



Macon County Mental Health Task Force

January 28, 2016
Minutes

Members Present: Kathy McGaha, Jim Bruckner, Patrick Betancourt, & Tammy Keezer

Absent: Ronnie Beale, Mike Neidig, Robbie Holland, Andy Shields, Marty Wadewitz, & Paula Ledford

Guests: Dr. Jim Hartye w/Mission Health, , Ron Ross, Lauren Garner, & Jason Strack w/ACS, Lisa Hilliard w/DSS, Sarah Altman, Joe Ferrara w/Meridian, Brenda Thomas w/ Youth Villages, and Raymond Turpin w/ Macon Co. Psych. Srvs.

Jim Bruckner welcomed everyone and asked them to introduce themselves when they speak. Meeting called to order 8:38 am

Vote to add Board member: None

Approval of Minutes: –Kathy McGaha made a motion to approve Joe Ferrara seconded. The motion passed

Current Issues – Dr. Jim Hartye, Mission Health System - Mission is staying very busy. They have been working hard on their new Tele-site project and will begin rolling it out in Highlands by March or April.

Joe Ferrara, Meridian. We are partnering with Jackson Psychological. This has been a huge undertaking and most of our time is being utilized to complete this transition. Our new partnership will officially begin April 1, 2016. There will not be a name change to the organization at this time.

Jason Strack, Meridian – Meridian is currently working on improving community response time. 60 40 split. We have gotten approval to expand Balsam Center from 12 to 16 beds. We are also becoming an IBC drop-off. We have been able to raise the acuity already with insulin dependent patients and some detox patients.

Ron Ross, Outpatient Services Appalachian Community Services - We have seen a lot of increase in the Substance Abuse component. Our Substance Abuse Intensive Outpatient Program (SAIOP) is growing. We also recently brought on Aspire of Haywood County Children's Day Treatment. We have a trainer here in Macon County who works with Substance Abuse in children. Psychological services are also expanding quickly. We are currently providing psychological services once a week in Macon County.

Lauren Varner, Appalachian Community Services – We are working with the Macon County Detention Center getting people who need substance abuse treatment into SAIOP services on their release.

Brenda Thomas, Youth Villages – We are currently serving 4 children and families in Macon County through Intercept program.

Raymond Turpin, Jackson Psychological – We are currently working on partnering with Meridian which will take effect April 1, 2016. We are trying to work with families in Macon County. We currently have a 92% success rate on keeping children in homes. We just completed Suicide Training at Union Academy and Macon Middle School. We will be training Franklin High school students about depression in the near future. This has proven to be a good outreach to teens and is going really well. We typically have one or two students that approach us after each of the trainings seeking help or advice.

Patrick Betancourt Director of DSS – We are staying very busy. Nothing else to report at this time.

Sara Altman, Southwestern Community College – We have currently 56 first and second year students enrolled. We are getting more from Franklin High School and Macon Early College. Most of the students have a desire to go on to pursue their BS and Masters degrees.

SCC is working with Western Carolina University to make small changes to the curriculum to match what will best benefit the students.

There are two SCC students currently working at the jail.

Jim Bruckner, Macon County Health Director – The Macon County Health Department is expanding into primary care.

MCPH is talking with Appalachian Mountain Community Health Centers, which are federally qualified health centers. They want to come into community like Macon and set up a program to establish primary care for indigent patients. They are trying to include mental health services if possible. The next step is to talk with county leadership. Appalachian Mountain Community Health Centers primary counties are the far western eight counties in NC.

MCPH began the new Employee Health clinic a few months ago. They are currently seeing about sixty patients per month. Employee Health has opened services up to include family members and retired county employees as well.

Jim Hartye asked if employee health services are blended with primary care. Mr. Bruckner said yes.

Mr. Bruckner asked if there was anyone else that needs to be invited to the Mental Health Task Force Meeting. Warren Cabe or a representative from EMS was suggested.

Kathy McGaha asked how much mental health training first responders were getting. Ron Ross said it appears they are getting minimal training and could use more.

There was discussion on Naloxone an injection or nasal spray that you can give an overdose patient that will bring them out. Macon County is currently having discussions about drug and which medical personnel should have authority to use it.

Next meeting – March 3, 2016

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 am

Respectfully submitted,

Darice Davis