



Providing service and comfort to people affected by HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C
MENDOCINO COUNTY AIDS / VIRAL HEPATITIS NETWORK FALL 2014

Doing an Inch a Day with the Help of MCAVHN and the 11 O'clock Calendar John's Story

John Palacios describes himself as a special education student, a mental patient and someone who has used drugs occasionally. He lived in Fort Bragg for 27 years where he got in frequent trouble. Things started to turn around for John when he finally got on the right medications after spending two weeks at the Saint Helena Recovery Center.

"Meds don't mix with alcohol or drugs", John says, adding "I found that out by going to jail." He made his way to MCAVHN after the courts suggested that he move to Ukiah, and now things are looking up. "John (Weber), Joann, Libby and Tony are life-savers. Through the ups and downs of my recovery, they've done nothing but supported me."

John credits MCAVHN with giving him tools for his tool belt: how to be patient, how to be truthful, wise and considerate. He tries to go to MCAVHN for a few hours every day. He also drops in frequently at Manzanita Services for life skills, job prep, money management and art classes.

"I try to do an inch a day. A foot a day I'd be skipping over and tripping over myself." John checks in with MCAVHN three or more times per week and appears in court once a week as part of the Eleven O'clock Calendar, a program designed to monitor the "inch a day" for frequent users of the criminal justice system who have a dual diagnosis (a diagnosis of drug use combined with behavioral health issues). The program helps turn lives around while saving taxpayers a minimum of \$91 per day in incarceration costs. John credits Judge Moorman, Public Defender Linda Thompson and Deputy District Attorney Beth Norman with keeping him moving forward on his path.

In addition to advocating for John at the Eleven O'clock Calendar appointments, MCAVHN has also helped him with rent and utilities. "The last place I want to be is outside for the winter. I'm a little skinnier than the rest so I catch pneumonia really quick. MCAVHN has really helped me out, got me a place, everything I needed. Good things will come to those who wait."



John Palacios on his new front porch

MCAVHN SERVICES

Behavioral Health Case Management
(in cooperation with many local agencies)

Client Advocacy

Food Vouchers

Transportation Assistance

Client Social Events

Client Informational Events

Drop-in Center

Consumer Education

Support Groups

HCV and HIV Treatment Support

Syringe Exchange Program

Overdose Prevention

Educational Presentations

Community Outreach

ROSOC Case Management*

Eleven O'clock Calendar

Training for Interns

Work Experience Hours

Community Service Hours

*ROSOC - Recovery Oriented
Systems of Care, helping
individuals reduce harmful practices
and meet their life goals.

HOW DOES A NON-PROFIT OPERATING ON A SHOE STRING AFFORD TRAVEL & CONFERENCES?

That is the tough question we are trying to answer.

From time to time we have found the funds to send our executive director and sometimes another employee to exchange best practices, politics, compassion and support with others who share our mission.

This year our ED Libby Guthrie envisions being able to send all four MCAVHN staff members to not one but two conferences in the eastern United States.

The first conference is the National Association of Case Management in Philadelphia. Libby and John (our client services coordinator) have the honor of presenting "Case Management for Co-Occurring Disorders". This will be the second time Libby and staff have been asked to present our cutting edge strategies at a national convention this year.

That same week the Harm Reduction Conference takes place in Baltimore, about one hundred miles away. This event is attended by harm reduction activists, agencies, large programs and active-users.

The opportunity to attend both conferences promises to be inspirational, informational and restorative.

It's a tall order but Libby and the Board of Directors believe it to be so worthwhile that funds are being scraped together and plans are being made to cover basic services at MCAVHN House

and

AN ANONYMOUS DONOR HAS PLEDGED TO MATCH DONATIONS UP TO \$500

to help defray additional costs .

Please see office contact information on page 3 if you would like to help meet the match.

HARM REDUCTION

A Definition

1. Modality of working with individuals and communities to minimize adverse consequences of drug use.

e.g. Overdose prevention, syringe access, healthcare especially for HIV, hepatitis and mental health needs, drug law reform including prison reform, housing and drug treatment options.

2. A movement for social justice.

Special Thanks

to

Ukiah Valley Medical Center

Our Newsletter Sponsor

Andrea Summer, Volunteers & Generous Item Donors

for our Summer Yard Sale

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Volunteers:

Betty Petitt, Donald Bowen, Donya Ramirez, Maureen O'Sullivan, Fernando Velazquez, Jeff Murray, Bill Walker, Bill Walls, Larry Cristiani, Betsy Abele, Teddi Lawson, Walther Theall, Christine Sullivan, Heather McKenzie, Tweety and Lisa

Ways You Can Help

Help Meet our Challenge Grant
for Travel and Conferences
(see article this page)

Attend our Halloween Extravaganza
Kings and Queens and In-Betweens
(see the back cover)

Donate at Any Time
(use PayPal online or send us a check)

Donate an Auction Item or Become a Sponsor
for Event of the Heart
Valentine's Day, 2015
(more info later)

Volunteer at MCAVHN House
(training provided)

Watch for Other Events During the Year

Consider Serving on the Board of Directors
(contact Libby or Judy at MCAVHN
or any board member)

How Can You Help Someone If You Run Them Off?

MCAVHN Case Aide Tony Cellini on Harm Reduction and Working at MCAVHN

Tony Cellini says he sees a lot of burn-out in people working in helping fields. He has seen others whose personal belief in harm reduction doesn't match the protocols where they work and they end up hating their jobs. "If someone comes in three times and keeps using, do you kick them to the curb? You don't know which time is going to be the time when someone says, 'You know, I really wanna do something different'. See if you can find the thing that makes a difference".

Tony knows first hand about drug use and incarceration but has been in recovery for over 8 years and has been finding ways to make a difference for others ever since. He began volunteering at Hilltop Recovery Services in Middletown after undergoing his own recovery treatment there. When the side effects of the medications he was taking for hepatitis C left him ill and depressed Tony filled out his own paperwork for further assistance. Hilltop took notice and kept offering him paid employment. When he began working full time they sent him to school for his CAS (certified addiction specialist) certificate and then his RAS (registered addiction specialist, a nationally recognized certificate).

He continued his education at Mendocino College and is currently a full time student working on a bachelor's degree in psychology from National University through a program being offered in Ukiah. He continues his involvement with NA (Narcotics Anonymous) and Sons of Italy.

Tony is now employed at MCAVHN for 28 hours per week and says, "I love



Tony Cellini

what is happening here. I enjoy coming to work." He explains that harm reduction is not recovery but is a starting point, a part of the process. He has seen clients who substitute methadone for opiates or alcohol for speed who then think "I'm not using my drug of choice, so I'm clean". They may not be "clean" but they can start to manage their life a little better and stop living the lifestyle of addiction.

Many thanks to Tony for helping our clients navigate the process from harm reduction through recovery.

What's Next?

See details on page 4 for an opportunity to help MCAVHN while celebrating Halloween.



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Mendocino County AIDS Viral Hepatitis Network presents



FRIDAY October 31st

Doors open at 5:00 p.m.
Costume Judging at 8:00 p.m.
Saturday Afternoon Club - 107 S. Oak St

Costume Contest
Full Bar—Food—Music
\$10 cover

MCAVHN's Mission: To provide services & comfort to persons & families affected by HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C & the co-occurring disorders of mental illness & substance abuse.