

Our objectives are ...

- ❖ to protect privacy in psychotherapy.
- ❖ to provide support for therapists working outside of managed care.
- ❖ to increase the number of new, self-pay clients receiving treatment from independent psychotherapists.

We are ...

- ❖ a marketing organization whose purpose is to explore ways to promote, with integrity, the independent practice of psychotherapy.
- ❖ a clearinghouse for information about ethical issues in managed-care psychotherapy.

We are not ...

- ❖ a clinical “panel,” or clinically affiliated “group practice.”
- ❖ seeking contracts with insurance companies or employers.

Steering Committee

Ed Bialek, MSW, LCSW
Stephen Bittner, MD
Susan Nathiel, PhD, LMFT
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Coordinator

Megan Haney

What we believe

...about managed care

Health care is in chaos. Despite recent attempts at federal and state regulation, managed care remains an arena of rampant profiteering. Corporate financial and operational experimentation, along with frequent and disruptive buyouts, mergers and management shifts, will go on for the foreseeable future. The eventual outcome is anybody's guess.

What is clear is that health care planners are determined to dramatically reduce the number of psychotherapists in practice and control the practices of those who are left.

Insurance companies currently cover some mental health care, but managed care does not fund mental health care adequately. Capitation and case-rate reimbursement have arrived. Mental health services compete for funding every day with medical needs, and in the process are being carved out and marginalized. Job openings are declining drastically.

Managed care limits access to psychotherapy in exerting constant pressure to downgrade service, in making treatment goals and protocols the province of the corporation, and in limiting those goals to minimal restoration of daily functioning. In its drive to limit costs, managed care promotes medication as a substitute for therapy regardless of whether or not this is clinically appropriate.

Recredentialing, reviewing and gatekeeping mechanisms are techniques that serve managed care's goal of taking treatment decisions out of the hands of therapists and their clients.

The erosion of confidentiality is inevitable under managed care. Managed care requires the sharing of detailed personal information. Once client information is submitted to a managed care company, a therapist has no control over how carefully privacy is protected. Centralized computer banks such as those at the Medical Information Bureau make it much easier to exchange this information, and increase the risk of future harm.

...about psychotherapists

Psychotherapists will find it necessary and desirable to cultivate a self-paying clientele. If we do not inform the public that there are alternatives to managed care psychotherapy, and that traditional psychotherapy is available, affordable, and desirable, the marketing forces of managed care will prevail.

Psychotherapists can market their services and still maintain the highest professional standards. We can do this by educating the public about the ways in which quality psychotherapy is jeopardized by most current insurance arrangements. We must inform clients that, if they use managed care, they may sacrifice confidentiality and the ability to negotiate the terms of their own treatment.

Psychotherapists need to be accountable and self-regulating, but in traditional ways via peer review, supervision and training. The quality of our work is best judged by colleagues, not insurance companies.

...about clients.

Clients are beginning to learn the hard way about the pitfalls in the new insurance environment.

They are beginning to be subject to relentless marketing, rather than full information, abrupt changes in providers, rapidly shifting benefits packages, inflexible treatment plans and shifting of the burdens of medical care to the family.

Clients are becoming more aware of managed care's intrusion into their ability to choose and contract with their therapists directly, to form a therapeutic relationship responsive to their needs.

Clients are becoming aware of the invasion of privacy and the potential problems associated with the stockpiling of permanent records of mental health treatment in corporate computers.

Some people will continue to seek traditional, privacy-based, client-focused psychotherapy and be willing to pay a reasonable, sliding-scale fee.

General plan

- ❖ Market independent psychotherapists as an alternative offering confidential, affordable, and specialized psychotherapeutic services to clients who ...
 - *desire complete privacy*
 - *need or want more psychotherapy than their insurance benefits allow*
 - *are dissatisfied with managed care treatment*
 - *are failing to improve and want outside consultation*
 - *need different therapy than, or adjunctive therapy to, their managed care treatment*
 - *or who need home visits, collaborative work, agency networking or other services not provided in their managed care plan.*
- ❖ Develop an information clearinghouse and support network for therapists as their incomes drop, frustrations mount, friends leave the field, and the marketing forces of managed care continue to demonize professionals as the villains in the health-care crisis.

Specific plans

The Guild's marketing services include:

- ❖ a comprehensive, free Directory. This is our primary marketing instrument.
 - *The Directory includes 15 pages of general information on:*
 - *psychotherapy—how clients can know when they might need it, how they can arrange for it*
 - *the various types of professionals that offer psychotherapy, and their qualifications*
 - *some of the schools and types of psychotherapy*
 - *why Guild members and other psychotherapists are concerned about the impacts of managed care*
 - *how the Guild's alternative compares to managed care treatment.*

Each Guild member is described in a half-page profile, and indexed according to geographic location and professional specialties.

The Guild annually distributes about 3,000 copies of the Directory to potential referrers, clients, and members.
- ❖ an 800 number which can be called for the free Directory and other information about the Guild.

Our 800 number (1-800-731-8126) has been up and running since early 1996.
- ❖ a “Question and Answer” brochure aimed at potential clients, for distribution in waiting rooms, libraries, and other public venues. The brochure tells how to get a free copy of the Directory, and educates clients about the hidden costs of managed care as well as the alternative offered by the Guild.
- ❖ free publicity in the form of newspaper features, Op-Ed pieces, radio interviews, public presentations featuring Guild members, and listings in other directories and referral services such as Infoline.
- ❖ paid advertising of the Guild and Directory in media such as radio and print.
- ❖ sponsorship of public events such as symposia, lectures and panel discussions.

- ❖ a printed newsletter for Guild members and other interested parties to serve as a forum for current issues, events, and Guild members' activities.
- ❖ an e-mailed newsletter to publicize the professional activities and other concerns of Guild members (including group openings and available office space).
- ❖ a Web site on the Internet, on which the Directory and other Guild-related materials are posted.
Our Web address is <http://www.cpguild.com>.

We require that members ...

- ❖ offer a 20% fee reduction, if a client finds a therapist through the services of the Guild, pays at the time of service, and requires no insurance or other paperwork.
- ❖ furnish proof of their current Connecticut state licensure.
- ❖ furnish proof of their malpractice insurance.
- ❖ participate in regularly scheduled peer review or supervision.

We recommend that members ...

- ❖ offer free first sessions (30 minutes) to evaluate and discuss clients' payment options, and to educate them about the potential consequences of using their insurance benefits.
- ❖ offer sliding scales and devote part of their practice to the treatment of medically indigent clients.
- ❖ track the number of referrals they receive through the Guild.

About quality ...

We are committed to quality, integrity, and rigid ethical standards.

We feel that ongoing peer review and outcome assessments are important mechanisms of quality maintenance.

The Guild is a marketing organization and will not prescribe or review any of the specifics of how members conduct their individual practices.

We do, however, reserve the right to choose who will be affiliated with the Guild.

About insurance ...

We assume that therapists and their clients will decide together, on a case-by-case basis, whether and how to use insurance, how to work with review processes that may exist and how much privacy to sacrifice.

Membership details

- ❖ Members of the Guild agree to abide by the terms of the Guild's membership contract (included in this packet or available on request), which extends for two years.
- ❖ Once a member's listing is printed in the Directory, s/he pays \$80 monthly in member fees (collected bimonthly).

For further information ...

If you would like to speak to the Guild's service coordinator, to a member of the Steering Committee, or to a member at large, you may contact us through any of the means below:

- ❖ toll-free: 1-800-731-8126
- ❖ in New Haven: 789-8208
- ❖ via e-mail: info@cpguild.com
- ❖ via mail: 400 Prospect St., New Haven, CT 06511

You may also visit our Web site on the Internet, at <http://www.cpguild.com>.