

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **1. Statewide & Local Advocacy Councils:**

A new law requires SAC to be located in the Executive Office of the Governor; provides priority consideration for certain candidates for SAC; directs Council to establish interagency agreements with certain state agencies; requires copies of certain files, records and reports to be provided to the Councils at DCF's expense; provides clarification for duties performed by the LAC, etc. This new law amends Ch. 402 of the Florida Statutes.

This new law does several things to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the SAC and Lac. They are as follows:

A. Relocates the SAC and LAC as well as their staff to the Executive Office of the Governor from its current location in the DCF. This would accomplish the following:

- Eliminates the appearance of any conflict of interest
- Enhances the independence of the SAC and LAC
- Allows the SAC and LAC to have their own staff and not be staffed or supervised by any DCF employees
- Allows the SAC to supervise and direct its own staff
- Improves the effectiveness and efficiency of the SAC and LAC and their staff
- Increases accountability of the SAC and LAC
- Improves the overall operation of the SAC and LAC to meet their statutory requirements

B. Eliminates some of the barriers the SAC and LAC have had over the past two years with access to client information.

C. Allows the Governor more flexibility in making appointments to the SAC.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## **2. SAC's Presentation at CAFE'**

CAFÉ was a great achievement for both SAC and LAC members as well as those in attendance. SAC's presentation, "HIPAA and What It Means To Me," was a great accomplishment. This presentation taught consumers and families about their Protected Health Information (PHI) and their rights. As a result of this presentation SAC was successful in helping families that attended the workshop in better understanding the federal law related to PHI and HIPAA.

## **3. Operation Spot Check**

The LACs across the state have been participating with the Office of the State Attorney in "Operation Spot Check" to identify facilities that are not up to standards and or codes of the State, County or City. All of the facilities visited to date have been assisted living facilities, but starting in July of 2004 "Operation Spot Check" will be expanding into other facilities such as ICF/DD, group homes and nursing homes. The closures that took place have related to some type of violation that places the residents in a life-threatening situation. The LACs continue to participate with Operation Spot Check.

## **4. Training and Standards**

SAC's Training and Standards Standing Committee during the past year (FY 2003-2004) updated and modernized the training program for both new members, local council officer training, HIPAA and Train the Trainer.

## **5. Statewide HIPAA Training Program**

The SAC developed and implemented a statewide HIPAA training program to insure that all members would be in compliance. The SAC Chair, Craig Rappel, of the law firm Rappel and Rappel in Vero Beach, provided the training program material to both the SAC and LAC members.

## **6. Landmark Learning Center Closed**

The SAC is continuing to monitor the closing of Landmark Learning Center, a developmental disabilities state institution located in Miami. A SAC member was assigned to monitor the closing of this institution and during this past year the Department of Children and Family Services (DCF) has addressed all of the Councils' concerns indicated. The moving of clients into the community has gone very well to date. It is expected that the facility will fully close in 2005.

## **7. Long-Term Care Ombudsman Council**

The SAC and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Council continue to work together to eliminate any duplication of efforts.

## **8. Mental Health Institutional Rules**

The DCF Mental Health Program Office has, after 14 years, completed and promulgated the rule required in Florida Statutes.

## **9. Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)**

A white paper report was issued by the Council and submitted to both the State and Federal Government. This highlighted some of the current problems in the system. Most notable was the lack of a Guardian Ad-Litem for abused children.

## **10. Changes to the Adoption Rules**

Changes requested in 1998 to the Adoption rules have been promulgated into rule after six years of advocacy.

## **11. Florida Civil Comment Center**

The SAC completed its reviews of the facility and issued its final white paper report to the DCF, Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Corrections (DOC). All three agencies have been working cooperatively on the recommendations. Several recommendations have been implemented.