

Mental Health Addictions Services Advisory Board (MHASAB)

MEETING – July 12, 2018 – 1 Medical Dr., Morris Plains

Members Present:

Charlie Berman, Citizen Representative
Chris Chernick, Citizen Representative
Linda Csengeto, MCOTA
Carol DeGraw, United Way of N.N.J.
Heather Diamond, Center for Evaluation & Counseling
Cheryl Garodnick, Citizen Representative
Margaret Himsl, NJ Friendship House
Marcy McMann, Citizen Representative
Mary Jane Melo, Citizen Representative
Vicky Mulligan, Rest, Stop & Rejuvenate
Heidi Schnapp, Center for Evaluation & Counseling
LaJuan Tucker, MCPO

Also Attending:

Eileen Alexander, DMHAS
Bob Davison, Mental Health Association
Aura Dunn, Public
Valerie Fox, Consumer
Erik Moran, Zufall

Staff in Attendance:

Laurie Becker, MCDHS
Anna Marie Hess, MCDHS
Beth Jacobson, MCDHS
Pat Mocariski, MCDHS

I. Call to Order and Approval of May 10 minutes –

Ms. Marcy McMann, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:23 p.m. Mr. Charlie Berman made a motion to approve the May 10 minutes and Ms. La Juan Tucker seconded the motion. All were in favor with two abstentions and no opposition. Motion carried.

II. Welcome and Introductions –

Ms. McMann welcomed everyone.

III. Chair Report – Ms. McMann

There was a very good turnout for the annual Consumer & Family Forum held on June 21. There were about 170 - 180 in attendance. Part of the Forum included a question and answer period where consumers informed officials of the needs and services they feel are missing in the county. A lot of valuable information was gathered.

Notification was given that DMHAS was likely moving back under the Department of Human Services.

IV. Presentation on the Health, Education and Legal Partnership (HEAL) by Ms. Sharon Yoo, Legal Services and Erik Moran, Zufall Health Center

Ms. Yoo spoke about the HEAL Program. This program is a collaboration between Legal Services and Zufall Health Center. This legal/medical model began about 10 years ago. This collaboration serves the individuals with low/no income. Legal Services and Zufall started talking about this collaboration in 2014 and the possibilities for funding the project.

Zufall/LS found that although doctors were addressing medical issues often there were still underlying problems. For example, when the doctor treated a child for asthma, there were times when after each treatment, the child's asthma kept coming back. Upon further investigation it was found that there were problems in the family's home such as mold, rodents, etc. that were causing some of the medical issues. Once they fixed the problem, the child would get better.

The HEAL Program is available at both Dover and Morristown Zufall locations. Ms. Yoo is at the Morristown site about 20 hours a week. She is available to patients and addresses issues as soon as possible. Prior to the program's implementation at the Zufall site, the patient was given a referral of where to go to get help. Many were not able to follow through.

The goal is to be an advocate for medical patients and help them with legal issues. The primary focus of the County grant is on patients with mental illness and/or substance use. About 80% of their patients have one or both of these diagnoses.

Mr. Moran said that patients see him or another care team member at Zufall. They screen the patients to be sure there are no conflicts. They meet with the patient to see what issues they have. It is very beneficial to have doctors and legal help in the same building since it speeds up the process.

Patients are assisted with essential needs such as housing issues and conditions, domestic violence, etc. They can also assist with some applications. If the need goes beyond what the HEAL Program encompasses, they can refer the person to Legal Services. Legal Services does not represent anyone in criminal matters. They can connect people directly with services, as there are providers in the same building. Many patients have problems with housing and others have landlord/tenant issues.

Ms. Yoo said that patients can also go to Zufall for psychiatry and dental services. They have served about 40 patients since March. Ms. Becker asked how long they keep a client. Ms. Yoo said they keep the client until their issues are addressed. Three attorneys work on the HEAL project.

Ms. Yoo said they also provide trainings to providers. They recently did a training on social security disability. The next training will be on housing and after that, they will do a training on Medicare forms.

**V. Subcommittee Reports –
2019 Funding Process Updates – Ms. Becker**

On June 29, all 2019 funding applications were received. Applications now need to be prepared and reviewed by advisory boards. The MHASAB funding review will be on August 28 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. A signup sheet was passed around. Members cannot be in conflict with Grant-in-Aid or Chapter 51 to participate in the funding review. Both Grant-in-Aid and Chapter 51 funding applications will be reviewed on the same day.

There are many new applications. Once the funding review committee has made their decisions, funding recommendations will go to a vote before the full board. Once the board approves the recommendations, they go to the Freeholders for approval. Award/declination letters will go out in November.

There will be no board meeting in August.

Planning – Ms. Jacobson

Ms. Jacobson continues to meet with the Regional Learning Collaborative to work on the County Comprehensive Plan (CCP). She has conducted a focus group with the Advisory Committee on Aging, Disabilities and Veterans (ACADV), and has focus groups scheduled with the Youth Services Advisory Committee (YSAC), Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) Cross Systems Committee, and with CARES Recovery volunteers. A date for a focus group with Corrections staff is still to be determined.

Legislative/Advocacy – Ms. McMann

Distributed information on two bills that are before the senate.

- Bill 2529 – Creates Mental Illness Diversion Plan to divert eligible persons with a mental illness away from criminal justice system and into appropriate case management and mental health services.

Ms. Tucker stated this is a bill proposed by Senator Ruiz. This is similar to the Veterans Diversion Program. The Veterans Diversion program is law now but the Mental Illness Diversion Plan is proposed and not yet law. The Prosecutor's office will run the program. The person is eligible if charged with a nonviolent offense. There are other criteria as well for eligibility. The person must agree to meet the requirements of the program. Once the person has successfully completed the program, the charges are dismissed.

Ms. Tucker said there are a few issues related to the need to monitor clients.

Ms. Tucker stated that in Morris no one is in the Veteran's Diversion program as of yet. No one fits all the criteria. Not sure any county but Ocean has anyone in the program. It is for nonviolent offenders and that eliminates many people from being eligible.

Ms. McMann said this is similar to the Pretrial Intervention Program in Morris County. The person has to have a nonviolent offense and meet other criteria to get into the

program. If the person successfully completes the program and the probation period, the charges will be dismissed.

Ms. Tucker said both programs have many of the same questions. When it comes to the six-month review, do they have a right to counsel? If Probation wants to kick them out and charges come back who will represent them?

- Bill 2560 – Ms. Tucker stated this is a similar bill but do not think it will pass. None of these programs are funded.

VI. State Liaison Report – Ms. Eileen Alexander (see report attached)

There has been a lot of discussion about Charity Care and NJ MAPPS, the state entity that reimburses for services. Hospitals without a Department of Health license for clinical services cannot bill for Charity Care. This has been a big problem for many hospitals that needs resolutions.

The state is working on Community Support Service (CSS) rates. Mr. Davison stated that many things are not worked out yet. Ms. Alexander said that there was some confusion reported by providers and the state. In about a year, all will be going to fee-for-service.

VII. Municipal Alliance Coordinator – No report (Mr. Nebesni has moved to a new position)

Addictions Services Administrator – Ms. Beth Jacobson

Ms. Jacobson distributed a signup sheet for addictions site visits.

Ms. Jacobson spoke about the Jail Reentry program that has begun at the Morris County Correctional Facility. Two new OTA staff are onsite at the jail in order to provide case management and assistance in getting linked with services upon release. They are currently being trained on all OTA services and programs. The goal is to get the inmates linked to Medicaid and other entitlements prior to their release.

In addition, they are working on implementing a Vivitrol project for opioid or alcohol dependent individuals. Vivitrol (naltrexone) is medication that blocks the effects of opioids and alcohol. The case managers would follow up with these individuals for one year after release. The goal is to get this program operational by October.

Ms. Becker and Ms. Jacobson are helping the Jail reentry staff get linked to the community. This involves meeting with the Coordinated Entry and other community partners. OTA staff will help inmates get connections for housing, employment and other services. These connections will help give inmates get a second chance. The OTA staff members working at the jail will focus on inmates with substance abuse issues. They will follow them up to one year.

There will be an Opiate Task Force meeting on July 17 at 5:00 p.m. Ms. Jacobson will email information out on the Opioid Summit in Rockaway on August 15 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. featuring Vance Johnson.

Ms. Jacobson said that the Prosecutor's office are hosting panel discussions on community policing programs. The next program will be on Wed., Aug. 15, in Rockaway at Christ Church in Rockaway.

Mental Health Administrator – Ms. Becker

The Forum debriefing meeting went well. There were some fresh new ideas for next year. Much concern was expressed over Logisticare (Medicaid transportation provider) and its unreliability. Discussed the possibility of having a focus group about transportation. It would be a good idea to bring MAPS, Logisticare, Lift and Uber all together. Ms. Alexander suggested a subcommittee to work on this. Ms. Becker stated she believes this is doable. Questions could be asked to the providers. Once the meeting is over the board could write a statement regarding transportation problems in Morris County.

Ms. Alexander stated that transportation issues are brought up every year at the Forum with little follow up on issues/problems that were discussed in the past. Ms. Becker stated that Mr. Basto has been the facilitator at the Forum for the last several years. He requested copies of the forum summaries since he may put together a white paper on this. Ms. Becker stated that there will be a final report and summary posted to the county website at <https://hs.morriscountynj.gov/>

Navigating Hope will be an expansion of the Hope One van. The Navigating Hope van will have a broader scope of services that will complement Hope One. The board will ask Navigating Hope staff to give a presentation once they are up and running. They will start with a team consisting of an OTA member and a Family Promise member that will work with providers to serve the community. They will use laptops, make calls to help clients and use other high tech equipment.

VIII. Joint PAC Report – No Report

IX. Old Business

Ms. DeGraw stated that at the last board meeting discussion ensued over concern that an elderly person may not be admitted to a nursing home because they are on psychotropic medications. Ms. DeGraw said they have been asking at the Caregiver's Coalition whether this has been an issue. One nurse stated she had a patient denied to a facility that was on one of these medications. Ms. DeGraw suggested we get someone to come and talk about this. Only a certain number of patients with psychotropic medications are allowed in each nursing home. Too many patients on these medications may cause the nursing home's ratings to go down. They need a limited amount of these patients in order to keep their ratings and providers want to be sure they keep their ratings. Ms. Alexander stated at times there are also staffing issues and one nurse could have to care for up to 25 patients.

Ms. Schnapp thinks it is great that this is being talked about at the Caregiver's Coalition and that they advocate for these issues. Ms. DeGraw suggested this be an issue for our board to advocate. Ms. Alexander will try to get a presenter to come and talk about this.

X. New Business –

Fliers were distributed on the Knock Out Opiate Abuse Songwriters Scholarship Contest. Those interested can make a video of themselves performing an original song, lyrics, or musical composition and tell why this cause is important. The performances will be held at the Knock Out Opioid Abuse Concert on October 4. The grand prizewinner will be selected at the contest/concert on October 4. For more information, see <https://LIFECENTERSTAGE.ORG>

Ms. Mocarski commented that Ms. Vicky Mulligan, Board Member and founder of Rest, Stop and Rejuvenate and her staff did a great job at the Forum with creative ideas, picture taking and songs, which inspired all. The video of the pictures they took at the Forum can be found on their website (noted above).

Mr. Berman stated that his agency, Willow Tree Counseling, established a free service for parents that have lost a child through addiction. Most of these children were lost in their mid-twenties. The group is held every third Wednesday at the First Presbyterian Church in New Vernon.

Fliers were distributed on the Festival of Hope to be held on Sat., Sept. 15 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Chilton Medical Center in Pompton Plains. This is a free community focused event designed to promote education about mental health awareness, depression and suicide prevention, and the importance of access to medical health care. Registration is required. To register go to <https://AtlanticHealth.cvent.com/festivalofhope>.

XI. Open to the Public –

Ms. Aura Dunn stated this is her first meeting and she is looking for ways to get involved. She is very passionate about these matters.

XII. Adjourn –

Motion made by Ms. La Juan Tucker to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Charlie Berman seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Mocarski
Program Development Aide

