



Macon County Mental Health Task Force

February 8, 2013
Minutes

Members present: Ronnie Beale, Jim Bruckner, Jane Kimsey, Andy Shields, Jim Bottomley, Kathy McGaha, Paula Ledford, & Marty Wadewitz

Guests: Tammy Keezer, MCPH, Greta Metcalf w/Jackson County Psych, Dianne Whitman w/ Dept. Juvenile Justice, Raymond Turpin & Kathryn Holmes w/Macon Psych, Rhonda Cox & Susan Keenan, w/Smoky Mountain Center, Steve Stewart w/MCSO, Corporal Scott Marion w/MCSO, Judy Johannsen w/CFAC, Reid Smithdeal w/Meridian, Ann Nandrea w/NAMI, Tabatha Brafford & Duncan Sumpter w/ACS.

Mr. Bruckner welcomed everyone to the meeting and officially called the meeting to order at 8:34.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by Major Shields and seconded by Mr. Wadewitz to approve the minutes of October 14, 2012 as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Updates

Sheriff's Department – Major Shields reported that the total man hours spent in transport of involuntary commitments for 2012 was 1,022. The year to date total man hours for 2012 was 5,919. There were 15 involuntary commitments this month, using 78 officers. There was a 478 hour increase from this time last year for a 33% increase in total hours. There was a little decrease in the average time to process commitments and it was down 6%. The average time for an involuntary commitment case is approximately 30 hours. 20% of their commitment transports were kept at the Haywood hospital. The remaining transports were to all parts of the state. They have spent \$500.00 for out of town meals this year. The County acquired another transport vehicle to cover all the traveling and have hired 9 people part time specifically for transports. From January through December of 2012 we spent \$139,182 in wages. This was mostly for part time personnel.

Mr. Beale had a meeting with Judge John Smith about the problems caused by the limitation of only having two magistrates for Macon County. We have requested that more magistrates be assigned. Judge Jones told Mr. Beale that there is a Magistrate Training on February 22nd specifically discussing involuntary commitments. Mr. Beale

told Judge Jones that Macon County could not possibly send a magistrate due to the fact that we only have two.

Schools – Ms. Ledford said things had been going well but the number of students returning from placements has declined. Placements are going to be shorter. Not sure how funding will work for those school programs. The children that are being seen have made improvements. Ms. Ledford made a statement that they have students who are at the high end of need that are disrupting the education of other students at the school. These children are giving Ms. Ledford concern for the safety of others. There is one teacher who was injured by one of these students and has to be out for surgery due to the injury. Ms. Cox is working with the providers to develop a system of treatment that will cover these higher need students. This plan will need to include day treatment providers as well as other treatment interventions like Multisystemic Therapy (MST). The DSS continuum has been missing MST which has good long term outcomes. Kids who qualify for MST are usually already involved in the juvenile justice system and other agencies. Ms. Ledford is concerned because children are coming back to school after being discharged from residential care but the school is not being notified. Ms. Cox is trying to work with providers to make sure they contact the school as part of their discharge to let them know that child will be returning to school.

Mr. Beale said he felt like we have gotten better at identifying these children. Mr. Beale asked Ms. Cox for suggestions of how to improve the communication between the care partners and the schools. They do have an expectation that the parents will have some responsibility for the communication with the schools. Mr. Bruckner identified that there is a disconnect with some of the parents and their children. Because some of these children come from other counties and their parents are fearful of that child they will never be engaged in their therapy. Ms. Cox said there will never be a perfect system but if they can help as many children as possible and balance their care with their needs the system will be doing its job. Ms. Cox said she was not saying that kids that need services won't get them but they will push to make sure the families are being engaged if at all possible because they have learned from experience that if the family does not engage that child will not improve. In the past there has been a direct relationship with DSS and the schools and they have not had the same level of communication with the schools. They are working to improve those relationships

If the child is in PRTF they have a community care coordinator that supports the discharge process in addition to the PRTF provider. The level of care should be a step down process. The more often and longer they are in long term care the higher the chances that the child will be seen by law enforcement officials. They have been looking at long term and day time treatment times to see if they are fitting the child's needs. The decision regarding the time of placement is still being worked on to meet the best placement model guidelines. Ms. Ledford said they really do need the support of the facilities to help with these high end kids being return to school. Ms. Cox said they have had challenges with the outcomes piece for these kids to determine how the child is progressing with the service.

Ms. Metcalf stated that they understand that the cuts in funding are causing problems with the system. They had a meeting in January to get a feel for the direction they needed to take. There was open discussion with the schools at that meeting. They are also trying to follow the best practice models. The issue is that over the last ten years the cuts have been huge and to break even they have had to run programs at a loss. There are currently seven children in the elementary program. They currently have four billable children and two of them are getting ready to leave the program because they have been in the program for so long.

Ms. Metcalf said they are seeing more kids and the average day treatment time is between 3 months and 18 months. They are pushing hard to get the whole family unit into treatment so the behavior issues with the child can be addressed with the parents and they can be taught how to correctly deal with their child. No one is saying that 3 to 18 months is a set time and cannot be extended or shorted based on the need of the child. If there are individuals that need extended treatment it is being made available. Ms. Nandrea mentioned that NAMI is having a Family to Family Class starting Tuesday and they still have openings.

Ms. Keenan, the new MHSA Care Coordinator with Smoky Mountain Center, previously worked in CO and was responsible for a day treatment facility there. She indicated that their results indicated that the day treatment facilities were helping these kids and they were less likely to enter the law enforcement facilities.

Macon Psych – Finally running at full staff

Walk-In Clinic – Appalachian Community Services – Mr. Sumpter passed around a Crisis services handout indicating the Macon County crisis management data results from 2012. Appalachian provides limited psychiatric care. They are fully staffed for walk-ins and medication management. The walk-in assessments are usually seen in clinic within 15 to 20 minutes with a 2 hour assessment including psych exam, treatment plan & referral. If they need a psychiatric appointment with 24 hours they are usually able to fulfill that need. Mr. Sumpter reviewed the data represented in the handout. He stated that due to their services 137 hospitalizations were diverted. He also stated that 95% of their first time petitions come through the ER and 64% of dispositions are out of ED within 24 hours. 92% are out within 72 hours. Mr. Beale asked Mr. Wadewitz what the numbers were for the ER visits. He stated we experienced more violent ER visits in 2012. Mr. Beale asked if Smoky Mountain has sat down with Angel Administration Ms. Cox said they have made the rounds within the past two months of 2012 with all of the local hospital's administration. They are also having ED initiative meetings with providers, hospital personnel, etc. to try to come up with productive solutions. They received a grant in the amount of \$40,000 from Evergreen foundation for wrap around services for adults in need.

DSS – Ms. Kimsey stated they are experiencing utilization issues and approvals for step downs from PRTF's. She said they are excited to get additional pieces of the continuum of services in place. The kids are getting back into the communities without the right

services but they are working with the families to make this better. Foster care rates have gone up, 8 kids from three families went into care in the past two months. New unemployment benefits will affect the number of families receiving benefits. Child protective services has a Friday meeting with providers and care coordinator case workers to work on communication between agencies.

LME – Adults receiving mental health services in adult care homes are being impacted due to Department of Justice settlement which there have been long term conversations about the tendency to institutionalize individuals with mental health or substance abuse issues. This settlement will help them draw down money to help these individuals with wrap around services. State has hired personnel to perform second level of PASSR screenings of adults with needs. As of February 18th there will be new requirements for individuals with mental illness living in adult care homes. The goal is allow individuals to be integrated into their community living situation. This has significant impact for the community due to limited housing for this population. Macon County has been approved as a partner for adult day treatment facilities. There are approximately 240 adults in the adult ED facilities. Also MAHEC is having a training in Asheville on the 22nd that will be broadcast to Angel regarding I Involuntary Commitment Training.

Mental Health Providers

Meridian – Mr. Smithdeal stated that the clinician times had increased due to increased patient visits. Assessments were holding steady. Peer support B-3 services was up and running as was in their contract but they were told after the fact that there was no money. Ronnie suggested that they try re-billing Smoky Mountain for the services already rendered. They are looking at another way to fund the service. They have been completing approximately 30 assessments in Macon County per month. They are working on a hospital diversion project with their peers. REC they are seeing between 125-150 unduplicated. The ACT team members have been an excellent resource of information for the jail recently. They are still in expansion mode with the ACT Team. They have approximately 20 spots open.

Appalachian - Mr. Sumpter said that some of the lower level care was eliminated due to the budget cuts. Mr. Beale asked if there was a direct contact at Smoky Mountain they can call to ask for assistance. Ms. Keenan is their care coordinator and that is probably who they should be contacting. We do have care coordinators in all of our western counties now. The intensive in home stay average has been 4.6 months. Ms. Ledford asked about different providers at different levels. This will make it more confusing to keep the children's care partners informed and keep the line of communication open with the school.

Community Partners

NAMI - Ms. Nandrea noted that there is a CIT Conference on February 19th in Raleigh. The NAMI Western Regional Conference is scheduled for April 6th in Asheville. These are both one day conferences. Mr. Beale has a PowerPoint from last year's Western Regional conference. If anyone would like more information go to www.naminc.org and click on the events tab. NAMI finished the second round of Peer to Peer classes in

December. They will be offering a class in the spring on mental illnesses and how to deal with them. She hopes they will have another one in the fall.

NA – Jim Bottomley asked if the contact phone numbers for both NA and AA could be added to Major Shield's list for contact list for assisting inmates. They have a new list of volunteers and things are going well. They are currently reaching out to local hospitals to discuss ways to transport recovering people from detox to NA or AA meetings. Mr. Stewart asked if the juvenile transport service was still available. Ms. Whitman said it is still available but they have to call Raleigh and get it scheduled through Asheville.

JCPC – Ms. Whitman said they appreciate the support through Smoky Mountain. They are dealing with a few difficult cases right now. She does feel that everyone is working well together.

Legislative Update

Magistrates - Mr. Beale said he was asked to present to the justice committee at their last meeting. He talked with the court judge in charge of all magistrates. The rural counties were cut back to three magistrates. We were at 4.5 and have been cut back to 2. The requirement for a magistrate is either a four year justice degree or 2 years of experience and a 2 year degree. These individuals average about 70 hours per week and the pay is not very much. The commissioners will be asking the legislature to put the funding back for these positions. On occasion a magistrate can be replaced by a video conference meeting but this only works in certain instances. It does not work in an instance where someone is being involuntarily committed. One key component to handling involuntary commitments is having someone with experience in the magistrate's office. That is not the case currently. The case load formula is what they base the magistrate need on. The average age of a magistrate is about 25 years old. The pay for the magistrate is the same as it was seven years ago. Most of these young guys have a four year degree and they are looking for another job. A letter was prepared to the judicial branch asking for the additional personnel. Over 600 positions have been eliminated from the legislative branch. There are 20 counties in NC that have more legislatures than the other 80 combined.

Board Makeup - Senator Davis met with appropriations chair to discuss 122C make up of boards. LME board is going to change drastically but they have asked for that not to happen. 11 of the 21 positions are mandated. Watch out for the elimination of commissions or boards currently in place. They will be disbanded and reappointed by the Legislature.

Dietician bill – This bill eliminates the board for dietetic licensing. This would eliminate the ability to bill for dietetic services.

Other Business – Someone asked who the magistrates need to be calling first in the event of an involuntary commitment. Ms. Brafford with Appalachian said they end up with most of the referrals. She said she would be willing to go with Mr. Beale and Genny Pough with Smoky Mountain to talk with the magistrates to discuss the proper procedure

for involuntary commitments. Efforts are being made to improve communications and if you experience difficulties call Mr. Beale.

The Next Meeting is scheduled for May 3rd at the health department at 8:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bellavance