health rehabilitation support; they know the consequence of no community support and do not want to end up hospitalized or imprisoned.

After 7 years of decreased public funding for the Wichita Breakthrough Clubhouse, the program still helps 30% of Breakthrough Club members obtain and keep paying jobs in the Wichita community. This is compared to the 17% employment rate of people with severe and persistent mental illness who are employed nationally. Increasing funding to Breakthrough Club and other Clubhouses throughout Kansas will help people stabilize their mental illness and find jobs.

While pursuing several different funding sources after Lottery Vending legislation was vetoed in 2017, KDADS finally decided on a one-year FY18 grant of \$500,000 to allow Breakthrough Club to demonstrate that the model produces cost effective results that support those with mental illness while providing them with mechanisms for functioning successfully in the community. We will work with legislators, the community mental health centers and other mental health advocates to find adequate funding.

With a two-year Kansas Health Foundation grant, Breakthrough Club will work with other communities across the state that want to investigate the model for working with those needing services in their communities. As with Breakthrough Club, the model assumes utilizing a mix of both public and private funding.