

**Meeting Minutes of  
The Governor's Council on Behavioral Health  
8:30 a.m., Thursday, July 14, 2009**

The Governor's Council on Behavioral Health met at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 14, 2009, in Barry Hall's Conference Room 126, 14 Harrington Road, Cranston, Rhode Island.

Members Present: Richard Leclerc, Chair; Leo Cronan; Scotti DiDonato, Sandra DelSesto; Mark Fields; James Gillen; Richard Hill; Joseph Le; Peter Mendoza; Elizabeth Earls.

Ex-Officio Members Present: Fredrick Friedman, Department of Corrections (DOC); Denise Achin, Department of Education; Colleen Polselli; Elizabeth Gilheeny and Craig Stenning, Director, Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals.

Guests: Vivian Weisman, Judy Taylor, Ian Knowles, Richard Antonelli; Allison Croke; Frank Pace; Bruce Long; Dawn McGuire; Beth Marootian; Loren Sidman; Ali Kazmin, MD, Connie Henderson

Staff: Charles Williams, Corinna Roy and Lisa Stevens

Once a quorum was established, the Chair, Rich Leclerc, called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. After introductions were conducted, Neil entertained a motion to accept the Minutes of June 11, 2009. Peter Mendoza motioned to approve and Scotti DiDonato seconded the motion. Rich Leclerc called for a vote to approve the minutes, all were in favor and the minutes were approved as written.

**Mandatory enrollment into managed care for adults:** Alison Croke (DHS) presenting: *Attachment I*. Alison was there to discuss a change in the policy (Rhody Health Partners) as it pertains to enrollment, which is now mandatory. Representatives from United Health Care and Neighborhood Health Care were present to answer any questions the Council may have. Requirements for eligibility are: you must be over 21, living in Rhode Island, have only medical assistance, and you must be living in a community placement. Clients no longer have the option to stay in Medicaid-fee-for-service. Enrollment will be effective October 1<sup>st</sup>. Clients will have until December 31<sup>st</sup> to make a change of switching between health plans etc. Every January will be open enrollment. Medicaid covered benefits do not change with Rhody Health Partners. Services that the waiver covers will still be covered as well.

New regulations are in the process with DHS to create similar step down units like SSTAR's; which is a combination of a hospital and a community provider. This would create new services where the IMD restriction is lifted.

Clients will have their cards and will be able to access services by 10/1. At this time business cards were handed out *Attachment II*. Charles Williams mentioned that he and Alison will be meeting with CPNRI, Opioid Treatment providers and with the Mental Health & Substance Abuse providers at each of their offices.

**Updates from MHRH:** Craig Stenning, Director, MHRH – Spoke about disaster planning for H1N1 flu. This will most probably affect RI in September and October. We are entering hurricane season as well as planning ways to respond to the current fiscal crisis. Most state departments are at a 30% decrease in their workforce. The predictions for the H1N1 flu are that 30-50% of the workforce will become sick during a 6 week to 2 month period. We are working to see how we would continue to provide the services we provide under those situations.

Global Waiver Tasc Force Meeting: We are in the initial stages of implementation; most of the emphasis has been placed on nursing home development and the elderly.

Today at 2 pm there will be a ceremony for 71 individuals who were buried here, on the Pastore Campus, to honor them. All but a few have been identified by Chet Browning. These were the poor and forgotten people of their time.

The General Assembly has passed the final version of the budget and identified about 70 million dollars of savings to be distributed among departments. MHRH, being the department with the largest number of employees, received a substantial amount of the reduction to our budget—about 4 million dollars. This statute will be implemented within the next few months. However, MHRH still needs to provide protective service functions for all adults with disabilities not just those with developmental disabilities.

**Subcommittees:** Three subcommittees have been formed; Transitional Youth, Block Grant and Peer Oriented Services. Rich thanked Denise Achin for chairing the Transitional Youth Committee. Rich will chair the Block Grant committee and the Peer Oriented Services is co-chaired by Chaz Gross, Sandra DelSesto, and Ian Knowles.

Reports back from these subcommittees will be heard at the September Council meeting.

**Block Grant Meeting:** Corinna Roy stated that she, Frank Pace and Mark Fields went to the annual Block Grant Conference in June – Kathryn Power presented at that meeting. Corinna asked Kathryn why none of the stimulus dollars were dedicated to our populations. Kathryn confirmed that dollars were not dedicated but could not give an explanation why. We would need to collaborate with other agencies that are getting those dollars to help our clients.

Frank Pace stated that this was his first Block Grant Conference. Of note he learned about combining behavioral health with primary care. Mark Fields stated that this also was his first Block Grant Conference. He stated that the conference covered many areas including senior citizens. He mentioned that they talked about thinking out of the box and to do the best with the monies available in a positive way. His biggest interest was listening to the different ways that each state plans and operates.

**Updates from DCYF:** Frank Pace mentioned that DCYF has been working with its FCCP providers on the new MIS system and software through Harmony which they are putting the finishing touches on. It will be called RIFIS (Rhode Island Family Information System).

There is ongoing work with Medicaid codes for wrap-around services through the global waiver. They are still working on the Phase II paper which is the restructuring of the residential contracts to be more community based.

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS:** Fred Friedman (DOC) spoke about getting access to stimulus funds to create jobs. He mentioned that he leaves for Washington for a two day program called the Crime Reduction Act.

**MHRH** received a small amount of stimulus funding through the RI Department of Public Safety. There are two projects: approximately 104 thousand for recovery support initiatives which will extend some of the recovery support services that are currently being offered through the Access to Recovery grant's populations. In addition, approximately 240 thousand as supplemental and expanded funding for the TPCP (Transition from Prison to Community Program). The Department and the Division of

Information Technologies seem to be clearing a number of hurdles in development for a combined substance abuse/mental health management information data collection system. A vendor has been identified and notices will be sent out. An October 1<sup>st</sup> start up is anticipated.

Access to Recovery is at 105% of intakes and the GPRA follow up rate is at 35%. July 1<sup>st</sup>, Phoenix Houses of New England officially took over the intake assessment process as well as customer service on the vouchers they create. There is a possibility of an ATR III but the details are not clear.

Jim Gillen announced that there is an event at the McAuley House on July 24<sup>th</sup> and all are invited. Another announcement was the Gateway to Recovery Event at Roger Williams National Memorial Park on August 22<sup>nd</sup> which is a WaterFire night. This committee meets here each Friday at 3 PM.

Corinna stated that the block grant application will be completed in August and can be reviewed. This application is due September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Upon motion made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m. The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for **Thursday September 10, 2009, at 8:30 a.m. in the first floor Conference Room 126 at the Barry Hall Building.**

Minutes respectfully recorded and written by:

Lisa Stevens  
Secretary, Governor's Council on Behavioral Health