

B6 Metro

THE BOSTON GLOBE

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Noncrisis line lends a wise, sympathetic ear for troubled callers

By Carey Goldberg
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"Peer warm line. This is David. How can I help?"

Pause.

"It sounds like you're really upset."

David Wilson, a longtime veteran-to-veteran counselor, has tallied many a man through many a hard time, but this conversation on Monday was a milestone. It was his maiden call as part of a new Boston institution: The city's first help line for mentally ill callers that is staffed entirely by people who have personal experience with major psychiatric illness.

The warm line — which is similar to a suicide hot line except that callers do not have to be in crisis — has just gotten underway three afternoons a week at 1-877-PEERLINE (877-733-7563). "Our goal is to talk through

problems before they become a crisis situation, thereby eliminating the need for hospitalization," said Amy Dwyer, the warm line coordinator. "If you let things build and build, they become overwhelming."

Wilson attempted to reassure his first caller, who wanted to know how to find a psychiatrist. "I've been in positions where I don't know whether I'm coming or going, and sometimes it's good to just talk to somebody," he told him. "Don't sit there and beat yourself up about it. The fact you're calling is the first step. That means you want to help yourself. Congratulations!"

More than three dozen such peer-run call-in services have been launched around the country and in Canada in recent years, including several others in Massachusetts. Officials in New York City are exploring the possi-

bility of starting one there.


"They seem to be spreading all over the place," said Jody Silver, director of consumer affairs for the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. "Especially during this fiscally challenging time we're all going through, this would be a cost-savings approach because it would cut down on expensive crisis services."

The bad economic times are prompting reports from around the country that the numbers of calls to mental health hot lines are increasing.

At Samaritans Inc., with offices in Boston and Framingham, round-the-clock volunteers who take more than 100,000 calls per year have seen a notable increase of late in calls from people with economic concerns, executive director Roberta Hurtig said.

"Our new warm line" is an

PEER ASSISTANCE
Howard Trachtman, who helped launch the line, said those working the phones tend to be 'very sensitive.'



other good thing," Hurtig said. "We're so lucky living in Greater Boston, in that there's a variety of services that are available, and we know the need is great."

The warm line, based at Boston Medical Center, is just across the hall from the office of Boston's psychiatric emergency team for people on public health insurance. Calls are now beginning to flow back and forth across the hall.

The emergency team sends two or three overnight calls per eight-hour shift over to the warm line, staffers say. And any warm

line caller who sounds imminently suicidal is sent across the hall to the emergency clinicians.

The warm line's proximity to emergency services makes it unusual, but chance was the peer helper through many similar experiences. Those working the

phones tend to be "very compassionate, very sensitive, because we've been damaged, we've been traumatized... and we've been very sick, and that's changed our view," he said.

Funded by the state Department of Mental Health, the warm line is operating on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Organizers hope to expand those hours.

Staff members say their main aim is not to diagnose or treat, but simply to listen and reflect back what callers say, bringing in their own experience when relevant. Much as Wilson did as he was wrapping up his first call.

"I've been where you are, man, and it works out; it just does," he said. "But you've got to do the legwork, OK, my friend?"

Carey Goldberg can be reached at goldberg@boston.com

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NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

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D.P.U. 08-09-A
February 2, 2009

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CONTRACT NO. 100-257-C1A
FOR
RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CRAGER DAM BRIDGE -
IN THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

LOCATION: Boston & Cambridge

Sealed proposals submitted a form furnished by the Department and not for enclosed plan 1115 on or before 3:00 PM on the date specified above, and will be opened in the presence of interested parties.

Individual sets of contract documents, which include plans, specifications, and conditions of contract, will be available for inspection at the Department's office at 100 South Street, Boston, MA 02111, from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM on the dates specified above. A fee of \$50.00 must be paid at the time of inspection. The fee is non-refundable and will be applied toward the purchase of contract documents. Contract documents may be purchased from the Department at a price not to exceed \$1,000.00 per set.

A pre-qualification conference for prospective bidders will be held on the date and at the location specified above.

The project consists of the reconstruction of the Crager Dam Bridge, including the reconstruction of the bridge deck, approach ramps, and abutments. The project also includes the installation of new lighting and traffic signals. The estimated project cost is \$30,000,000.

The work is to be accomplished by June 30, 2012. The project is to be completed in three phases. The first phase is the reconstruction of the bridge deck. The second phase is the reconstruction of the approach ramps. The third phase is the installation of new lighting and traffic signals.

The proposed contract includes partial payment of 10% of the bid price for the first phase of work.

The applicable local minority workforce utilization percentage is 4.50%.

Each bid must be accompanied by a bid deposit in the form of a bid bond, cash, certified check, or a money order payable to the order of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The bid deposit must be in the amount of 1% of the bid price, but not less than \$50,000.00.

With Brian Connors, Director of Construction and Recreation
Department of Conservation and Recreation
100 South Street, Room 600
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MORTGAGEE'S NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by **APRIL MARY DEWITT** to **WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.** as mortgagee, the undersigned, **WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.**, as mortgagee, hereby gives notice that the said mortgage is in default and that the undersigned is exercising its power of sale under the said mortgage. The sale will be held on **February 24, 2009** at **10:00 AM** at the **Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.** located at **100 South Street, Boston, MA 02111**. The property to be sold is located at **100 South Street, Boston, MA 02111**. The undersigned is offering the property for sale on a "cash or best offer" basis. The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any offer and to sell the property for less than the bid price. The undersigned is offering the property for sale on a "cash or best offer" basis. The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any offer and to sell the property for less than the bid price.

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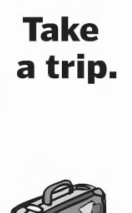
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

11-3 COMM 42 - Rules for Community Health Centers

The proposed amendments increase community health center payments for the period of October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009. The amendments also increase the maximum percentage of the total population that a health center can serve. The amendments also increase the maximum percentage of the total population that a health center can serve. The amendments also increase the maximum percentage of the total population that a health center can serve.



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