



Macon County Mental Health Task Force

MINUTES
February 24, 2012

Members Present: Ronnie Beale, Martin Wadewitz, Jim Bottomley, Jim Bruckner, Jane Kimsey, Paula Ledford, Kathy McGaha, Mike Neidig, & Andy Shields

Call to Order: Jane Kimsey welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:36

Approval of Minutes: No notes were available from the meeting held in September

Updates

Sheriff's Department – Mr. Shields stated there has been a 38% increase in the number of commitments over last year at this time. It is taking 148% more officer hours to process these commitments. The time involved in processing paperwork is 133% more than this time last year and the amount of time to transport the commitment patients is 75% more than at this time last year. (Attachment 1 – Transport Report for 2011)

410 hours last year

525 this year

104,000 – man hours

The biggest problem is the lack of beds and there are no other alternatives

Of the 138 commitments 30 were broken

It takes approximately 346 hours to find a combative juvenile a bed

73 male & 66 female (they have to send two male officers with a female patient unless a female officer is available)

There are now 18 part time officers on staff to transport and sit with commitment patients. Mr. Shields had no complaints about the response of the emergency response team. The department is constantly rotating staff into the program to get them trained up and once they've been in the program for approximately 3 months they are burned out and they rotate off. There is discussion that one room at the hospital is being prepared for use as a safe room by removing all possible objects that could be used as weapons.

Raleigh – Attorney General's office is working on a new process for involuntary commitments. The State has cost shifted this to the Counties

State funding was cut by ½

Macon Psychological was not on the list for this meeting and they said they would be willing to come to the next meeting if we wanted them to

Schools – Ms. Ledford reported that the program is working well in the schools. Due to the large number of referrals and having only 2 therapists, there is a wait list for services. If the client is identified by the parent as needing to be seen immediately the therapist is recommending that they contact a provider sooner than wait to see a school therapist. They are adding additional staff. There has been success from the recommendations that were made in the past year. Ms. Ledford said she would try to get a number of the disciplinary referrals to see if the grades and graduation percentage of these students were better. Mr. Beale asked for information on the number of children receiving services and what the outcomes have been. Children are being referred earlier to try to redirect behavior problems. The ability to provide these services is dependent upon the Medicaid funds. Macon Psychological is providing services for at least one child who did not have Medicaid just because the child was in desperate need. The question was asked about how often they are able to see each child in the school system. The staff at this time is not adequate to see all the needy children. Ms. Ledford said they are currently training more staff. By March 7th they should have 6 therapists in the schools. They are only taking on as many children as they can provide adequate services for. The hope is that by the time school starts in the fall of 2012 they will have adequate staff to provide care for all of the children in need. Due to the fact that Macon Psychological is so easy to work with the likelihood of referrals is greater. Ms. Ledford received a text that 170 school children have been referred so far. Of these, 30 are on a waiting list.

Macon County Public Health is allowing Macon Psychological to use space at the health department. Mike Neidig said he may have space available for them to use and will check for availability.

Walk-In Clinic – There was no one available to report. Mr. Neidig did state that people were being assessed but there were not enough employees to provide the services that are needed. There is a high turn over at Appalachian. They do not refer out.

DSS – The seven western most DSS's met to determine what they wanted to be the continuum of child mental health services and to identify the providers available to give services. TF-CBT and Multi-Systemic were gaps in service continuum with no one available to provide services. Kids Place has received a grant to train clinicians in TF-CBT. Partnering with additional mental health providers is going well. 75% of DSS children are being provided with services. We have to be proactive in making sure these children continue to receive services after the waiver is implemented.

Guardianships – DSS will be getting all appointments for mental health patients. They are working with Maria Spaulding with DHHS to get more money.

LME – There will be eleven LME's statewide. If we did not have Angel Medical Center willing to be a partner on commitments we would be out of luck. Mr. Beale would like to propose to the LME by way of resolution that they appoint a liaison from the LME to start the process at the state level to secure beds for the six far west counties. There is a hospital in Andrews that is closed that could be proposed as a site. LME will now technically become an Insurance company. Beth Melcher the DHHS Assistant Secretary is the most knowledgeable person on mental health services.

Mental Health Providers – As of July 1, 2012 the LME will be choosing the providers, Mr. Neidig stated that various agencies can't keep staff to provide the services needed. It is unpredictable which providers will survive the waiver.

NAMI – Debbie could not be here due to medical issues

Legislative Updates – Ronnie Beale – 122C is made up of the boards – Nelson Dollar that is the head of the committee tried to cut out the participation of the county commissioners on the board. That did not happen. Allows 1. Commissioner per county and those members to appoint the rest of the board. Need to get structure set in place so it cannot be changed. Need to be able to maintain local input. If the Medicaid waiver doesn't start to go well they will stop using this process. Smoky Mountain is currently doing a good job using this model but if they mess it up they will pull the plug and change the process. If 80% of county commissions approve a vote it can be approved. The MCO to leave financial hardship in – electing county. They want all county managers to serve instead of the county commissioners. They would not be subject to term limits.

The Senior Services/Community Resource Center Building will be named in honor of Dorothy R. & John L. Crawford on April 27th from 2:00 to 4:00. Commissioner Beale asked everyone to try to be there.

Mr. Wadewitz reported that TelaStroke will start at AMC in April. TelaStroke will allow a neurologist to consult with AMC and patient to make a determination whether a patient can stay at AMC or needs to be transferred. Telapsychiatry will start at a later date. Telapsychiatry will allow AMC physician and patient to consult with a psychiatrist on mental health patients. This service should provide better treatment of the patient and potentially could provide earlier determination on patient options.

Other Business

Community Care Free Clinic – Mr. Neidig has been volunteering at the clinic to handle any mental health patient needs. He would like to see this service expand. He has been volunteering at the clinic a couple times a month.

Mr. Bottomley visited local providers of mental health services in the area with a reporter recently to assess the mental health referral process. He asked that a list of providers with contact information be published so people know who to call for what services. This list was published in the Franklin Press.

Next Meeting Date: June 1st at 8:30 – A/B if available

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes recorded by Charlene Bellavance