

# ARLINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD

## Mental Health Committee

December 3, 2014

Approved 1/7/14

**Committee Members Present:** Judy Deane (Co-chair), Betsy Greer, John Blount, Tom Quinn, Richard Smith, Debra Byrd, Sam Howlett, Susan Lowry

**Committee Members Absent:** Anne Hermann (Co-Chair), Scott Brannon, Caroline Bragdon, Ann Wroth, Lee Long, Brian Berke

**Guests:** Alice Straker, Lizabeth Schuch, Robin Cowles, Dayna Belfiore

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

**Approval of Minutes:** The Committee approved the October 22 Committee minutes without correction.

**Presentation:** Lizabeth Schuch, Wellness and Recovery Manager, and Robin Cowles, a peer service provider via PRS contract, presented on the role of peers. Ms. Schuch gave an overview of what a “certified peer specialist” is, how they help consumers, and the prospect of credentialing and Medicaid billing. In response to a question, Ms. Schuch indicated she would try to determine how many peer specialists there were in the State. She listed the current BHD peer positions which include staff in PACT, CSE, Clarendon House, Job Avenue and the Peer Helping Peer Recovery Center, in addition to the SA Bureau. Also, there was a wide-ranging discussion of staff with “lived experience” versus the specific “peer specialist” role; and training, credentials and grades and salaries. Ms. Greer framed part of the discussion by asking what there was about the peer specialist that would convince managers and legislators to support funding these positions.

Ms. Cowles detailed her background and provider roles. After describing her behavioral health history, she described that she is a 20 hour/week PRS employee embedded in Job Avenue, primarily providing employment services at Clarendon House. She leads work adjustment groups and provides vocational counseling to Clarendon House. Ms. Cowles highlighted how her history is helpful in engaging clients. She described also how as a pilot, she is assigned 10 hours weekly to the PACT program providing peer counseling. She described how she receives referrals from the PACT case managers for assistance in engaging clients and counsels them and how this has been successful in reengaging hard-to-engage PACT clients. In response to a number of questions and comments, Ms. Cowles also described her training and experience and thoughts about how her own experience helped in relating to clients.

**Mental Health Director’s Report:** Dr. Orenstein distributed and highlighted the finalized Committee schedule. He noted that Beth Tschopp will be attending the 1/7/15 meeting. He also noted that a new subcommittee, the Group Home Committee, is being formed. It is now seeking family members and the first meeting should be scheduled in late January. In addition, the Young Adult Committee is being reactivated with a meeting scheduled for 12/17, 9:00 am in Sequoia 400. Dr. Orenstein described that an ad hoc staff committee met several times to review young adult service procedures and the RAISE model, to determine service gaps and needs. There followed a brief discussion of the RAISE model, which is on the agenda of the upcoming Young Adult Committee meeting. Finally, Dr. Orenstein distributed copies of the CSB Annual Report.

Mr. Howlett, after describing his background and his interest in the Committee addressing quality of care issues, asked what the purpose of the MH Committee was. Ms. Deane described that it was to oversee adult mental health services and determine opportunities to improve services, by identifying gaps and what can be done about them. She noted the functions of the subcommittees, and there was also some discussion of staff qualifications and credentials as a potential quality issue.

**Chair's Report:** None

**Announcements:** Ms. Greer noted the following: Stigma and Mental Illness presentation at GWU Hospital, 12/11 at 7:30 pm; the open house at Mary Marshall 12/18/14 3-5 pm; and the Clarendon House holiday party 12/11/14, 12-2:00 pm at Spider Kelly's.

**Adjournment and Next Meeting:** The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM. The next meeting will be 6:00 PM, January 7, 2015 in Room 201 Drewry Center.