



Clubhouse International Presents First-Ever USA National Clubhouse Conference

Silver Spring MD, November 12, 2014 – Clubhouse International (www.clubhouse-intl.org), a non-profit/non-governmental organization coordinating a global network of Clubhouse Communities for people living with [mental illness](#), today opened the very first *USA National Clubhouse Conference*, which is being held on November 12-14, 2014 in Silver Spring, Maryland, near the nation's capital.

Over 260 participants from approximately 100 Clubhouses from across America are expected to attend the conference, which is presented by Clubhouse International in response to the growing demand from US Clubhouses to create a national voice for the Clubhouse model – one of the most cost-effective solutions for people living with serious mental illness.

- Clubhouses are membership organizations that provide opportunities for their members to regain an often lost sense of hope, self-worth and confidence through shared work, employment, education, new friendships and help with needed social services.
- The Clubhouse model works everywhere. It is an internationally recognized model (included in SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-Based Practices) that delivers some of the most cost-efficient and effective mental illness recovery and rehabilitation services available.
- Today, there are over 300 Clubhouses in 33 countries providing a bridge to recovery for over 100,000 people each year.

The conference will focus on topics and issues of concern to US Clubhouses, including developing sustainable funding solutions; national and state legislative advocacy and messaging for [mental health](#); forming and maintaining effective Clubhouse boards; and delivering on Clubhouse basics – including maintaining adherence to the International Standards for Clubhouse Programs.TM

The program includes a panel of distinguished speakers from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS); the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) national office; and the American Psychiatric Association to discuss Medicaid funding for Clubhouse services; legislative advocacy and partnering opportunities with local NAMI affiliates; and relationships with the psychiatric and medical communities. Meetings with various congressional representatives and senators are also planned.

Reflecting on the conference opening, Joel D. Corcoran, Executive Director of Clubhouse International said, *“This inaugural USA National Clubhouse Conference is the first of what we hope will be many opportunities for US Clubhouses to work together to promote meaningful solutions for people suffering from mental illness – which affects one in four people in the United States – more than cancer, diabetes or heart disease. It offers exciting and inspiring learning opportunities about changing the world of mental health, and a compelling forum for the exchange of information and ideas of interest to new and veteran Clubhouses, and others who are interested in our work.”*

Clubhouse International was founded in 1994, and is a co-recipient (together with Fountain House, the very first Clubhouse) of the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize of \$1.5 million. The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation presents the annual award, the world's largest humanitarian prize, to an organization that is doing extraordinary work to alleviate human suffering. The 2014 USA National Conference follows on the heels of other Clubhouse conferences held recently in Europe, Asia, Canada and Australia.

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