

**Next Meeting with
Consumers
December 11, 2003
DWCCMHA at
Noon—6th Floor**

**Bulletin 13...November 26, 2003
Detroit-Wayne County
Community Mental Health Agency
640 Temple
Detroit, MI 48201**

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Ted Chipps, Editor

Persons Points of View



--An E-Mail Bulletin from Customer Services reflecting what Consumers are doing and saying as well as news from the Agency

Overcoming Obstacles to Medical Care

How A Simple Card May Save Lives

“Imagine you are in a foreign country and you suddenly collapse from pain in your chest,” said Shenlin Chen, Executive Director of the Association of Chinese Americans. “They bring you to the hospital and they keep talking louder and louder to you but you don’t know what they are saying. The pain gets worse but they don’t help you. They seem to be screaming. You pass out.”

The majority of the more than 700 members of the Association of Chinese Americans Drop-In Outreach Center living in the



Staff and volunteers of the Association of Chinese Americans Drop-In Outreach Center translate Chinese verbal responses from their members into written English. Standing (L to R): Tracy Lin, Program Coordinator; Shenlin Chen, Executive Director, and Viota Poon, Fiscal Officer and Program Coordinator. Seated: Gabriel Chan, Program Developer.

Detroit Metropolitan area do not speak or write English. They cannot fill out simple admittance forms for Hospital and / or Emergency Room Services, or doctor's offices. This prevents many of them from getting medical care.

Finding An Answer

A Chinese-American Person presented this potential crisis situation to Dr. Eunice Banks, Director of Customer Services, during a Consumer meeting held at the Association.

Dr. Banks and Shenlin found a solution. They would design a card both in English and Chinese. It would contain information that a hospital emergency room or private doctor would find useful. Chinese Americans with Limited English Proficiency could carry it with them at all times.

Dr. Banks and Shenlin wanted to find support for the project in the medical community. They decided to consult a local hospital for advice on what information they would need for the card.



The Drop-in Center gives Persons a chance to meet and socialize. Playing Mahjong, (L to R) Xiao Xun Chen, Mei Yun Li, Ju Su Li, Yung Chen Li.

The hospital staff was eager to help. Together, they chose name, address, phone number, date of birth, contact person and language as the information required for the card.

Next, the Association rallied volunteers to launch this ambitious program. The challenge is to educate members of the Drop-In Center and the Chinese community to the value and peace of mind that the bilingual card can bring them.

“A core of five to ten volunteers has been assembled to visit members in their

own homes,” said Shenlin. “During the first year, our goal is to reach a hundred Persons who can only speak Chinese.”

“The Drop-In Center has embraced the role as a channel between Chinese-Americans and medical care providers,” she noted. Besides this project, the Association provides Educational (including English classes), Preventative Health Care, Social Services, Cultural, and Leisure Programs. The Drop-In / Outreach Center is located at 420 Peterboro, Detroit, MI 48201.