

# Systems Change: One Relationship At A Time

Presented by:

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**Consumer Council System of Maine**  
A Voice for Consumers of Mental Health Services

“Any person, any couple, any community  
has the answer to their problem within  
their own system.” - Milton Erikson

## How the CCSM came to be....



- In 1989, patient deaths at Augusta Mental Health Institute triggered a class action suit on behalf of patients, resulting in what is known as The AMHI Consent Decree.
- Many peers from around the state have to worked to help make the following a reality:  
**“Consumer Voice”** (From the AMHI Consent Decree Plan 2006 Pg 2):  
Informed consumer voice is an integral part of the mental health system proposed in this plan. To provide more opportunities for consumer input, DHHS will provide financial support for the creation of eight regional councils and one statewide council. These councils will receive financial support from DHHS, but will operate as independent bodies with their own staff.

## Public Instrumentality

“Perform an essential government function”

- Public Law 592
- Title 34-B §3611



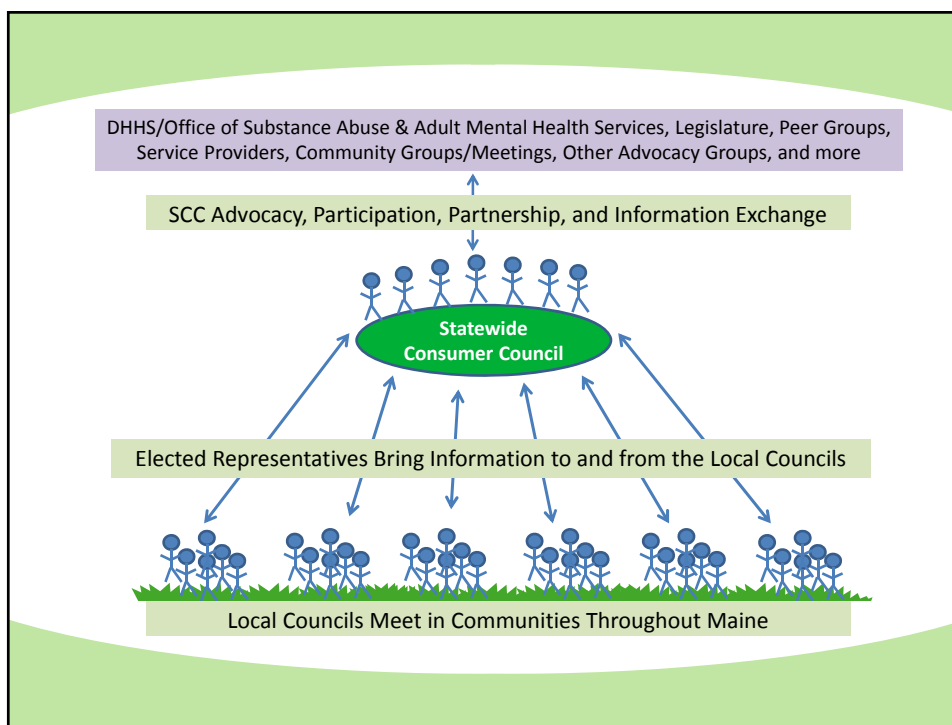
## Mission statement

The Consumer Council System of Maine represents fellow consumers with an effective, organized voice in shaping public policy and mental health services.

We hold as essential the participation of all consumers and look to collaborate with allies to find realistic solutions to local and statewide issues and to advance recovery-oriented, consumer-driven mental health care and peer-run recovery opportunities.

## Values statement

- We believe in a recovery-oriented, peer-led system of care guided by resiliency and hope.
- We believe inclusion of all consumers is essential to the success of our mission and honors the diversity of our community.
- We believe in building collaborative relationships to find realistic solutions to local and statewide issues.
- We believe in moving forward with creativity and innovation to bring about systemic change to mental health care.
- We believe in listening and supporting one another with compassion, equality, dignity, and respect.
- We believe in open, honest communication, conducting ourselves with integrity and transparency, encouraging collective accountability.
- We believe in acting wisely and deliberately, informing ourselves and others, to advocate effectively for quality services and preservation of rights.



## Change: What does that have to do with the Legislature?



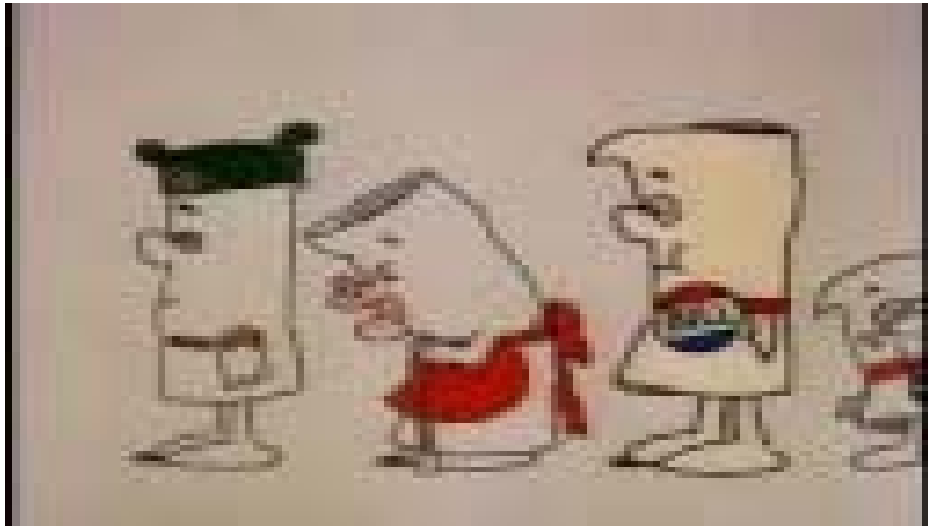
One of the roles of the CCSM is to be interacting and informing the Legislature in Maine and supporting them to make decisions that support a lot of issues that peers hold as important.

## A Lesson In Maine Politics



Let's begin with an overview of the structure of the Maine State Government and Maine's path of Legislation

## How A Bill Becomes A Law....



## Maine's Path of Legislation



Idea  
Developed



Committee  
Action



Bill Drafted



General  
Order



Governor



Bill Introduced



Second  
Reading



Law



Committee  
Reference



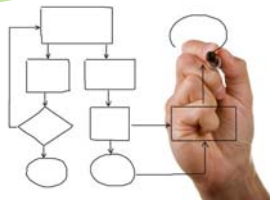
Second  
Chamber

## Building Relationships

Most important step to building relationships = ONE on ONE Conversations



Example: Finding your legislator on Facebook and becoming their “friend” in order to have online and face to face conversations.



## Mapping Your Legislator

What is Mapping and why would we do it?

Mapping is a term for finding out as much as possible about a legislator, using public sources, to use as a base to build your individual relationship.

This helps you connect with individuals in a personally authentic way.

### Some examples of things to find out:

- Personal Story- Family, town, why they are a legislature
- Are they newly elected or re-elected; # years in service
- What key committees are they on? Are they in leadership?
- What bills have they sponsored? What are they Interests?
- Civic Involvement, Business/Employment profile, community connections



## Special Guest- Representative Heidi Brooks

## Shared Perspectives



- We all come to our own understanding of the world by our unique experiences and lens of life. Understanding how we see things differently helps us to build relationships and understand how people come to know what they know.
- This is very helpful in the Legislature since there are a vast continuum of opinions and votes on various important bills/laws/budgets. Being able to understand those that oppose your interests can help you connect to potentially share things that may change their mind or give them a different perspective. Or it may change your mind as well.

## Shared Perspectives (continued)



- It is important for consumers/peers to share their expertise with the legislature to help shape policies/bills/budgets.
- The CCSM meets with the Health & Human Services committee at the beginning of each Legislative session to introduce who we are, what we do and what our charge is in our statute.

## The Art of Being Concise

- There are demands on everyone-coming from all different directions
  - Home
  - Work
  - Different opinions and needs
  - Phone and internet
- People do not have a long attention span
- Importance of being Respectful
- Major Reality of Workgroups, Committees, Meetings and Testifying at the Legislature: There is not a lot of time and if you don't have time you have to make your words count!

**I**   
**CONCISE**



## Elevator Speech

An **elevator pitch**, **elevator speech**, or **elevator statement** is a short summary used to quickly and simply define a profession, product, service, organization, event or issue.



## CCSM Elevator Speech

The CCSM is a mental health advocacy organization mandated by legislation as a voice for individuals who receive mental health services. We work to affect public policy change and address statewide and local issues affecting those receiving mental health services.

We advise the Department of Health and Human Services, the Legislature, the Governor and other state agencies by providing input regarding programs, evaluation, public policy and resource allocation of state funding. The most important part of our work is connecting with others in our local communities and collaborating with those interested in our work to address issues and concerns that arise at the local level.

## Moving Forward and the Legislature



- In State Government, it is hard to think about moving forward. It is easy for people to be stuck in the past: i.e. past administrations, etc.
- It is our mission to move forward in a positive way, to find realistic solutions to the issues we are faced with as well as celebrating what we have accomplished.
- This does not mean that we do not hold people accountable for the past and/or current issues and hold true to the Consumer Movement.



## Committee Involvement

**Systems change happens at a lot of conference room tables where many discussions about important changes take place.**

There is a desperate need to have consumer voice at the table to raise important issues for our fellow peers.

**We need YOU!!!**

**Some examples right now are:**

- Re-design of the MHRT/C training (training for case managers and other mental health professionals)
- Behavioral Health Home Advisory Committee
- MaineCare Member Advisory Committee
- PAMI at Disability Rights Maine
- And Many More....



## Maine State & National Legislative Websites

### **Maine State Legislative Site**

<http://legislature.maine.gov/>

### **Where to Find Your Senators**

<http://legisweb1.mainelegislature.org/wp/senate/senator-information/find-your-senator/>

### **Where to Find Your Representatives**

<http://legislature.maine.gov/house/rep.htm>



## More Legislative Information Sites....

<https://legiscan.com>

<https://legiscan.com/ME>

<http://ballotpedia.org/>

[https://ballotpedia.org/Maine State Senate elections, 2016](https://ballotpedia.org/Maine_State_Senate_elections,_2016)

[https://ballotpedia.org/Maine House of Representatives elections, 2016](https://ballotpedia.org/Maine_House_of_Representatives_elections,_2016)

[http://ballotpedia.org/Main Page](http://ballotpedia.org/Main_Page)

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/s1945>

<https://www.govtrack.us/>



## Even More Legislative Information Sites...

### **Maine's Path of Legislation**

<http://www.state.me.us/legis/path/path1.htm>

<http://legislature.maine.gov/general/path-of-legislation-in-maine-detailed/9285>

### **State of Maine Glossary of Legislative Terms**

[https://legislature.maine.gov/LawMakerWeb/glossary\\_of\\_terms.asp](https://legislature.maine.gov/LawMakerWeb/glossary_of_terms.asp)

<http://www.maine.gov/legis/opla/glossary.htm>

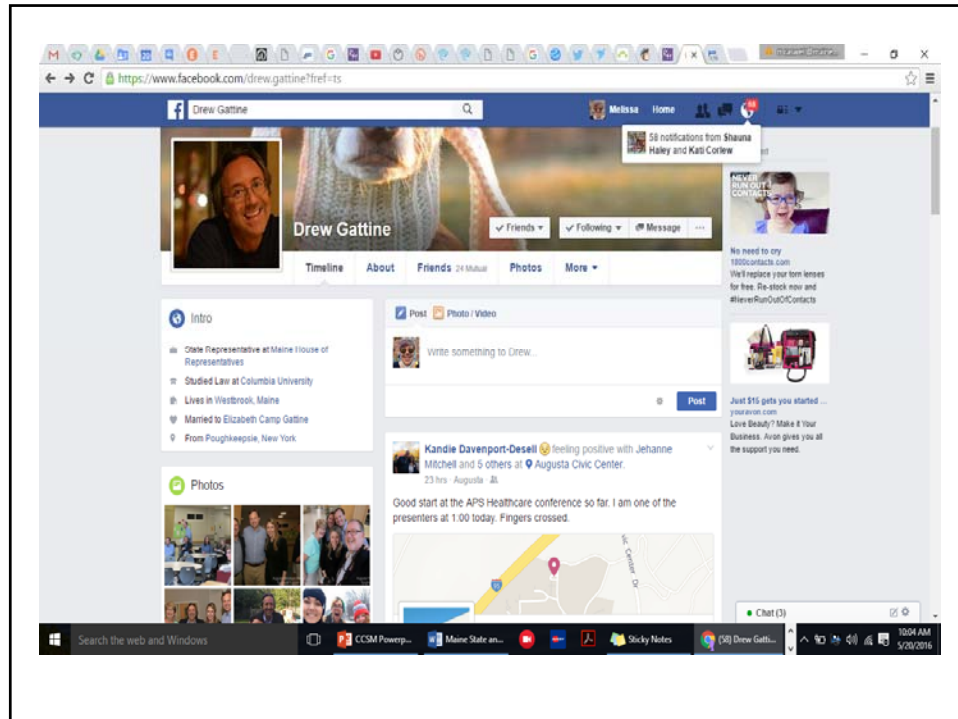


Used to keep up-to-date on what is happening with local, state and national legislation.

### **Consumer Council System of Maine**

<https://www.facebook.com/maineccsm/>





## Large Group Discussion

1. What would healthy collaboration look like?
2. What could be some roadblocks?
3. What are your next steps to building collaborations?



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