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September 27, 2010

Dear Colleagues:

For the past few years through the *Share the Care* initiative, we have been working to support the Area Agencies on Aging and the county mental health agencies to improve collaboration at the local level to better serve older adults with behavioral health needs. We feel that creating partnerships among agencies, both at the state and local levels, will result in better services to older adults, while maximizing available resources.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between agencies is an important component of this partnership. It represents a written, mutual agreement of how cross-systems services are developed and implemented in your area. In response to requests from counties for continuing technical assistance in developing MOU's, we partnered with the University of Pennsylvania to develop the enclosed MOU Writing Guide. The guide was piloted in two counties, and we are hopeful that it will help you to strengthen your current MOU. The MOU Writing Guide is also available in electronic format on the PA Department of Aging website ([www.aging.state.pa.us](http://www.aging.state.pa.us)) in the [Professionals and Providers](#) section and on [www.parecovery.org](http://www.parecovery.org) in the Resources, [Newsletters/Publications](#) section. Should you have any questions or comments about the writing guide, please direct them to Ginny Mastrine, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, at [vmastrine@state.pa.us](mailto:vmastrine@state.pa.us) or to Patty Clark, Office of Long Term Living, at [patrclark@state.pa.us](mailto:patrclark@state.pa.us).

We are excited by the innovation that your collaboration promises, and we have seen both new and improved partnerships at the local level as a result of your hard work. Thank you for all that you do in service to older Pennsylvanians with behavioral health needs.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Sherry H. Snyder in black ink.

Sherry H. Snyder

Handwritten signature of Jennifer Burnett in black ink.

Jennifer Burnett

Enclosure