



Southwest Florida Coalition for Optimal Behavioral Health and Aging

Meetings are held the 2nd Friday of each "odd" month from 10am-11:30am
Ruth Cooper Center of Lee Mental Health, Inc.
2789 Ortiz Avenue, Building F Conference Room
Fort Myers, Florida 33905
Co-Chairs
Barbara Kilbride 239/218-4615 and Karla Morgan: 239/336-6912

Mission:

Work to improve the availability and quality of behavioral health and substance abuse services for Southwest Florida's older adults and their families through networking among service providers to (a) improve communication, understanding and coordination of services; (b) promote opportunities for cross-training; (c) increase public awareness and (d) expand legislative advocacy efforts. (Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee Counties)

Affiliates:

The Southwest Florida Coalition for Optimal Behavioral Health and Aging is comprised of advocates and key stakeholder organizations from the following entities willing to commit time, special talents and resources to carry out the mission and priorities of the coalition:

- Providers of mental health and substance abuse/addiction services
- Providers of human services through the aging network and family service agencies
- Providers of health care services (hospitals, home health agencies, primary care centers)
- Providers of information and assistance (211 and other telephone help lines)
- Public safety officials and first responders (law enforcement and EMS)
- Voluntary health organizations that serve people with dementia type illnesses, Parkinson's disease and Huntington's disease
- Primary and secondary consumers (older adults and their family members)
- Consumer advocacy organizations
- Representatives from state government responsible for planning, policy and program development (AHCA, APD, DCF, DOEA/CARES)
- State universities (Florida Gulf Coast University and the University of South Florida)
- 24-hour care facilities (assisted living facilities and nursing homes)

2009 Priorities

- Increase service providers' skills by identifying and promoting training opportunities on topics pertaining to behavioral health and cognitive issues that may affect older adults, their families and other members of informal support networks.
- Work with the Florida Coalition for Optimal Mental Health and Aging and other member regional coalitions to support legislative action that may result in positive system changes.