



Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare

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Behavioral Health Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes February 4, 2009

Advisory Members Present:

Ann Ebsen, Chair
Laura Linhart
Brian Paulsen
Mike Smith
Duane Wilcox

Advisory Members Absent:

Mary Angus

HHS Staff Present: None

Region 6 Staff Present: Patti Jurjevich, Taren Petersen

Recorder: Amy Lett

1. Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions

Ann Ebsen called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes for December 3, 2008

Duane Wilcox made a motion to approve the Behavioral Health Advisory Committee (BHAC) meeting minutes from 12/3/08; Laura Linhart seconded the motion. Approval of the minutes passed upon voice vote.

3. Approval of Agenda

Laura Linhart made a motion to approve the BHAC Agenda for 2/4/09. Brian Paulsen seconded the motion. Approval of the agenda passed upon voice vote.

4. Election of BHAC Officers for 2009

a. Report from Nominating Committee

Mike Smith said they had no nominations prior to the meeting so today nominations would have to come from the floor.

Duane Wilcox nominated Ann Ebsen as Chairperson for a second term. Mike Smith seconded the motion.

Mike Smith nominated Laura Linhart as Vice-Chairperson for a second term. Duane Wilcox seconded the motion.

Laura Linhart moved to close the nominations. Duane Wilcox seconded the motion.

b. Election of Officers

Approval to elect Ann Ebsen as Chairperson and Laura Linhart as Vice-Chairperson passed unanimously upon voice vote.

5. Alegent's Behavioral Health Access Line – Steve Spelic

Taren Petersen stated that BHAC members had many questions at the last meeting about the new behavioral health access line being manned by Alegent. Steve Spelic of Alegent came to today's meeting to answer questions.

Mr. Spelic advised the crisis line that was formerly manned by members of The Spring Center staff was transferred to the Lasting Hope Recovery Center's (LHRC's) assessment center.

Alegent's ultimate goal is to also transfer the 717-Hope line to LHRC by this March/April. 717-Hope is still answered by emergency psychiatric nurses at Immanuel. When calling the 717-Hope line there are currently 4 options given. They are as follows:

- Option 1 – Make an appointment
- Option 2 – Psychiatric Consultation
- Option 3 – General Information
- Option 4 – Crisis/Emergency

Ann Ebsen asked about the crisis assessment line's capability to do well checks. Mr. Spelic advises they do have Caller ID but there are exceptions where that does not work. There are people who have their number "blocked" (which is happening more frequently) so their number is marked private and we do not then have a number. The other occasion is if a person calls another number first and then is transferred to us, (say they call the main hospital switchboard) we do not then have their number. It is at these times that it is up to the skills of the professional staff to get that information.

Mr. Spelic said the types of calls varies greatly but people manning the phone lines could advise callers to go to the Emergency Room (ER) or to see their own General Practitioner; Alegent staff members have an electronic database from which they can make proper referrals for callers in crisis.

Currently the call volume is averaging 2500 calls every month.

Current line at LHRC is a no-option system.

Mr. Spelic said he has not heard of any complaints or problems regarding people not being able to get through or delayed because the phone lines were too busy.

Mr. Spelic said that two calls can be taken at the same time. If a third person were to call in, they would be asked to leave a message and someone would call them back as soon as possible.

Ms. Ebsen asked if LHRC has more capability to make appointments. Mr. Spelic said no. Staff is being moved from Immanuel's facility to LHRC in March/April – that is why they are opting to transfer the 717-Hope line to LHRC.

Someone asked about how the phone number(s) are marketed to the public, in particular those who have not had to use the service before. Mr. Spelic said that the number is in the phone book and all Alegent information is in the 211 database (including the 717-Hope line). Mr. Spelic also stated that there is a meeting coming up with Alegent's marketing staff to look at making the community more aware of LHRC. So far Alegent has had feedback from law enforcement that they really like LHRC.

Immanuel is still averaging about 13 – 15 assessments/day in their ER. These people are made up of walk-ins, Emergency Protective Custodies (EPCs) and family members bringing them in. Alegent has been able to divert 53 – 55% of the people assessed. So far there has not been a decrease in the number of EPCs at Immanuel.

County attorneys are now being called if staff sees a person coming into the ER and who looks to be a danger to themselves or others; this is utilizing law enforcement less.

Ann Ebsen said she had a client who needed a crisis line to call during the time The Spring Center was closing and calls were being taken over by LHRC. The client told Ann that he received excellent information and was treated very well by the staff at LHRC who took the call.

Discussion about diversions and the mobile crisis teams was held: Taren Petersen noted that the Assessment, Support and Prevention Team (ASAP), Sarpy County's mobile crisis response team, was able to divert 92% of the people they met with in Sarpy County December 2008. This program is currently only for Sarpy County residents; Region 6 is considering putting together a mobile crisis team for Douglas County.

Mike Smith said that Sarpy County is not seeing a trend in the numbers going down in Sarpy County for EPC and Board of Mental Health (BOMH) despite the efforts of the ASAP team. It was discussed that the number of job layoffs in our area could be contributing to the numbers not decreasing despite the different programs being implemented such as the ASAP team.

Duane Wilcox asked how a family who has never called for any type of behavioral health service would know to call LHRC.

Steve Spelic said that all Alegent information is in the phonebook and in the 211 database including the 717-Hope line.

Ann Ebsen asked if 911 refers caller to either the 717-Hope or the assessment line at LHRC. Mr. Spelic said he was not sure; different operators may handle calls differently. Taren Petersen said the State of Nebraska created a crisis line number specifically for farmers in rural counties; Ms. Petersen will get Mr. Spelic more information on this so Mr. Spelic can learn more about this and in order to get these two services aware of each other.

Brian Paulsen said he is not aware if the Cass County Sheriff's department's dispatching office is aware of the LHRC crisis line. It was discussed that Mr. Spelic should do some training in that area about the LHRC facility and its capabilities.

Mr. Spelic noted that several pieces of legislation have been introduced to law makers this session; two of them are specifically about creating statewide or regional access telephone systems.

6. Update on By-laws – Ann Ebsen/Mike Smith

Included in the packets was a revised set of by-laws for the Behavioral Health Advisory Committee (BHAC). Revisions and edits of these by-laws had been discussed at previous BHAC meetings and members were asked to review the final copy prior to coming to today's meeting.

Laura Linhart made a motion to approve the revised by-laws. Brian Paulsen seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken and the revised by-laws were unanimously approved.

7. Potential Change in Meeting Date – Ann Ebsen

Ann Ebsen stated that Stan Carlson and Donna Mahlendorf have resigned from the Behavioral Health Advisory Committee. There was brief discussion about altering start times of the meeting but in the end it was decided to leave the meeting time to begin at 9:00 a.m. Meetings will continue to be held the first Wednesday of the month. Ms. Ebsen advised we could revisit this item once we get new members on the committee.

SIDENOTE:

Discussion was had about having a strategy to find new BHAC members. Patti Jurjevich said she will give a schedule to potential members. Ms. Jurjevich will also speak to Mary Angus, Region 6 Governing Board members and Region 6 county board members. Duane Wilcox said he will contact Donna Mahlendorf about a potential member for Washington County that she had suggested.

Laura Linhart suggested that ads be placed in the smaller newspapers of the local communities served by Region 6.

Ms. Jurjevich said we will also place an ad in the Omaha World-Herald and post a notice on the Region 6 website, www.regionsex.com.

8. Suggestions for Future Presentations/Speakers – Patti Jurjevich

Patti Jurjevich stated that recently we have had Network Providers come to BHAC meetings to discuss their Region 6 sponsored programs and we have also had representatives from other behavioral health organizations discuss their role in the Region 6 community. Ms. Jurjevich asked BHAC members if they have any requests for more information, presenters, speakers and/or anything else they would like to learn about or be made aware of.

Laura Linhart asked if we could request someone from the Department of Health and Human Services to come and discuss the current status of Nebraska's health system. Ms. Jurjevich said she will make that request and see who we can get to come to a meeting. Ms. Ebsen asked about the service providers for the homeless in our area. Ms. Petersen said she thinks a good candidate to discuss this would be a representative from the Project for the Assistance in the Transition from Homelessness (PATH) program. Ms. Ebsen said that BHAC members would be interested to learn more about anything that would help educate members and make them aware of issues affecting Region 6.

9. 2009 Legislation – Patti Jurjevich

Ms. Ebsen asked for a chart showing the bills introduced into legislation for the 2009 session. Ms. Jurjevich said she could email Ms. Ebsen this information.

The lists that BHAC members received in their packets today are those bills that are most relevant to behavioral health in our area.

Included in the above mentioned list are LB 275 and LB 346 (these are a similar concept with a different way of going about funding it) – they are trying to create a crisis line for the State of Nebraska. The governor has identified \$5 million that would support this however Region 6 has concerns about where these funds are coming from – there have been rumors that part of the money may be pulled from the Regions' budgets. Region 6 also has concerns about this proposed piece of legislation because we need to first

determine if there are enough services in the community to refer people to from a crisis line; we think more planning needs to be done before implementing such a crisis line. Ms. Jurjevich also drew special attention to LB 519 – re: Provider reimbursement rate increases.

There is also concern of what we can expect from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) considering the recent news of Todd Landry's resignation coming just months after the resignation of Chris Peterson.

Ms. Jurjevich advised that she will attend the hearings in Lincoln this week where these bills will be discussed in further detail, Region 6 will contact BHAC members about contacting Senators once we get more information about these bills and know where we stand in regards to supporting them or not.

10. Updates – Taren Petersen

a. One-Time Funding

Out of 18 preliminary special projects chosen to use the one-time funds for, Region 6 has tackled or is working on 8 of the 18. Because of the downturn in the economy we have moved slowly and cautiously in regards to how we are spending these funds – Providers also had voiced a concern with the economy and said they wanted us to spend the funds cautiously.

The target date for the capital expenditures piece is now Feb/March time frame; Region 6 plans to do a Request for Proposals (RFP) for this.

Youth Services funding – We had set aside \$564,000 for Youth Services; the planning to do something with these funds will begin in March; planning for this project has already changed since we first started thinking about it due in part because of the Safe Haven issues.

b. Continuation Funding Planning Process

As of 1/1/09 the service being provided at the Recovery Center at Sarpy changed from subacute services to secure residential services. The building still needs construction/renovation to make it a secure residential site and this is scheduled to begin the first part of February. This is a 16-bed program and right now only 3 people are receiving services there because construction has to be done and meet the needs of the program. At this point safety is the main concern – we'll start admitting people into the secure residential program after the construction work is completed.

Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare is also working on creating a mobile crisis team for Douglas County; hopefully this will help divert people from having to go to ERs in the first place.

c. Network System Coordination

BHAC members receive an advanced copy of the Network Services Update via email.

- Ms. Petersen highlighted that Region 6 has done a great job of diverting people and there are now only 2 individuals at Norfolk Regional Center (NRC) out of the original 100 people that were at NRC when behavioral health reform started.

Katie Hruska stated that 1-1/2 to 2 weeks is now the average length of time to be on a waitlist – people used to spend 8 weeks on the waitlist. BHAC

members asked about how long people are staying at the Regional Centers. Ms. Hruska advised she has the average length of time for people staying at the Regional Centers since she started on 8/4/08 and can provide that information to BHAC members.

- Ms. Petersen noted that Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare recently had our CARF accreditation survey and our Prevention Department got an exemplary rating and great remarks. BHAC members congratulated Jeff Helaney and his staff.

11. Contract Status Report for the Period Ending December 31, 2008

Handouts were included in the packets for BHAC members. Network Provider budgets are on track; Region 6 does not have any concerns at this time with how Providers are pulling down their funds.

BHAC members are welcome to contact Darren Weis or Taren Petersen with any questions that may come up.

12. Public Comment

- John Sheehan of Douglas County Community Hospital (DCCMHC) stated that the Region 6 Governing Board approved that Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare does not need to provide funds for the DCCMHC's Day Treatment program. Mr. Sheehan noted that the Douglas County Board of Trustees approved that they will continue to fund the program. Mr. Sheehan said the program had 134 patient days in January and had Region 6 continued funding the program, DCCMHC would have requested \$152,000 for the year. Mr. Sheehan does expect to ask for funds from Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare in the future.

13. Adjourn

Brian Paulsen made a motion to adjourn. Duane Wilcox seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Prepared By:

Amy M. Lett

Date:

4/1/09

Approved By:

A. E. Eho

Date:

4/1/2009