

**Kansas Mental Health Coalition**  
Support Clubhouse Model Expansion

**Statement/Position:** It is the Kansas Mental Health Coalition position that the State of Kansas should provide stable funding for programs using the Clubhouse model that serve people with severe and persistent mental illness, to live a healthy and productive life in their own community.

**Supporting information: The Problem- *Lack of Community Support for people living with severe and persistent mental illness:*** According to a report from Mental Health America, “Kansas ranked 51st compared to the other states when it came to adults reporting they had unmet mental health needs.” Kansas can do better. The Breakthrough Club, a program of Episcopal Social Services (ESS) in Wichita, KS provides services to consumers with mental illness utilizing the Clubhouse Model. Breakthrough Club is the only Clubhouse organization certified to use this model in Kansas; it is part of a national association of 186 Clubhouses operating in the United States and received and maintained its national accreditation in 1995. Data demonstrates less than 6% of members needed hospitalization and over 30% found employment. With adequate funding, hospitalizations and the inappropriate use of jails can be reduced, as well as employment can be increased, for individuals with mental illness living in Kansas.

**Action Steps-The Solution:** While pursuing several different funding sources for State participation to support of the Clubhouse model, KDADS finally decided on a one-year FY2018 grant of \$500,000. The goal is to allow the Breakthrough Club one year to demonstrate to the legislature and the State of Kansas how the Clubhouse model produces cost effective results, as it provides people with severe and persistent mental illness the mechanisms to function successfully in the community. With assistance from a two-year Kansas Health Foundation grant, the ESS Breakthrough Club is reaching out to various communities that might be a good fit to implement the Clubhouse model. As with Breakthrough Club, the model assumes utilizing a mix of both public and private funding.

**Bottom line** we need to find a way to continue stable funding for the expansion of services we are implementing at Breakthrough Club, as well as funding for other communities that want to develop Clubhouse programs. Obviously one-year funding will not be sufficient to produce on-going success.

**Action Steps:** We will work with legislators, the community Mental Health Centers, and other mental health advocates to find adequate funding. Sources may include:

- Continuing SGF funding utilizing savings in the corrections and hospitalization budgets
- State implementation of Medicaid Clubhouse Code 2030
- Targeted funding from lottery sales
- Other sources that may be proposed

## **Additional Information**

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 a very vulnerable population of people with limited mental health supports. This trend needs to change and the utilization of affordable, effective, mental health services that includes **the Clubhouse model is 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.

In Kansas we are experiencing a mental illness crisis where people are being treated in substandard hospital situations and local jails. **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.

People with mental illness should be treated in the community utilizing the Clubhouse program, medication support, and short-term hospital stays. **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**. 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 who are active in the Clubhouse program have a higher rate of employment and a lower rate of hospital recidivism. Recent Medicaid utilization studies show that cost of treatment for mental health care is lower for Medicaid eligible Clubhouse members than a carefully matched non-Clubhouse Medicaid group. Implementing the Clubhouse Model in Kansas is a cost effective tool in the rebuilding of Community Support Program for people with severe and persistent mental illness.