



Macon County

Mental Health Task Force

11/2/2016

Minutes

Members Present: Commissioner Ronnie Beale, Jim Bruckner, Tammy Keezer, Patrick Betancourt

Guests: Kathryn Shields Holmes, Francis Venticinque, Amy Barnes, Greta Metcalf, Ron Ross, Tabatha Brafford, Lauren Garner, Bethany Brown, Sheila Jenkins, Lisa Hilliard, Nancy Chastain, Stephanie Almeida, Steve Stewart, Howard Dowdle

Vote to add Board member: None added

Approval of Minutes: Patrick Betancourt made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Kathryn Shields seconded the motion.

Current Issues: Ronnie Beale gave a legislative update. The legislature did approve 30 million dollars to put into the Mental Health system. It will be dispersed among several different areas. We have asked for the rural county LME's to receive money for the Stepping Up program. The Stepping Up program is a stop gap before someone goes to jail we want to give them the opportunity to go to treatment first. It is going to take a lot of different partnerships to make this happen. Some counties in the state are working together in a joint effort to accomplish this. Smokey Mountain LME/MCO is now called VAYA. There are some changes with the community programs from VAYA. Beds are still in much demand. ER's are still where people go, but walk in centers are getting more patients. Tabatha Brafford gave a brief description about B Hub. B Hub doesn't really have beds, they have 23 chairs. You can detox there however this is not a treatment center. They provide care until a treatment center is available. They will be taking voluntary committed individuals. Mr. Beale said we have found some good treatment centers in Georgia. The Old Vineyard in Winston Salem is also a good place. Kelly is the contact at the Old Vineyard. Mr. Beale also said that we are still having discussions on supporting those who are giving care. The state just finished a 5 year grant on how to help the caregivers. There are several trainings for caregivers, agencies at Vaya. Please call Kate Glance. Ms. Homes said that good supervisors and good directors are very valuable for new staffers. Just somebody willing to listen helps the most.

Other Business: Patrick Betancourt, DSS: We continue to see high numbers in our child welfare services. We have been working with providers on an MOA to help with these children. We are meeting this Friday,

11/4/2016, to talk with the other Western County DSS's about service changes. Mr. Beale asked if this is a spike in numbers or if it is becoming the trend. Mr. Betancourt said this seems to be a trend. The numbers keep rising and the cases we are seeing are no longer only physical abuse. Almost every case has some sort of substance abuse and domestic violence. Trauma infused care is starting to make its way to the classroom. Mr. Betancourt said our schools are the major reporting sources.

Tabatha Brafford, ACS – We have had a prescriber recently declined for tuition payback assistance, which is very disturbing because there is such a high demand for prescribers, and clinicians in this rural part of the country. Mr. Bruckner said to talk to the Office of Rural Health at the state and they might be able to help.

Amy Barnes- Smoky Mountain LME/MCO is now called VAYA. Mr. Beale said there were 5 people that have recently left VAYA. Shelly is now in charge of Haywood West.

Kathryn Shields Holmes, Meridian- Ms. Holmes said that she is happy to say that the child and family services have not changed. We are still really integrated in all the schools and staying very busy. We have had 113 referrals since school started. We receive about 3 referrals a day. Mr. Beale asked what the proper procedure is for referring a client to Meridian. Greta Metcalf explained the process in detail. There was talk about mobile crisis, how people are supposed to seek help, what the process is and how to make the communities aware of where to go and how to seek help. Ms. Brafford further explained that Mobile Crisis has to respond within 2 hours in urgent situations. The problem comes in determining what is urgent.

Greta Metcalf, Meridian- We now have a clinician integrated into Angel Primary Care. Mission has provided with us to give short term counseling or linkage to higher services. Stephanie Almeida asked about the screening process that the doctors use. Ms. Metcalf said she is not sure of the screenings they are using, but she is sure they are using standard protocol. We recently participated in the Narcan trainings. We had 30 clients complete their course work at the Recovery Education Center. The families and students from the Recovery Education Center wanted to do a fall festival, which was a huge success and a lot of fun. We now have a psychiatrist, Dr. Lawrence, in Macon County. We have had an increase in referrals at the walk in center. We are adding a lot of questions on the assessment process in order to allow us to make better connections between patients and primary care providers.

Tabatha Brafford, ACS – We have 16 beds and are currently at 90% capacity. On a good note, out of 58 admits, 48 were direct admits that never went to the ED. We are having great success at direct admits. We now have Primary care at the Macon office once a week. We have hired Claudia Peters, MD full time at Balsam Center. Our new website will be up and running this month.

Ron Ross, ACS – Our walk-ins are very high. We have hired an acra therapist. We are beginning a 7 challenges group in several counties. Jail services are going well.

Lauren Garner, ACS – All is going well. We have seen an increase in people in the community accessing walk-ins. We have hired 2 new clinicians. There are now 5 clinicians in Macon County.

Nancy Chastain, Vaya – Leslie McCrory is doing pregnancy substance use home and working with care coordination. She will be calling health departments, but she is very new so it may be a while. If you have clients

that need to speak with Ms. McCrory refer them to Amy Barnes and she will link them to Ms. McCrory. Ms. McCrory is working in all 23 counties. This links to Castle Work houses. We are beginning to work with Start for children for co-occurring disorders for children. We have a veteran's service officer, Brandon Wilson, who is linking veterans with different services. You can contact him through Vaya.

Stephanie Almeida, Full Circle Recovery – Full Circle Recover was awarded a \$20,000 Evergreen grant by WNCAP to expand services into southwestern NC. They will be expanding HIV and Hep C services to western counties of NC. Everyone will be able to access services. They are also working with CCWNC on a Hep C Plan.

Lisa Hilliard, DSS – She said Mr. Betancourt had already given a good report on DSS and that they are keeping up with things.

Francis Venticinque NAMI/NA– Mr. Venticinque gave a brief work history on himself and said that he is glad to be a part of this meeting. He feels like this meeting is very helpful.

Bethany Brown, Mission– This is her first meeting. Will be reaching out and making contacts with folks in this room.

Sheila Jenkins, Senior Services – Ms. Jenkins heads up the care transitions team in Macon County. She said when senior citizens are in the ED they seem to deteriorate quickly while waiting for a bed. We want to be able to link them to treatment sooner to keep them from getting to that point. Steve Stewart, Macon County Jail – The jail population has grown tremendously. We are over capacity. Mobile crisis has been fantastic with evaluations and rapid response. The same person being the contact on the inside and the outside is what is making us so successful. Macon County is setting the standard for treatment programs inside the facility. We have 2 inmates in Raleigh Central Prison for mental health purposes. This is the first time Mr. Stewart has seen this in his 6 year history. We anticipate being busier during the holiday season. Mr. Beale also noted that the number of female inmates is at an all-time high.

Howard Dowdle, ACS – We are having about 20 patients per week that we are seeing. If we can't provide the services they need, we will provide them with other resources in and out of state. Substance abuse among the elderly is something that we are concerned about and needs to be addressed. This is a building process and there is a lot of work to be done. Hopefully more resources will become available.

Next meeting: TBD

Meeting adjourned: Ronnie Beale adjourned the meeting at 11:00

Respectfully submitted,

Darice Davis