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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 28, 2014

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### **PEACE, LOVE and HOPE Kicks Off Cumberland/Perry Counties Mental Health Awareness Month Activities for May**

**Cumberland County, PA** - PEACE, LOVE and HOPE are the theme for this year's Mental Health Month celebration. These three words are critical in the recovery journey. Peace refers to knowing yourself, having basic needs met, and having access to necessary treatment and supports. Relationships are about LOVE--being appreciated for who you are, and having friends, family, and other important people to share in your life. HOPE is the knowledge that you can move forward with your life having aspirations and goals.

Mental Health Month activities kick off with the Mental Health Awareness Walk on May 1st. This is the ninth year for the walk that works to promote awareness of mental health and over 160 people have registered to participate. Tee shirts will be worn by walk participants to show that the community is united against stigma surrounding mental illness. The stigma associated with mental illness is a major barrier to individuals seeking services when dealing with a mental illness. The walk will begin at 10:00 AM from Letort Park in Carlisle, PA to the Old Courthouse in Carlisle where speakers will share their stories. The walkers will then return to Letort Park for lunch.

"Putting the 'YOU' in CommUnity--Our Recovery Journey" is the theme for the recovery conference which will be held on May 12th at the Radisson Harrisburg. This is a conference sponsored in collaboration with the Dauphin County Community Support Program. On Saturday, May 24th, in partnership with Dauphin County Community Support Program, the Mental Health Association of the Capital Region, National Alliance on Mental Illness, PA, Cumberland and Perry Counties, and the Cumberland/Perry Counties and Dauphin County Mental Health/ID Offices, a Mental Health Awareness Night at the Harrisburg Senator's game will occur. This provides an excellent opportunity for the community to learn more about mental illness while participating in a fun evening. A Community Concert, Picnic and Resource Fair draw the activities to a close. This will be held on May 31st at Little Buffalo State Park in Newport, PA. This event begins at 11:00 AM and is free and open to the public.

Mental Health Awareness Month events are planned and carried out by the Cumberland/Perry Community Support Program (CSP) which is comprised of individuals living with mental illness, family members, providers of services, County mental health staff, and other interested stakeholders who work together as equal partners to offer hope and assurance that individuals with a serious mental illness will enjoy the highest possible quality of life. For additional information about the above events or to learn more about CSP, please contact the CSP office at (717) 254-6060 or visit the CSP website at for a more detailed calendar of events [http://www.espcp.org/mental\\_health\\_month.html](http://www.espcp.org/mental_health_month.html).

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