



MENTAL HEALTH LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes – February 22th 2018

Special Meeting with Director Hogan of DPHHS

Voting Members Present: Deborah McAtee, Nancy Filbin, Dr. Donna Kelsch, Betty Stroock, Tom Peluso, Carol Townsend, Shelly Johnson, Matt Kelley, Commissioner Joe Skinner, Commissioner I Ho Pomeroy, Chelsey Voegele, and Andrea Lower

Non-Voting Members present: Ellie Martin, Rebecca Adams, Sarah Webb, Rick Gale, Shellie Aune, Michael Foust, Edward Sypinsky, Betsy Asserson, Christopher Coburn, Chad Berg, Melanie Hamling, Jessica Seekins, Glenda Noyes, Sita Feinberg, Rowen Schuler, Jim Stordahl, Sita Feinberg, Rowen Schuler, Steve Ette, Vickie DeBoer, Vivienne Riselely

Voting Members Absent: Susan Gregory, Shirley Kaufman, Renee McLendon, Lori Reynolds, Vickie Groeneweg, Chelsey Pengra, Breanna Hume, Katelyn McAree

Staff: Stephene Kamerman

Chair McAtee welcomed Ms. Hogan to the LAC meeting, explaining the LAC's goals and what our big accomplishments have been.

Director Hogan requested that everyone in the room introduce themselves.

Director Hogan then explained her background, how she acquired the director position and what state of affairs she is currently facing. Ms. McAtee asked what her philosophy is for managing the cuts at DPHHS and she stated that she doesn't have one. Cuts were determined by the division heads.

Mr. Foust asked Director Hogan if there is a strategy in place to provide consistent support for the future. Director Hogan responded that there is not. She reminded everyone that DPHHS is at the mercy of the House of Representatives when they meet every two years. She encouraged the LAC to stay active in communicating with our representatives.

Mr. Kelly requested feedback from Director Hogan regarding systematic communication from DPHHS to the group, as well as outside peers to maintain a sustainably fundable system. Director Hogan responded that she is optimistic about the presence of one representative at this meeting. She will continue to work with legislation to continue the commitment. Additionally, there is a possibility of telecommunicating with Zoe Bernard of DPHHS.

Ms. Voegele asked about specific plans to address the gaps in child services. Director Hogan responded that she is proud of where we are and what we have done. She added that Child and Family Services did not communicate well with Mental Health initially. This is a work in progress that will continue to improve. Clarification was requested regarding the gaps in low income families vs. kids with insurance that don't get the coverage they require. Director Hogan responded that Medicaid expansion is now payer source, which frees up block grants for these types of things.

Ms. Lower requested feedback in filling gaps within the Criminal Justice division, which sees up to 65% of intake affected by mental illness. Director Hogan again referred to the Medicaid Expansion possibility. She agreed that there are a lot of cracks in the system.

Mr. Peluso addressed his concerns regarding the inefficiencies of the reimbursement costs for services. Director Hogan requested specifics from Mr. Peluso so that she may address them. Mr. Foust mentioned the additional staff required for a facility to operate, to include front end and back end services, such as billing and phone service. Respite care and travel reimbursement are also good examples.

Dr. Kelsch questioned how to proceed with an emotional disturbance case that is only allotted 10 sessions per year. What if they need more? Director Hogan responded to please contact her directly at Sheilahogan@mt.gov. She continued that this has been very difficult for everyone. She needs to gauge where things should be, while still stretching funds as far as possible.

Ms. Johnson requested feedback regarding treatment court and inmates as block grants funds are inaccessible to them. She added that it is important to meet/evaluate the individuals for a plan on how to address their specific needs. Director Hogan requested Ms. Johnson's phone number, further explaining that if the block grant funds are not utilized, that they will be returned to the original fund. She agreed to investigate the reason why these funds may not be used.

Chair McAtee adjourned the meeting for scheduling purposes, but welcomed everyone to stick around and further discuss topics.

Next Meeting: March 12, 2018