



# pennsylvania

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

In March 2004, members of the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services' (OMHSAS) Advisory Committees arrived at consensus on an advisory structure to assure that:

- Consumers, family members, and other stakeholders have the opportunity for meaningful, effective participation in advising OMHSAS;
- Information is shared broadly and in a timely manner from stakeholders to OMHSAS and from OMHSAS to stakeholders;
- Valuable networking opportunities are available among stakeholders;
- There are productive partnerships between OMHSAS and the Advisory Committees.

The Structure of the advisory committee has evolved from 2004. Today, the OMHSAS Advisory Structure is comprised of three committees and two subcommittees: Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Committee, Adult Behavioral Health Advisory Committee, Older Adult Behavioral Health Advisory Committee, Persons in Recovery Subcommittee and Youth Subcommittee. The Youth Subcommittee provides youth representation to the Children's and Adult Behavioral Health Advisory Committees. These committees will advise on a broad behavioral mandate to include, but not be limited to, mental health, substance abuse, behavioral health disorders, and cross-system disability. All workgroups and committees of OMHSAS work to support the objectives developed by the OMHSAS Advisory Committee.

The purpose of the OMHSAS Advisory Committees shall be to provide counsel and guidance to the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Department of Public Welfare of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in order to ensure an infrastructure and a full array of mental health, substance abuse, and behavioral health services which comply with the Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles of OMHSAS, as well as core principles of the Community Support Program (CSP), Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP), Cultural Competency, and Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Programs (BDAP). The council is mandated by federal law, and has mission: to advocate on behalf of adults with serious mental illness and children with Serious Emotional Disturbance, review the Mental Health Block Grant, and monitor the statewide system of mental health care.