

Rep. Tim Murphy (R-PA) Honored for His Leadership in Mental Health

Rep. Tim Murphy (R-PA) was honored by NAPHS during the Annual Meeting for his "commitment to a fair and comprehensive system of care for those with serious mental illnesses." Accepting the award from NAPHS Executive Director **Mark Covall** (right) at the Annual Meeting was Rep. Murphy's Senior Legislative Assistant **Michael Baxter** (left).



Rep. Murphy, who chairs the House Mental Health Caucus, was recognized for his efforts in Congress to ensure that Americans of all ages have access to a full continuum of appropriate and affordable treatment when they need help with mental illnesses and substance use problems. In announcing the award, NAPHS Executive Director **Mark Covall** noted that "Rep. Murphy has been an outstanding leader on complex policy issues that have a direct impact on the lives of millions of children, adolescents, adults, and older adults in need of care." For example, Rep. Murphy has taken a leadership role in legislation aimed at addressing access concerns. He endorsed the *Medicaid Emergency Psychiatric Care Act* (S.1592), a measure designed to address the crisis of emergency room crowding by promoting the right care, at the right time, in the right setting. "His efforts to focus attention on mental health policy issues will help to ensure that an essential infrastructure of public and private behavioral healthcare providers remains able to care for those in need," said Mr. Covall. "We applaud and want to recognize the extraordinary contributions of this congressional champion who has committed to improving mental health care for all Americans."

NAPHS Honors Exceptional Efforts in Grassroots Advocacy

NAPHS presented Grassroots Leadership Awards at the NAPHS Annual Meeting to two association members whose actions have demonstrated that individuals *can* make a difference in the lives of people who face mental and addictive disorders.



NAPHS Grassroots Advocacy Chair **Diane Kiddy**, director of government affairs for Universal Health Services, Inc., in King of Prussia, PA, (shown here with NAPHS Executive Director Mark Covall) was recognized for her outreach efforts in response to Hurricane Katrina and for her efforts urging Congress to introduce legislation to resolve the conflict in federal law between Medicaid "IMD" (Institutions for Mental Diseases) requirements and requirements of the *Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act* (EMTALA).

"My job as Director of Government Affairs of Universal Health Services (UHS)," Ms. Kiddy says, "is to be an advocate for the interests of our facilities and the patients we serve in Washington, DC and state capitals. However, it is most influential for the CEO of a facility to carry the message to the Senator or Representative. And even more importantly, that CEO needs to be the leader, activating facility employees and allies in the community to influence the behavioral health agenda in their state as well as in Washington, DC. Members of Congress do pay attention to their constituents and that is the value of a grassroots campaign. The purpose of the NAPHS Grassroots Committee is to develop strategies and tools to tap into this powerful resource."

Diane Kiddy obtained the sponsorship of Representative Tim Murphy (R-PA), chair of the Health Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee of the EMTALA/IMD bill in the House. She also gained Rick Santorum's (R-PA) leadership on the Senate Finance Committee in considering the EMTALA/IMD as part of the Katrina relief package and budget reconciliation. This support was built through her persistent and positive approach to the legislative staff. "It is critical to form strong relationships with the Congressional staffers, who meet regularly with their counterparts in other Members' offices, assist in the committee work, and are influential in setting their bosses' priorities," she said.

William Sexton (left), CEO of Wyoming Psychiatric Institute in Casper, WY, was recognized for his efforts in support of improved access, coverage, and funding for behavioral disorders. Mr. Sexton has worked to win the support of Sen. Craig Thomas (R-WY) as a sponsor of the *Medicaid Emergency Psychiatric Care Act of 2005* (S.1592). Mr. Sexton was also recognized for his advocacy efforts in support of fair and equitable health insurance coverage for mental illnesses.



In announcing the awards, NAPHS Executive Director **Mark Covall** (right) noted that successful advocates are active in their communities and work to develop relationships with all key stakeholders. "These relationships are not built overnight, but take time and effort to foster. That is exactly what these individuals have done. Change happens because of the action of individuals. Behavioral health advocacy can be exciting and successful."