

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Mental Health
Elizabeth Childs, MD, Commissioner**

April 27, 2005

As a critical part of the Department's commitment to reducing the use of seclusion and restraint, I am pleased to announce that we will be hosting a two-day conference entitled Creating Violence Free and Coercion Free Mental Health Treatment Environments for the Reduction of Seclusion and Restraint on July 14 and 15, 2005. This two-day training will be presented in Massachusetts by the National Executive Training Institute and is funded through the SAMHSA grant awarded to the Department.

It is essential that the Area Director, Area Medical Director and a leadership team from each adult inpatient facility attend this training. The focus will be on the essential role of leadership in reducing seclusion and restraint, and at the end of the training each facility will be charged with developing a strategic plan for restraint reduction which will incorporate strategies learned at the training.

I am asking Area Directors to facilitate the attendance of a leadership team from each adult inpatient facility in their Area. We are anticipating that each leadership team will include up to six (6) individuals. As the training is directed towards senior leadership, membership must include the facility's Chief Operating Officer, Medical Director, Director of Nursing and individual responsible for staff training. Other leaders whom I would recommend including are the Director of Quality Management and the facility's Human Rights Officer. Once the facility team members have been identified, please forward the names and a team contact person to the Division of Clinical and Professional Services in Central Office.

I appreciate your effort to prioritize this training and reiterate the importance of this initiative to the Department. I am convinced that the strategies we learn will significantly improve the quality of care we can provide in our inpatient facilities and greatly improve the safety of our patients and staff. I look forward to seeing you and your teams on July 14 and 15.