



**BIRMINGHAM GROUP
Health Services, Inc.**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 2, 2010

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Groundbreaking Mental Health First Aid Training Program Offered Free of Charge in Valley

Ansonia, CT (May 2010) – Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc. (BGHS) announced today plans to offer a groundbreaking, Mental Health First Aid USA (MHFA) training program, free of charge, to members of the Valley community. MHFA is an international public education program that helps the public identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders.

Mental Health First Aid USA is an international program that is managed, operated, and disseminated by the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare. The program is offered in the form of an interactive 12-hour course that presents an overview of mental illness and substance use disorders in the U.S. and introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, builds understanding of their impact, and overviews common treatments. “Those who take the 12-hour course to certify as Mental Health First Aiders learn a 5-step action plan encompassing the skills, resources and knowledge to help an individual in crisis connect with appropriate professional, peer, social, and self-help care,” said Pamela Mautte, Director of The Valley Substance Abuse Action Council (a program of BGHS) and certified MHFA trainer. “Birmingham Group Health Services is very excited to bring this critical training to the Valley and further enhance efforts to assist those at risk in our community.”

The Mental Health First Aid USA course can benefit a variety of audiences and key professions, including hospitals, employers, business leaders, faith communities, school personnel, state police and corrections staff, nursing homes, mental health authorities, state policymakers, young people, families and the general public. **BGHS plans to offer the MHFA training, free of charge, on three consecutive dates in June: June 3, June 10, and June 17, from 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., at Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc., Ansonia, CT.** To register, or to learn more, contact Pamela Mautte at (203) 736-8566.

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