

ARLINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD

Mental Health Committee

October 22, 2014

Approved 12/3/14

Committee Members Present: Anne Hermann (Co-Chair), Judy Deane (Co-chair), Tom Quinn, Richard Smith, Debra Byrd, Sam Howlett,

Committee Members Absent: Betsy Greer, John Blount, Scott Brannon, Caroline Bragdon, Susan Lowry Ann Wroth, Lee Long, Brian Berke

Guests: Shelli Wargo, Alice Straker, Jim Mack, Wes Sanchez

Call to Order: Ms. Herrmann called the meeting to order at the Drewry Building at 6:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: The Committee approved the October 3 Committee minutes without correction.

Presentation: Ms. Wargo acting Assessment and Intake Unit Manager presented and overview of the new program. The mission of the program is to provide intake and assessment for adults seeking substance abuse and mental health services at the Behavioral Healthcare Division, address emergency needs, connect those meeting admission criteria to appropriate clinical services, and refer/link individuals that do not meet admission criteria to alternative community services. There are 4 staff including the program manager. Ms. Wargo described the intake process from the initial telephone call, to the comprehensive intake assessment, and referral to the appropriate program; and she at times contrasted the current process to what was replaced beginning May 2014. She also described the program's contribution to the managed care process, including the completion of required service assessments, and their relation to the Financial Management Branch staff's financial assessments. Ms. Deane questioned the access times and client satisfaction with the new process. Ms. Wargo noted the standard was 10 business days for the intake assessment and 10 business days for the first clinician appointment, even though there are exceptions in emergencies or if these would result in excessive delays. The clients have not yet been assessed for their satisfaction with the process.

Both co-chairs expressed concern at the length of the wait time and also emphasized the importance of having the phone lines staffed, so that people seeking help can immediately connect with a human being. Ms. Wargo also noted that the unit does not have staff to keep the phone live full time, although they do work hard to return messages promptly. When Ms. Deane asked if another position would reduce the wait time from 10 business days to the 48 hours targeted by Ms. Kemp, Ms. Wargo indicated that only one additional position wouldn't achieve that, since each clinician can only do 2 intake interviews per day, given the length of the interview and the necessary paperwork. Ms. Wargo indicated that it is still too early in the process to say definitely whether wait times will be stable or changing, in part because a new clinician was recently added to the unit,

There were also questions about no-shows. Ms. Wargo indicated that the increase in wait time has not led to an increase in the no-show rate, which continues to run at approximately 50%. Ms. Wargo indicated that the no-shows are not really a problem for staff scheduling, in the sense that staff use that time to answer phones, return messages, contact families and do paperwork. She also noted that the staff follows -up on every no-show and tries to set another appointment.

Mental Health Director's Report

Dr. Orenstein noted that the new Executive Director, Beth Tschopp, was hired and is expected onboard November 5, and he briefly described her background. There followed a brief discussion of a number of recent staff changes and how this created some concern on the part of clients and staff but also provided an opportunity for positive change.

Dr. Orenstein noted that Dr. Larson, Medical Director, had resigned effective December 12. The position is being advertised and there are interested applicants.

Dr. Orenstein reported the current status of the closure of the Roosevelt group home and the move of clients into the Kensington apartments. The move is planned for November 1 into two 3-bedroom and 2 single apartments, for a net increase of two beds. Seven of the 8 clients are determined and all are very positive and looking forward to the move. In response to a question from Ms. Deane, Dr. Orenstein described that the RFP for the group homes has not yet been released by Purchasing and the current contract continues month-to-month.

The Committee then reviewed the draft meeting schedule. Dr. Orenstein reminded the members of the discussion at the last meeting and noted some highlights in the draft. In addition to the senior adult services and intake services already presented, upcoming topics will relate to: peers, emergency services, discharge planning, community support teams, a joint meeting with the child committee and young adult services, PACT, Employment Services, homeless outreach and forensic services. The schedule was accepted by the Committee. ACTION: Dr. Orenstein will proceed with implementing the schedule and will inform the prospective presenters.

Chair's Report: Ms. Herman made the following announcements: the Beacon Fifty+ Expo will be held at the Ballston Mall 10/26; and there will be a legislative forum at Fairlington Community Center on 11/7. The panel will include members of the local General Assembly Delegation, and the focus will be on aging.

Ms. Deane noted the following: there is a client art show at Drewry on Oct 24 and a lecture about the RAISE services for young adults with a first psychotic episode scheduled for 11/21 at the Sequoia auditorium; the CSB retreat will be held this weekend; and the CSB will be meeting with legislators in November.

Adjournment and Next Meeting: The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM. The next meeting will be 6:00 PM, December 3, Room 201 Drewry Center.