



Macon County

Mental Health Task Force

5/11/2016

Minutes

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

Guests: Francis Venticinque w/ NAMI/NA, Howard Dowdle w/ ACS, Nancy Chastain w/ SMC, Duncan Sumter w/ACS, Mark Gilbert w/ Murphy Medical /Cherokee County, Ronald Ross w/ACS, Lauren Garner w/ ACS, Amy Barnes w/ SMC, Stephanie Almeida w/ FCRC, Michael Roe O'Donnell w/ Full Circle Recovery Center, Jim Hartye, MD w/ Mission, Greta Metcalf w/ Meridian Behavioral Health, Kevin Inabinet w/ Meridian, Brenda Thomas w/ Youth Villages, Amy Seay w/ SMC and Patrick Betancourt w/ DSS.

Absent: Mike Neidig, Kathy McGaha, Robbie Holland, Andy Shields, Marty Wadewitz & Paula Ledford

Vote to add Board member: None

Approval of Minutes: None

Current Issues: Mr. Beale referenced a situation of a judge that mandated a one year treatment for a heroin addict, but there is nowhere to send him. This is becoming more and more of a problem. Teen Challenge will begin taking patients the first of June. He will probably be placed there if he qualifies. Mr. Beale met with Judge Roy from Clay County. He said nearly every case on his docket was drug related.

In Macon County there is a problem with people not being able to afford their medications and therefore are going untreated. Mr. Beale said a meeting is taking place tomorrow to try to alleviate this situation. The program will be based through EMS, Sherriff's dept. and volunteers and will most likely have to be handled at the local community level.

Jim Hartye said there are currently two pilot programs in the state called Mobile Medication Management. They have RN's and peer specialists that help people with their medications until they get into a routine of taking their medicines.

He also said there are assistance programs to help people afford their medications. Mr. Hartye mentioned two programs; 340B and Med-assist.

Mr. Bruckner mentioned the medication assistance program at Angel Medical Center and talked about getting assistance from them.

Smoky Mountain Center is also working towards getting assistance in Macon County. Mr. Bruckner noted the phone number of the Angel Medication Assistance Program.

Governor's Report

Mr. Beale said that the conference he attended was very good. He referenced the Governor's report which was talking about substance abuse, opiates and different aspects of mental health. \$585 million was spent on opiate abuse alone last year. It will be larger this year, but alcohol is larger than all other substances. We are seeing more and more people using synthetic heroin. There have been 6 deaths in Western NC from synthetic heroin. Narcon has no effect on synthetic heroin.

During the County Commissioners Task Force meeting they talked about local health departments becoming more involved in mental health. We would like to see Smoky Mountain LME/MCO be able to put a doctor in each Emergency Department. They have set a goal of educating one county commissioner in each of our counties on mental health.

We are trying to expand the Tele-psych into all of our counties. Most counties have it already have it. Mark Gilbert w/ Murphy Medical in Cherokee County said that the state said they would have NC Start up and running in that county in the next day or two. It will be in operation 8am -5pm Monday – Friday.

Balsam Center-

Balsam Center will have 4 extra beds beginning July 1. They will have 16 beds in total which is the most a facility based crisis center can have.

Community Health Assessments –

Mr. Bruckner said the CHA is posted on the Macon county website. The state is talking about doing a state assessment as well. Mr. Beale would like to see the state assessment broken up into rural counties and metro counties because there is such a vast difference between the two.

People do not know who to contact when they have a mental health emergency. There is a new policy called No wrong door. It is still a work in progress, but we would like to use 911 as the contact number when someone has a mental health emergency.

Francis Venticinque w/NAMI – Meetings are held Thursdays at 7:00pm (Methodist Church), the first Tuesday of month is a family support meeting. If you would like to refer someone the phone number is 371-1169. Every Friday the group goes into detention centers to talk about hope and what happens once they get released.

Lauren Garner w/ ACS said they are starting a jail program in July.

Howard Dowdle w/ADEC services - We are working with probation and DSS to help anyone who needs outpatient treatment. We will soon be able to provide transportation.

Mr. Beale said we are the only state in the country where a 16 year old is considered an adult. This leads to children being sent to jail instead of treatment. Statistics show that while in jail, these kids end up in more trouble, which leads to longer sentences.

SM LME/MCO – Smoky Mountain LME/MCO has started a new program offering 10 mental health assessments to veterans, which will open up a lot of services to them. NC has the highest amount of veterans of all states. Referrals will come in from the veteran's service officers and will go directly to the providers. This program has been running for about a week or so in Jackson and Macon counties.

Duncan Sumpter w/ ACS – We are excited about the IBC drop off with the 4 bed expansion at Balsam Center. We will be able to serve higher acuity people begin October 1st. He talked about different programs in various counties; tele-psych in Clay County should be online tomorrow. He said they will offer Tele-psych to other counties if the program works well. We have partnered up with homeless shelters, which has been great assistance.

Mr. Beale said there is nowhere to send the elderly mental health population. They are talking about a partnership with nursing home facilities to use the empty beds, but this is work in progress and is being discussed at the state level.

Ronald Ross said we are seeing younger and younger children. We have gotten two three year olds in the last week. The age makes the job much harder.

We are currently developing program with jail, tracking of and follow up with released inmates. We have had a record number of mobile crisis assessments in March. We are seeing an increase from 1-2 to 3-7 cases in a month in Macon County.

There is a large increase in people wanting to sign their kids over to the state. After reviewing charts, 95% of all children are trauma based.

Lauren Garner with ACS said we are doing a lunch and learn in Macon County for probation officers to inform them about our services.

Kevin Inabinet with Meridian said we are hiring an additional therapist this summer. Good retention rate with interns. We are doing well with the merging of Meridian and Macon Psych.

Greta Metcalf with Meridian said they went to Raleigh and most of the changes and implementations that they recommended were agreed upon. In 2001 we had 1907 beds in the state and now we have 250. We would like more facility based crisis facilities for children.

Brenda Youth Villages Intercept program – In home service for children that are in risk of going into PRTF and therapeutic foster care. We have expanded out a little in Graham and Clay counties. We have added an evidence based project to provide support for domestic abuse. We now have an adolescent substance abuse program. We can catch a lot of issues when children are younger. YV- Life set is a transitional living program serving youth 18-21 for youth transitioning out of treatment. It is public private partnership. Referrals come from anywhere; providers, LME's, DSS and DJJ.

Macon County Substance abuse task force - The Health Department and Sherriff's Office are working together on Naloxone distribution. Pharmacies are now able to distribute Naloxone. There Senate Bill entitled 794- Needle exchange program. We would like to get that off the ground in Macon County. The first meeting will be May 26th 10:00am.

Stephanie Almeida – Full Circle Recovery Center – This is a full service recovery center. Learn to Cope peer to peer support group for families meets every Tues. at 7:00. They will be meeting with Warren Cabe to see if the county would like to have overdose training so that EMS workers and first responders would be able to provide Naloxone. We have had 19 reversals in Macon County.

The Third Annual Night of Hope will be Aug. 31st. We have an opiate specific treatment group. Counseling solutions of Murphy is coming to Brass town.

Full Circle Recovery Center will soon have an outpatient treatment program.

LEAD – Law Enforcement Assistant Diversion. Fayetteville will have this beginning in October.

Patrick Betancourt – Numbers are up. We have had about 80 intakes per month in the last couple of months. Other DSS directors are seeing the same rise in numbers. We have 45 kids in care currently. We are thankful for all the partnerships with Smoky Mountain LME/MCO and providers.

Jim Hartye with Mission - We had 6 children on hold in the Buncombe ED today. We are getting fewer beds than previously. We have gone from 1 in 8 coming to Copestone to 1 in 2 coming to Copestone. Mr. Hartye has recruited a replacement for the Medical Director position. Rick Zen will be the new medical director. We are working with Angel Primary Care and Angel Women's practice to improving access to behavioral care programs.

Haywood Hospital is adding 17 more adult beds.

Old Vineyard is doing construction and adding 60 more beds and 22 are adolescent beds. Copestone is considering construction.

Substance abuse services for pregnant women. The goal is to figure out how we can get them plugged into services earlier. Mr. Hartye will be able to do more work with the region agencies now that there is a new medical director.

Suicide rates in our county are at an all-time high.

Other Business: None

Next meeting: TBD

Meeting adjourned: Ronnie Beale adjourned the meeting at 10:35 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Darice Davis