Newport Mental Health

CONSUMER ADVISORY COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT | FY2026

Purpose

The Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) ensures that individuals with lived experience, family members, and caregivers help shape Newport Mental Health services, policies, and priorities. Consistent with Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic requirements, the CAC meets monthly to provide feedback to leadership, identify community needs, and advocate for improved access and care delivery.

Year in Review

During FY2026, the CAC expanded participation, strengthened governance, and improved communication among consumers, caregivers, and Newport Mental Health leadership. The Council approved formal bylaws, enhanced member orientation, and established more consistent processes for agendas, minutes, and follow-up communication.

Key Accomplishment

A major achievement was the development and implementation of a caregiver welcome packet and related care-navigation tools. CAC members provided practical feedback to help families understand services, communicate with treatment teams, and navigate complex behavioral health systems.

Consumer and Family Priorities

- Improve communication among providers, consumers, caregivers, and families.
- Strengthen care coordination during crises, transitions, and situations involving releases of information.
- Expand access to behavioral health services and awareness of available supports, including crisis services.
- Address shortages of supportive and affordable housing for people living with mental illness.
- Increase feedback opportunities through surveys, focus groups, and ongoing engagement.
- Advance community education and advocacy on behavioral health needs and public policy.

Impact on Organizational Improvement

CAC feedback informed discussions about service navigation, crisis response, medication support, caregiver engagement, family communication, and quality improvement. Recommendations were shared with agency leadership and incorporated into ongoing planning. The Council also strengthened connections with statewide CCBHC advisory groups so local experiences could contribute to broader system improvement.

Looking Ahead

In FY2027, the CAC will focus on diversification of membership and outreach, subcommittees addressing housing, advocacy, and consumer feedback, educational opportunities, and practical tools that improve care navigation and access. The Council remains committed to ensuring that lived experience informs Newport Mental Health programs, policies, and strategic direction.

Thank you to the consumers, family members, caregivers, and community partners who shared their experiences and perspectives throughout the year.