If you already make purchases from Amazon.com, consider making them from Amazon’s sister website, Amazon Smile. If you select LCMHS as your charity on Amazon Smile, Amazon donates a portion of your purchase price to LCMHS. It’s a great way to help the organization without extra spending.

www.smile.amazon.com
For this fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), the state legislature gave LCMHS only a .22% (yes, 22/100 of one percent) increase in Medicaid reimbursement rates. In dollars, the increase amounts to only $27,498. The Agency received no increases in grant money (e.g., Oasis House, Emergency Services, etc.).

College Steps, a program that allows Developmental Services consumers to attend Johnson State College, has begun its new school year. DS currently has six students taking part in this program.

College Steps partners with colleges across the country to provide individualized college support for students living with social, communication, or learning challenges. The program coordinator at JSC oversees the network of trained peer mentors, who provide customized social, academic, and relevant vocational training support to College Steps scholars.

Expanded Psychiatry Services

LCMHS is pleased to announce it has added two psychiatric nurse practitioners to its psychiatry staff.

Rebecca Brooklyn, APRN, PMHCNS-BC, joined the staff at LCMHS in December of 2014 after a lengthy career as a registered nurse and nurse-midwife. She is board certified as a psychiatric nurse practitioner and brings with her extensive experience caring for children, families, and adults in a variety of settings.

Julie Sullivan, APRN, PMHCNS-BC, joined LCMHS on August 17. She has been providing psychiatric services, as a nurse, therapist, and nurse practitioner, for over 20 years. Most recently, she practiced at Washington County Mental Health Services, working with both children and adults.
Lamoille County Mental Health Services and Morrisville Family Health Care have partnered their resources to offer acute primary care exams at LCMHS’ main office on Harrel Street in Morrisville.

Both organizations understand that some mental health patients don’t feel comfortable in a primary care setting, or may have transportation challenges that prevent them from making doctor appointments. The addition of a medical exam room at LCMHS’ main office makes it easy and convenient for their patients to see a medical practitioner before or after a routine counseling visit.

“Adding primary care to the services available at Harrel Street not only creates better access, but is also another step toward providing integrated, holistic health care in our community,” says Savi Van Sluytman, CEO of LCMHS.

Family Nurse Practitioner Kim Dacek of Morrisville Family Health Care is the attending medical professional. She will see LCMHS patients for acute conditions such as flu, headache, sprains, sore throats, ear aches, or having stitches removed. Morrisville Family Health Care is a division of Community Health Services of Lamoille Valley.

LCMHS is reaching out to their patients and encouraging them to take advantage of the on-site medical care. Patients can schedule acute care visits by calling the LCMHS at 802-888-5026.

Both Julie and Rebecca are available to consult with individuals for medication management and other psychiatric services. The addition of these practitioners doubles the capacity of LCMHS to serve its consumers, resulting in less delay for individuals needing these services.

We are honored to have two such experienced health care providers join our staff and we are looking forward to the contribution they will make to our continuous efforts to provide professional, high-quality services in a timely way.
The CRT and DS programs were recently audited by the Department of Social Security in their role as the representative payees for some of our consumers who receive Social Security benefits. The programs are pleased to report that auditors were very happy with the systems we have in place and our transparency throughout the process.

In 2014, 4.32% of adult Vermonters had serious thoughts of suicide, one the ten highest rates among the United States.

* Mental Health America, Parity or Disparity: The State of Mental Health in America, 2015

Developmental Services recently underwent a bi-annual quality review by the State of Vermont. The DS division exceeded expectations in several categories, resulting in adulation from service coordinators and state officials alike.

Staff Development Day, held August 14, was a success! Employees attended presentations at People’s Academy from JP Hayden, a master’s-level psychologist, and Susan Loynd, the director of operations at WCMHS. In the morning, and returned to 72 Harrel Street for lunch and afternoon activities, including a trivia quiz, raffle drawings, prizes, volleyball, and—most popular—the dunk tank!

LCMHS Developmental Services consumers and employees participated in Direct Service Professionals Day at the State House, a celebration of—and show of appreciation to—individuals who work with individuals with developmental disabilities. (The Montpelier Times Argus also posted a picture of Jennifer Stratton reviewing the flag garden.)