

Developmental Disabilities Sub-Committee
April 20, 2022

Present: Brian Hart, Michelle Nicholas, Rene' Snyder, AJ Kircher, Leisa Alger, Melissa Stafford, Sean Eagen

Excused:

Minutes:

Approved without changes. (Rene' Snyder motioned/AJ Kircher second)

Director of Community Services Report – Brian Hart

- **Local Plan:** The State has not opened the site in which to enter our Local Plan. They are currently holding state wide meetings to modify how the system was designed and categorized. The system is not user friendly. They are hoping to have it open and ready to enter the local plans in June.

Brian emailed the committee members a list of 9 or 10 items to prioritize. Brian stated that the number one item is Workforce issues. We need to promote the Health Care field, look at loan forgiveness, and find qualified staff to fill positions. All agencies are short staffed. We need to be touching base with students earlier. Maybe looking at relaxing some of the requirements for certain positions from a 4 year degree to a 2 year degree. We need higher rate reimbursements from the State to support qualified staff. A Rate Review would be welcomed by all providers. Brian stated that a Detention Center is offering pet insurance, a sign on bonus and increased salary to entice new staff. In the NYS Budget they are increasing wages for Health Care (\$2.00 in October and \$1.00 next year) but this doesn't over all agencies. OPWDD has been left out again. There doesn't seem to be any solutions. Once one area is stabilized, then it de-stabilizes another area, as agencies advocate against each other. How do we modify tele-health. Brian said the State has been discussing workforce, in the fact that qualified people just are not there. Even if there was funding, no one is there to fill the positions. The State needs to raise everything all at one time so there is not any advantages/disadvantages from one field to another. We are finding there are more people needing services and not enough qualified staff to give the service.

Brian stated that number two on the priority list is CRISIS Services. This area needs to be expanded. We need Respite for acute situations, not just for planned Respite. There is a gap between agencies and care coordinators. We need to build a bridge with CRISIS. Staff are not trained, there is a need for education and there should be a scope of responsibility as a group. OPWDD has connected with the local Mental Hygiene and ARC to have a Pilot Program.

Brian discussed a situation that happened over the weekend with a DD person who was in the area but lived in another State. Many different agencies were contacted and involved. It all ended well but took several hours to develop a plan.

A committee member asked if we had anything to assist with psychotropic medication administration. We need a resource in the community to assist individuals who are not independent in taking their medications. It would be helpful if there was someone who would fill their pill tray for the week. These individuals are not taking their medications as prescribed. There are individuals out there who just don't understand or can't seem to process from start to finish. The IRA's have nursing staff who oversee the distribution of medications. OPWDD require annual recertification, there would need to be changes from the State to make that happen. If they have a prescription and have home visiting, maybe they could assist them to fill their pill tray with them so they will eventually learn how to fill it themselves.

Brian stated that number three on the priority list was Respite Housing. There is a need for caregiver relief for children with recreation activities built in. We need to not have housing for life, movement opens the door for those who need a lower level of care.

Brian stated that number four on the priority list was Children Service Enhancement. Data collection from respective agencies needs to happen. We need to address Cross System needs with children. Commissioners and Directors of Community Services are looking into this. There are children in the ER for days. They need to assess their needs as soon as possible.

Brian stated that Transportation was on last year's plan and wanted to know if we should keep it on this year's plan. The committee members agreed that there is a need for transportation for urgent as well as regular appointments. The transportation has not improved, but the demand has increased.

Brian stated that Arounja was on last year's plan and wanted to know if we should keep it on this year's plan. The committee members agreed that there is a need for people to access where they can find help with mental health and substance abuse.

Brian stated that tele-med was on last year's plan and wanted to know if we should keep it on this year's plan. The committee members agreed that there is a need in our community to utilize this system.

➤ **Sharing by Community Members:**

- **Chemung-Schuylers ARC – ARC/CLMHD/CCSI Pilot** – they are currently working on deliverables. They are starting with two counties Erie and Wyoming and they are collaborating with them. They are training the stakeholders. We are glad to be part of this. They are looking for Urban and Rural areas, thus those two counties. It will be the Mobile Mental Health CRISIS and CSI DD working together to meet the needs of Individuals with developmental disabilities who are not enrolled in CSI DD.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 15, 2021 via ZOOM.