

MORRIS COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE
ADVISORY BOARD – JUNE 9, 2011

I. Call to Order and Approval of May Minutes –

LaJuan Tucker, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. There was motion to approve the May minutes. The motion to approve the minutes was approved with no abstentions and no opposition.

II. Welcome and Introductions –

Ms. Tucker welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

III. Chair Report – LaJuan Tucker

Ms. Tucker attended the Consumer and Family Forum last week on June 2 at the Ukrainian Cultural Center. The Forum went very well and there was a nice turnout of approximately 140 attendees. Ms. Tucker thanked everyone who worked on planning the Forum. Ms. Becker should have the summary report completed and distributed by the August meeting.

IV. Action Items: New Hope Subgrant Modification – Beth Jacobson

New Hope has requested that \$6,210 be moved out of the adult short term residential facility and the money moved to the Men's Halfway House. This will pay for the rest of one resident's stay and will also allow an additional resident for 2011. By shifting this money around they are trying to meet the current needs of the residents. Motion was made to allow the transfer of the \$6,210 to the men's halfway house. Motion was approved with one abstention and no opposition.

Action Items: 2012 DMHS Contract Review – Laurie Becker

Ms. Becker is requesting the Funding Subcommittee to review the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) Contracts for Saint Clare's, Hope House, NewBridge and Community Hope on June 15 and provide a letter of recommendation on the MHSAB's behalf. Motion was made to empower the Funding Subcommittee to review the contracts and provide a letter of recommendation to DMHAS on the MHSAB's behalf. The motion was approved with no opposition and no abstentions.

Lou Schwarcz, Executive Director of Mental Health Association of Morris County, asked for a letter of support from the MHSAB to DMHAS for the Mental Health Association of Morris County (MHAMC) to expand its current Residential Intensive Treatment Program (RIST) by 12 to serve a total of 54 individuals. This RIST team provides case management type services. DMHAS put out a Request for Funding Proposal (RFP) for expansion of the current RIST program. Ms. Becker asked for a motion to send a letter of support from the MHSAB to DMHAS in favor of having the Mental Health Association of Morris County RIST Team provide the expansion of this program. The Mental Health Association of Morris County is the only RIST provider serving Morris

residents. Motion was made to send a letter of support for the MHAMC's proposal to provide the expansion of this service.

V. Saint Clare's Screening Waiver Application – Discussion and Recommendations to NJDMHAS

Ms. Becker stated that Saint Clare's is the designated Screening Center for Morris County. Morristown Memorial and Chilton Hospitals are affiliated with Saint Clare's to provide psychiatric emergency services. Saint Clare's has submitted a Screening Waiver Application to Division of Mental Health. Susanne Graham, the Screening Center Coordinator, was present to discuss the Waiver Application and answer any questions. Part of the approval process is for the MHSAAAB to provide a letter with the decision to endorse or not endorse the Screening Center Waiver.

Susanne explained what a designated screening center's function is and how it works. If someone is a danger to themselves or a danger to others there is a trained screener at Saint Clare's that will evaluate the person. This can be done at Saint Clare's or the screener can go to the site to evaluate the patient. The screener is there on behalf of the patient. The screener assesses whether or not the patient meets the criteria for commitment and what can be done to help them. The screener then speaks to the psychiatrist attached to the screening center. The psychiatrist may agree or disagree with the screener. The psychiatrist makes the final decision whether or not to sign the clinical certificate to commit the individual to hospitalization.

The screening center waiver would allow for the emergency room (ER) physician to evaluate the patient if the psychiatrist is not available and to sign the clinical certificate. The preference would still be for a psychiatrist to see the patient but if the psychiatrist is not available to see the patient N.J. State law says that the emergency room doctor must at least talk to the hospital psychiatrist on the phone prior to making the decision of whether or not to commit the patient. Thus the ER doctor discusses the case with the screener, and then by phone with psychiatrist prior to completing the clinical certificate. The use of the ER physician is primarily for only after hours, weekends and holidays.

A benefit of the waiver is to keep things moving and to not hold up the patient's getting treatment. The whole process should be completed within 72 hours and if committed the patient is then placed in a treatment facility of their choice. Within 24 hours of the patient's commitment they will be re-evaluated by a psychiatrist at the treatment facility.

After much discussion with public attendees and board members, the MHSAAAB made the difficult decision to recommend the waiver with certain safeguards and allow the emergency room MD's, in place of psychiatrists, to sign the clinical certificate for involuntary hospital commitment during the hours when a psychiatrist was not on site. Ms. Becker will include the letters of comment from

consumers that were sent to the MHSAAAB and were in opposition to the waiver. The motion to endorse the waiver was passed with one person in opposition and no abstentions.

The primary rationale for approval was the knowledge that there are intensive psychiatric assessments provided throughout the screening process via credentialed screeners, mental health practitioners, hospital psychiatrists and screening center psychiatrists via the telephone.

VI. Open to the Public –

Ms. Buchanan stated there is a need to talk further about the State's planned Medicaid Global Waiver concept. The Human Services Directors met with both Commissioners from the Department of Human Services and the Division of Children and Families. The Governor has budgeted a major savings from changes in the Medicaid Program, including a Medicaid Waiver with a managed care provision. This change to a managed care environment has major implications for all of the work in human services in the County, from working with children to seniors and the various populations in need. Currently there are more questions than answers as this is all evolving so quickly. Some of these changes will begin to happen as early as July. (There is further information available on both web sites.) Since the proposed changes will affect so many, Ms. Buchanan would like Morris County Department of Human Services to host an information and discussion meeting, open to all providers as well as County Advisory Board members. Ms. Buchanan will notify all when the meeting date is set.

Ms. Carol DeGraw mentioned that there was discussion at the Caregiver's Coalition meeting that 600,000 letters were sent out to people on Medicaid. Medicaid clients were informed of upcoming changes. They were told they must pick one of the four providers listed on the letter they received. Ms. DeGraw thinks they may extend the deadline for clients to pick their new provider. Some concerns were expressed that the HMO's listed may not cover numerous specialists. There was also concern over Medicaid beds no longer being held for clients that become ill and have to leave the facility to go to the hospital. There is much concern in the addictions area since provider agencies may not be able to stay in business since they will not have any contracted revenue.

Ms. Buchanan requested that she and Laurie Becker be kept updated of any news. MHSAAAB members will be involved in providing local input to NJDHS regarding the Medicaid Waiver plan.

Ms. Becker mentioned that 2011 Grant-In-Aid site reviews will be starting shortly. This is a great way to learn about various organizations and what they do. Laurie requested that anyone interested get in touch with her to sign up for 2011 site monitorings.

The 2011 Annual Co-Occurring Disorders Task Force Conference will be held on June 24 from 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Ukrainian Center in Whippany. There is still room if anyone wishes to sign up, please contact Pat Mocarski.

VII. Adjourn –

The meeting adjourned at 6:50.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Mocarski
Program Development Aide

Mental Health Substance Abuse Advisory Board
Attendance
Thursday, June 9, 2011

Members Present

Carol DeGraw
Margaret Himsl
Marcy McMann
LaJuan Tucker
Charles LaRussa
Barbara Ward
Deborah Ward
David Walker

Affiliation

United Way of Morris County
Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative
Prosecutor's Office
Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative

Members Absent

Gregg Benson
Charlie Berman
Karen Cutaneo
Lauren Hirtes
Fran Libasci
Spiro Milonas
Susan Tietjen

Affiliation

Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative

State Staff Present

Theresa Wilson
Vivian Schwartz

Affiliation

DMHS
DMHS

County Staff Present

Laurie Becker
Beth Jacobson
Pat Fetzer-Mocarski

Affiliation

MCDHS
MCDHS
MCDHS

Public and Guests

Valerie Fox
Susanne Graham
Christa Simons
Lou Schwartz

Affiliation

Consumer
Saint Clare's
Mental Health Association of MC
Mental Health Association of MC