



Dear Colleagues:

I am very pleased to send you the first 2007 edition of *Constella Leads*, the e-newsletter of [Constella Group's](#) Mental Health and Substance Use Program.

This edition focuses on pandemic influenza planning and introduces the new Advisory Group for Constella's Mental Health and Substance Use Program. It also highlights our participation in the recent national meeting of the American Public Health Association.

If you'd like to submit topic ideas for future editions, please feel free to send me an e-mail at [rmanderscheid@constellagroup.com](mailto:rmanderscheid@constellagroup.com)

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## Have You Planned for Pandemic Influenza?

In a highly pathogenic pandemic, *community and personal survival will very likely depend upon whether the local Pandemic Plans actually work.* There will be little time to make major adjustments to the plans once the pandemic begins. Therefore, it is essential to work with states now to assist them in their efforts to further develop their plans and to aid in developing and enhancing local plans. It is also essential to provide related technical assistance to ensure that the plans and the related implementation steps are as effective as possible when they are actually needed.

All 50 United States, the District of Columbia, and the territories of Guam and Palau have each published pandemic influenza plans on the Federal pandemic influenza preparedness site, <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>. Most plans were prepared by State departments of public health, and were last updated between Spring 2005 and August 2006 (approximately half are labeled "draft"). They vary in length from 11 pages to over 400, and while a longer plan is not necessarily a better plan, the variability in the length is reflective of similar variability in the content and depth.

Constella Group's Mental Health and Substance Abuse Program team reviewed a sampling of these plans last year to see what provisions, if any, are being considered in the area of mental health. In August 2006, we compiled our observations into a white paper titled, "Assisting States to Plan for Pandemic Influenza." The paper, which also incorporates other preparedness ideas based on Constella's areas of expertise, is an excellent starting place for anyone considering creating—or revising—a plan to help state-level agencies plan for an outbreak of pandemic influenza.

**For a copy of this paper, please contact [Ron Manderscheid](#) at 240-514-2607.**

## Advisory Group Meets for the First Time

The Advisory Group to Constella's Mental Health and Substance Use Program held its inaugural meeting by teleconference on January 24. The group's members include:

### Potential Impact of Highly Pathogenic Pandemic Influenza

- More deaths than the terrorist attacks of September 11th
- Greater economic losses than Hurricane Katrina
- 1% of the US population could die
- 10% could become severely ill
- Effects will be protracted
- Several waves of infections over a several month period
- Schools will close
- Business will be greatly curtailed

- Sue Bergeson, President of the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance;
- Mady Chalk, Senior Consultant on Policy and Quality Measures, Treatment Research Institute at the University of Pennsylvania;
- Allen Daniels, Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Cincinnati;
- Henry Harbin, Private Consultant and Member of the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health;
- Ronald Kessler, Professor in the Department of Health Care Policy at Harvard University; and
- Rhonda Robinson Beale, Vice President for Clinical Affairs at United Behavioral Healthcare.

The Advisory Group will meet on a quarterly basis to advise the Program on future directions and to identify projects that are needed in the mental health and substance use fields.

**For more information on the group's discussion, or to suggest topics for consideration, please contact [Ron Manderscheid](#) at 240-514-2607.**

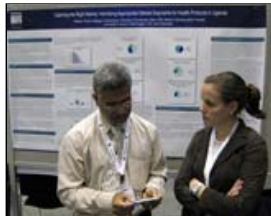
## ***Public Health and Human Rights***

When Constella learned that the theme of this year's American Public Health Association (APHA) Conference was "Public Health and Human Rights," it was a pretty safe bet that we would vie for a voice at this event — and have a voice we did. With 33 scientific papers, 23 presentations, and a 200 square-foot exhibit booth, Constella's Health Sciences and International Development staffs made quite an impact.



The APHA Annual Meeting & Exposition is the oldest and largest gathering of public health professionals in the world, attracting more than 13,000 national and international physicians, administrators, nurses, educators, researchers, epidemiologists, and health specialists.

Constella's presentations covered a wide range of public health topics including maternal and child health, population family planning and reproductive health, mental health, occupational health and safety, public health education and health promotion, international health and others – areas that are core competencies for our Health Sciences and International Development employees. The presentations had a great turnout and generated a number of follow-up conversations both in and outside of the exhibit hall.



The majority of the presentations Constella developed or co-authored highlight client projects in which we're currently involved. Examples include the [AFFORD Project](#) – a USAID-funded program Constella is co-implementing to offer affordable consumer healthcare products in Uganda – and the [Choose Respect initiative](#) - an award-winning promotional campaign Constella developed and launched for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help prevent intimate partner violence among adolescents. The [USAID | Health Policy Initiative](#) was also the basis of several presentations.

**To view a list of our presentations, visit [our APHA microsite](#).**

## ***New Publications***

Please see two new commentaries published in **Behavioral Healthcare**: [Saving Lives and Restoring Hope](#) (September 2006) and [Making Depression a National Priority](#) (November 2006).

**To discuss these commentaries, please contact [Ron Manderscheid](#) at 240-514-2607.**

## ***For More Information***

For more information on any of the items discussed in this edition or for further information on Constella's Mental Health and Substance Use Program in general, please contact me at:

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#### **About Constella Group**

Constella Group, LLC, is a leading provider of professional health services worldwide with more than 1,200 employees in 43 countries. Through our work in health sciences, international development, and pharmaceutical product development, we help public-sector, commercial, and nonprofit clients identify and address critical issues affecting human health.

In business for more than 30 years, we remain committed to our vision of *enhancing human health around the world, every day*. Whether communicating health prevention messages to the public, creating a social marketing program in family planning for a developing country, or helping a pharmaceutical client build relationships with regulatory authorities and manage its clinical trials, we are passionate about creating a healthier world, free of disease. We apply our resources, skills, and knowledge in the areas of research, communications and social marketing, social advocacy, training, policy development, program support, program evaluation, strategic consulting, technology, regulatory affairs, and clinical trials management.

Headquartered in Durham, NC, Constella has corporate offices in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and India, as well as project offices in countries throughout the world.

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