

FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS

Welcome to the Quarterly HeadsUp Newsletter! HeadsUp is an integrated center at the University of Pennsylvania, funded by the Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (PA-OMHSAS), providing a full array of free services related to training, education, clinical care, and program evaluation in early psychosis intervention. HeadsUp aims to ensure that evidence-based early intervention is accessible to all Pennsylvanians, and that providers receive comprehensive training and fidelity monitoring in early psychosis intervention.

Since our last newsletter, we are delighted to welcome two newly funded coordinated specialty care for First Episode Psychosis (FEP) sites: CSG Early Psychosis Intervention Collaborative (EPIC) in Williamsport (serving Clinton and Lycoming Counties) and a new On My Way site in Southampton (serving Bucks County). In this newsletter, we are excited to highlight the contributions of Samantha Grenon, Delaware County Supported Employment and Education Specialist at the Child and Family Focus On My Way program. Our featured program is HOPE (Helping to Overcome Psychosis Early), established in 2017 in Wilkes-Barre, with continual expansion to now include three sites serving six counties. HOPE's Director, Denise Namowicz has contributed her expertise and enthusiasm to the growth of not only the HOPE programs, but also to the quality of statewide FEP care through conducting staff trainings and serving on the HeadsUp steering committee and several subcommittees.

Despite the ongoing growth of FEP programs in the commonwealth (now totalling 19 sites), many young Pennsylvanians reside in counties without an FEP program, and thus do not have access to this evidence-based best practice for early psychosis care. We encourage all Counties in Pennsylvania to consider reaching out to [OMHSAS](#) to learn about annual funding opportunities. PA FEP programs join a dynamic learning healthcare system supporting education, training, outreach, program evaluation, and fidelity to the coordinated specialty care model. This network extends regionally and nationally, through the support of the National Institute of Mental Health funded [Connection Learning Health Care System hub of the Early Psychosis Intervention Network](#). EPINET links more than 320 CSC programs nationwide, providing services to more than 18,000 youth, in an unprecedented [research-to-practice initiative](#) to advance FEP care.

(continued on pg. 2)

FEATURED CENTER

HOPE HELPING TO OVERCOME PSYCHOSIS EARLY



DENISE NAMOWICZ, MSW, LCSW,
DIRECTOR OF HOPE FEP PROGRAMS

Denise is a graduate of Marywood University (MSW) and Lock Haven University (BSW). She has 41 years of experience in the Health & Mental Health Field and Management. She is a licensed Clinician and has held many management positions involving Program Development, Integration and Implementation of Evidence-Based Programs, Program Redesign, Quality Assurance, Peer and Family Peer Role Development. Her clinical experience is reflective in mental health and substance abuse with children, adolescents, adults and seniors through the practice modalities of individual, family, relationship/marital counseling and group therapy. Currently, Denise is the Director of HOPE (First Episode Psychosis Program) at Children's Service Center. She is a Certified PCIT Therapist, Certified Peer Supervisor, State wide Trainer for First Episode Psychosis and Co-Author of Pennsylvania Coordinated Specialty Care Programs for First Episode Psychosis: Six- and Twelve-Month Outcomes in Early Intervention in Psychiatry.

HOPE is an early intervention program for individuals experiencing symptoms of psychosis. Treatment is provided by a specialty coordinated care team and focuses on shared decision making, recovery, resiliency, and achieving aspirations. The HOPE program has three locations serving residents of Carbon, Monroe, Luzerne, Wyoming, Wayne, and Pike Counties, and providing care to individuals between the ages of 15-30 who are experiencing early signs of psychosis or their first episode of psychosis within the past 12 months.

CONTRIBUTING ARTICLE

PAYING IT FORWARD

BY MEREDITH JACOBY, HEADSUP OUTREACH COORDINATOR

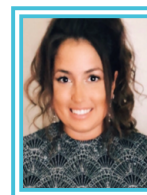
In March 2017, after graduating college, Samantha Grenon began experiencing symptoms of psychosis, leading to unexpected interference and trepidation along her personal and professional paths. During this time, Samantha was fortunate to connect with and receive treatment from the On My Way (OMW) First Episode Psychosis (FEP) program in Delaware County.

While in treatment, Samantha developed a strong rapport with the OMW Supported Education and Employment Specialist (SEES) who consistently emphasized positivity, highlighted Samantha's strengths, and helped rebuild the confidence she had lost. Upon completion of her time as a participant in the program and motivated by her experience, Samantha returned to OMW, this time as a SEES herself, to offer the same message of hope and measure of support to other young people who may be coping with similar experiences.

Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC), a general term used to describe a recovery-oriented treatment program, utilizes a team of specialists to create a plan based on an individual's needs and preferences. It is the backbone of all Pennsylvania FEP centers, and the SEES is an integral part of this model, giving valuable assistance to individuals and caregivers as they navigate school and/or work while receiving care. According to Samantha, this engagement often helps a young person develop life-long tools to boost feelings of productivity and purpose.

Samantha views herself and the role of a SEES as an empathetic advocate for program participants. Whether offering support with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), resumes, or career goals, she tries to meet a person where they are, helping to define education or employment goals and create strategies to meet those goals or overcome roadblocks when they arise.

In reflection, Samantha considers her experience with psychosis as a pivotal time in her life. While challenging, it helped her learn, grow, and led her in her current direction, which is where she believes she belongs. Samantha is currently attending graduate school for clinical mental health counseling with ambitions to obtain a doctorate and become a psychologist. She thanks the OMW team for offering ongoing opportunities and a rewarding professional environment and looks forward to continuing the dynamic work of helping young people experiencing symptoms of early psychosis to see the light at the end of the tunnel and know they are not alone.



Samantha is the Supported Education & Employment Specialist for the Delaware County Child and Family Focus On My Way program. She is 27-years-old and lives in Glen Mills with her Labrador mix, Pinot. She graduated from West Chester University with a Bachelor's in English and minor in Psychology. She is the oldest of four siblings (Alexander, William, and Danielle). In Samantha's free time she enjoys listening to podcasts, music, and hanging out with friends. Samantha now attends Capella University and is pursuing a Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Her goal is to earn her LPC and open a Private Practice. After this, she intends on returning to school obtain her doctorate in Clinical Psychology.

FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS CONT...

To provide more rapid access to care and expand into non-urgent referral pathways, HeadsUp now offers assistance with triaging and referring individuals with early psychosis to the PA FEP Center of best-fit (i.e., geographic location) or to other appropriate resources. To increase referral flow directly to sites or through this triage pathway, and to the HeadsUp [Early Psychosis Mentor](#) resource, we have been developing a curated network of mental health providers in the broad regions surrounding existing FEP sites and in underserved rural regions. We also seek to grow our list of agencies or individual providers to refer individuals who are discharged from our FEP programs. Our goal is to ultimately produce a "living" map tool, which we will launch in the next few months, reflecting an expansive and evolving statewide early psychosis referral and resource network hosted on our website. To this end, we invite all organizations and providers interested in joining our referral network to contact us. We also provide free trainings on early psychosis symptoms and screening to community providers, schools and colleges, and other interested stakeholder groups. To learn more, contact us at 1-833-933-2816 or email: headsuppaorg@gmail.com. Together, we intend these initiatives to support our mission to serve as a robust hub for mental health care clinicians, centers, and advocates across Pennsylvania on the frontlines of education, treatment, and de-stigmatization of early psychosis.

As we continue to expand in exciting new directions, we are ever grateful for the support and guidance from OMHSAS, SAMHSA (through the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, US Department of Health and Human Services), the HeadsUp Steering Committee, and providers, participants, families and mental health advocates for our collaborative efforts as we strive to achieve the HeadsUp mission. In these times of change we hope you find ways to promote health and balance, not only to your clients, but also yourselves and your teams.

With Best Wishes from HeadsUp for a healthy and happy 2023!



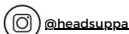
Monica E. Calkins, PhD
Co-Director



Christian Kohler, MD
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If you are interested in contributing to our newsletter please email: headsuppaorg@gmail.com

HEADSUP 2022 7TH ANNUAL PA EARLY PSYCHOSIS CONFERENCE!

The 2022 conference was a tremendous success and wonderful showcase of dynamic, high-quality presenters and sessions. During the first week of the conference, we focused on First Episode Psychosis (FEP) Care and Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC), offering professionals and practitioners treating early psychosis opportunities to strengthen skill sets, share best practices with peers, and implement new strategies, research, and trends into practice. Week two of the conference focused on Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy (CT-R).

HeadsUp is fortunate to have so many dedicated and talented collaborators helping to support our mission to bolstering early psychosis information and innovation. We are grateful to our funders, organizers, & presenters who help keep this conference and early psychosis care in Pennsylvania relevant and dynamic. We look forward to continuing to help serve our Pennsylvania early psychosis community together.

For more information about the conference visit our [conference brochure](#). This conference is made possible through a Community Mental Health Services Block Grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

[VISIT OUR DYNAMIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING PAGE OF OUR WEBSITE TO VIEW UPCOMING TRAININGS](#)

EPINET CONNECTION LEARNING HEALTHCARE SYSTEM



Since fall 2020, our Pennsylvania First Episode Psychosis (FEP) sites have been collaborating with Maryland FEP sites in the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) funded Early Psychosis Intervention Network (EPINET) project. Led by Monica Calkins, PhD for Eastern PA sites and Deepak Sarpal, MD for Western PA sites, HeadsUp is now part of the Connection Learning Healthcare System (Connection LHS), an EPINET Regional Hub centered at the University of Maryland and led by Melanie Bennett, PhD. As an EPINET Regional Hub, Connection LHS uses data to improve early psychosis services and to promote a culture of collaborative learning and continuous quality improvement across 25+ programs delivering Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC) for youth and young adults experiencing early psychosis and their families.

WE CONTINUE TO GROW OUR ONLINE PRESENCE, HIGHLIGHTING IMPORTANT NEWS AND INTRODUCING RESOURCES FOR USE AMONG ALL OF OUR MANY ADVOCATES AND STAKEHOLDERS.

TESTIMONIAL GALLERY

Sharing personal stories of recovery can help others feel less alone, shift attitudes about what it means to experience psychosis, and make seeking mental health care seem less scary. We offer a secure online platform to highlight the empowering and amazing words and work of the individuals in our programs.

[HAVE SOMETHING TO SUBMIT?
VISIT OUR SUBMISSION FORM HERE.](#)

PA FEP EMPLOYMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

First Episode Psychosis (FEP) care in Pennsylvania is exciting and dynamic work! We are happy to now offer an employment section on our website listing open positions at all of our First Episode Psychosis Centers. If you are interested or know someone interested in joining one of our PA FEP teams, visit our employment listing.

"FIND A CENTER" LOCATOR

Our website offers an easy-to-use interactive map on our "Find a Center" page to help Pennsylvania residents locate a First Episode Psychosis (FEP) center nearest to them.

ONLINE RESOURCES

RESOURCE MATERIALS

Educational materials are available to share with our community collaborators to help spread information about identification and treatment options for early psychosis.

Highlighted resources available for:

- [Individuals experiencing early psychosis](#)
- [Clinicians and providers](#)
- [Caregivers and loved ones](#)
- [School and university staff](#)
- [Advocacy groups](#)

EARLY PSYCHOSIS MENTOR

HeadsUp Early Psychosis Mentor is designed to increase the accessibility of specialized early psychosis care to all people in Pennsylvania. First Episode Psychosis (FEP) Centers are not always conveniently located to people who need them. If you are a Pennsylvania clinician working with a client who may be experiencing early psychosis, we are here to help connect you to information regarding specific care, research, and telehealth resources. For more information or to submit your first question visit the [HeadsUp Early Psychosis Mentor page](#) in the clinician's space of our website or reach out to us on our toll-free line 1-833-933-2816.

HEADSUP-PA.ORG

