



Macon County

Mental Health Task Force

November 8, 2013

Minutes

Members Present: Ronnie Beale, Jane Kimsey, Jim Bottomley, Mike Neidig, Kathy McGaha, Marty Wadewitz, Major Andy Shields, and Paula Ledford

Absent: Tammy Keezer & Jim Bruckner

Guests: Ann Nandrea w/NAMI, George Edmonds w/Youth Villages, Duncan Sumpter, Melissa Hamm, Tabatha Brafford & Tara Payne w/ACS, Dianne Whitman w/Department of Juvenile Justice, Amy Seay, Steve Michaels & Nancy Chastain w/Smoky Mountain Center, Joe Ferrara w/Meridian, Sarah Altman w/Southwestern Community College, Kevin Inabinet w/ Macon Psych, Sheila Price & Susan Johnson w/Angel Medical,

Co-Chairman Kimsey called the meeting to order at 8:35. Introductions were made around the room.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Mr. Wadewitz and seconded by Major Shields to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2013 meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Current Issues and Discussion: Ms. Kimsey asked for issues for discussion. Mr. Beale reported that there is a recent governance of legislation stating all LME boards must consist of 21 members. The problem with the model is there are a lot of counties that are not represented. They can be voted in but if they are not they will be appointed. If this falls apart it always comes back to the local level. We have proposed a resolution asking for a postponement until a decision is made regarding the representatives of the LME's. As of yesterday the secretary has not signed the agreement between the counties. They offered to have a 23 member board to include a commissioner as an advisory member but they couldn't find a commissioner that was willing to serve. The clock starts ticking for the new board the minute the secretary signs the agreement. Mr. Beale referred to a map of the counties that would be included as the service area for the LME's. This would fall to Smoky Mountain. No one is sure what this is going to look like. There would be four MCO's across the state based on the population. This does not take into account that a lot of our residents are only part time. County populations double in some instances. The governance legislation was the last piece to pass before the close of business. Mr. Neidig asked if the legislature was aware of the backlog in the community of mental health patients in the emergency rooms and that it has crippled the system to be able to provide the needed services. We have lost so many of the persons with the experience for placement of these individuals. We have one representative with Medicaid experience. Mr. Beale said if anyone has a plan that could be implemented to help with this situation this would be the time to present it. They are looking for successes.

Mr. Beale shared a recent article regarding rollout of another new Emergency Room initiative. Mr. Beale said he asked them some questions; how many hospitals were invited to discuss options beforehand, how many providers had been asked, was there a magistrate meeting before this was put in place, and where the closest crisis center for the far west counties would be. He is waiting for an answer? This plan was implemented with no new money to go along with it. The initiative says that DSS will use current funds. Mr. Beale and Major Shields have spoken with other jails and they indicated that the percentage of mental health involved inmates is probably much higher than the published average of 17%. Major Shields said they have been taking the most recent inmates to a crisis center over on the coast about 36 hours away.

Sheriff's report: Major Shields reported they have had 186 involuntary commitments for the year, 33 were broken. The ER hours – 7,465 hours so far for the year, they have had as many as seven individuals in the ER at one time being watch by one individual. Of the 20 events reported by Ms. Brafford there were 10 repeat consumers, 13 were involuntary, 16 of the 20 were hospitalized. During the past quarter of the 43 referrals, 4 were broken. Three weeks and five days was the longest time for getting individual into care, 513 hours is the new record. The average stay was not tracked but the estimate would be seven to ten days, ten being the max. Finding beds continues to be a problem. Ronnie said some of the other county ER's have stopped accepting these patients. The service has to meet the consumer's income. Pier support specialists have been used in other counties to solve the problem of lack of services on weekends or evenings. Other counties have asked for financial support from local groups. There is data reporting that initiatives are working? Jane said the committee meeting following this meeting will be looking at this data.

Schools: Ms. Ledford reported that collaboration and communication with Macon Psych as the primary care facility has improved. They have some students with very serious mental health issues. Not all of the parents are receptive to getting their children the help they need. In some instances the parents with mental health issues are not willing to work with the schools.

Ms. Nandrea with NAMI handed out a flyer for a Mental Illness Awareness and Suicide Prevention workshop they are hosting on Saturday, November 16th for parents and teachers. Ms. Ledford said it would be hard to get teachers there on a weekend. Mr. Beale suggested that Ms. Nandrea may want to get with the superintendent and see if they could break the training up into two sessions and do it on teacher training days.

Provider Updates: Mr. Inabinet stated the Macon Psych's Day treatment program has been working really smoothly. They are seeing numbers increasing but they are still fighting to serve the students that need help. They continue to do a lot of the services without receiving payment. Currently they have at least 120,000 of billed services they have not been paid for due to NCTracks implementation. This is a problem across the state. They did receive a \$50,000 hardship advance. There is still great need for psychiatric services.

Mr. Ferrara stated that the age cluster of those in need is between 20 and 40 and & Mr. Sumpter agreed. Mr. Sumpter said a lot of their recent patients have been acute due to lack of adequate services. A lot of the patients don't meet the requirements for care. Ms. Whitman said the juvenile justice numbers are actually going down. She is seeing a gap for sex offenders. They are working with Smoky Mountain on filling that gap. They hope to have this set up and going by January.

The Care Coordination implementation program has been the shining star in this whole thing. Mr. Neidig indicated they had talked about the void of services to the families due to lack of funding. That's where NAMI is trying to fill in with their training. He wondered if the magistrates were available to work with the families before they sign the petition for involuntary commitment. Mr. Ferrara has submitted a request for funding to try to help with some of this. There is such a big turn over with the magistrates it is hard to keep them informed. The magistrates don't seem to feel confident in not signing the petition. They think it may be the only way to get the person in need the help they need. Mr. Beale said he would be inviting the Superior Court Judge and the magistrates to the next mental health task force meeting. Ms. Seay said they were invited to the meeting immediately following this one for the Crisis ED Initiative. Major Shields said this would take a lot of players out of the numbers for them if they could get them help before the involuntary happens. Mr. Neidig said it would be better if they could get the parent to talk to the professional before they have to go to the magistrate.

Outpatient commitment – Ms. Brafford identified this is when a consumer comes in under a petition but not checked in as an inpatient. They are given psychiatric appointments that they are required to attend then there is a hearing. If they do not follow through with their appointments they can be picked up and they are required to be evaluated. Mr. Beale asked if Ms. Brafford could put together a list of people that are knowledgeable about this procedure and review the process with everyone. Ms. Seay noted that there was a recent training that the majority of people in the room were invited to and a PowerPoint was presented. They will be discussing this further in the next meeting.

Ms. Altman from Southwestern indicated the college is offering certificates in Substance Abuse Treatment for mental health professionals. A copy of the handout is available upon request.

Other Business: Ms. Brafford mentioned there had been a request for mental health services in the jail, there is a grant that they want to include Macon County in. They need letters of recommendation to include the Macon County jail. If they don't get these letters within the next week they will have to submit the grant. Mr. Sumpter will send the template for the letter out to everyone.

Schedule Next Meeting: February 7th 8:30 to 10:00

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 10:17 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bellavance

These minutes were approved on February 7, 2014 with a motion by Major Shields and seconded by Ms. Ledford. The motion passed unanimously.