The Iowa Mental Health Planning and Advisory Council
is seeking applications for membership:

The Mental Health Planning Council (MHPC) is an advisory body to the State Mental Health Authority within the Iowa Department of Human Services. The activities of the Council are intended to help support the creation and expansion of comprehensive, community-based systems of care for adults with serious mental illness and children with serious emotional disturbance in Iowa.

The key duties of the Council are:
1. To review the State Mental Health Block Grant Plan and make recommendations to DHS.
2. To advocate for adults with a serious mental illness, children with a serious emotional disturbance, and other individuals with mental illnesses.
3. To monitor, review, and evaluate, not less than once each year, the allocation and adequacy of mental health services within the State.

Membership requires active involvement and a commitment of time. The full Council meets six to seven times a year, usually in the Des Moines area, and members also participate in committee and workgroup activities between meetings to carry out the work of the Council. Meeting stipends and travel expense reimbursements are available to help support the costs of participation. Regular participation in meetings is an important function of Council membership.

Representation on the Council is specified by federal regulations and includes:
- Adults in recovery (to include adults with serious mental illness who are receiving, or have received, mental health services)
- Parents, guardians, or primary caretakers of a child (under age 18) with serious emotional disturbance
- Family members of adults in recovery (to include family members of adults with serious mental illness)
- Persons designated to represent key State agencies
- Representatives of public or private agencies concerned with the planning or operation of mental health services in Iowa
- Other persons interested in advocating for adults or children with mental health concerns

A term of membership is three years. When vacancies occur, new members are selected from available applications, with attention to the gender, age, cultural, ethnic, geographic, and other diversity-related aspects of Iowa’s population. Applications for any of the membership categories are accepted at any time and all applications will be retained and reviewed whenever openings for new members become available. Individuals may qualify for membership in more than one category.

Currently, the Council is seeking applications to fill vacancies for two parents, guardians, or primary caretakers of children with serious emotional disturbance, and one adult in recovery (to include adults with serious mental illness who are receiving, or have received, mental health services).

If you would like more information or an application form, please contact Connie Fanselow, cfansel@dhs.state.ia.us or 515-725-0131, at the Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Disability Services.