

# **Dutchess County Special Populations Work Group Meeting**

November 16, 2015

## **KEY AGENDA ITEMS AND INFORMATION:**

The following was the agenda for the meeting:

### Agenda:

- **Introduction of RESTART staff**
- **Minutes approval**
- **Opening of RESTART unit**
- **RESTART updates**
- **Software updates**
- **The heroin population and issues with mental illness**
- **Barriers within the long term and short term populations**
- **Youth (under 21)**

Other Items:

### Present:

Ronald Knapp, Chair, City of Poughkeepsie Police Chief  
Shirley Adams, Catharine Street Community Center, CIC Committee Chair  
Tom Angell, Public Defender  
Cheryl Atkinson, Project MORE  
Sam Busselle, Citizen  
Amanda Delaney, HVMH  
Bill Eckert, Dutchess County Mental Hygiene Jail Based Services  
Craig Eckert, Project MORE  
Colleen Feroe, DMH  
Jon Heller, Dutchess County Office of Probation and Community Corrections  
Martin Lynch, Project MORE  
Howie Merritt, DC Jail  
Steve Miccio, PEOPLE, Inc.  
Winifred Milkovich, DC Jail  
Honorable Frank Mora, Poughkeepsie City Court  
Randall Pentagine, Project MORE  
Mark Sasvary, HVMH  
Mary Ellen Still, Director of Probation & Community Corrections  
Kevin Warwick, Consultant, ASA  
Nicole Willoughby, Project MORE/CTC

### **1. Introduction of RESTART staff**

Bill Eckert introduced the new staff for the RESTART Program. The case managers from Project MORE are: Cheryl Atkinson, Craig Eckert, and Randall Pentigine. Amanda Delaney and Kristen Hanlon are the Master's level clinicians from Hudson Valley Mental Health. Bill Goff and Bill Eckert from DMH complete the staffing for RESTART. Bill Eckert said that there are 45 people on the men's program unit and 10-12 on the women's for a total of about 60 people in RESTART.

### **2. Minutes approval**

Ron reported that the minutes for September and October were emailed to all committee members. The minutes were approved on a motion by Judge Frank Mora and Marty Lynch.

### **3. Opening of RESTART unit / RESTART updates**

Kevin reported that the RESTART staff has been hired and are already running classes and groups. Tom asked for a brief background on the staff. Mark Sasvary of HVMH, reported that Amanda Delaney had previously interned at DCJ with Bill Eckert and Bill Goff. Mark said that Kristina Hanlon, who is a mental health counselor, has a background working with challenging populations. Many people were interviewed for these positions, and it was critical to find people who could adapt to this environment and be successful in it.

Marty reported that they have three staff members with RESTART. Randy Petagine has over 20 years of experience as a case manager in a jail/prison environment. Craig Eckert is trained in all the intervention programs such as Ready Set Work (RSW), Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT), and Community Transition Center (CTC) Programs. Cheryl Atkinson was formerly employed at the Westchester County Jail as a case manager, and is also a former NYS parole officer. Nicole Willoughby is the Director of the CTC Program, and has been delivering the MRT program and case management services pending hiring of full time RESTART staff.

Bill Eckert added that all the new hires are exceptional. Kevin said that we are seeing this curriculum being used across the system and this will show great benefits in the following year. Jon Heller said that due to the work of the Flow Committee, they are able to screen for appropriate candidates for RESTART and track them as they return to the community. Marty added that there are now inmates asking to participate in RESTART.

Sam asked if there were any budgetary concerns. Marty said that the only real cost is for the workbooks that are \$25 each, but this was budgeted for. The workbooks are copyrighted and cannot be copied, so each individual receives his/her own workbook. Kevin added that this program is only for high-risk offenders, and this cost was anticipated. He also noted that this program will likely result in a reduction in recidivism, and also create important connections to the community. RESTART is now attached to a community ATI system that was already there and working.

Tom asked about the risk scores for ITAP. Colleen responded that she did not have an answer at this time, but that Probation can provide those results from the Proxy and COMPAS. ITAP also uses the information from the COMPAS. Mary Ellen noted that Gary is gathering data about each program.

Tom asked Marty about the quality assurance program in Connecticut. Marty answered that in the state of Connecticut, there is a requirement to use evidence-based programming and that employees were trained in various disciplines and the results were monitored. Kevin said that we already have a Quality Assurance group in place and that our staff are highly trained and qualified. Marty said that MRT also provides training for QA, and Nicole and others will be attending this training. Kevin noted that our QA group will provide performance measures and monitor outcomes.

Bill Eckert said that the inmates on the units appear to be more positive. Approximately 50% of the women have a Proxy score of 4+ and 75% of the men have a 4+ score. There is concern about individuals with lower scores who have serious addictions and maintain high-risk behaviors. We continue to look for inmates who will have an anticipated six to eight weeks in the jail. Kevin suggested a focus group with inmates sometime in December and one has been scheduled for the afternoon of December 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### **4. Software Updates**

The software (COMPAS) has been identified and selected, but is pending final approval by the state. RESTART is currently tracking everyone manually. Marty added that they are using the NY Scale and anticipate this to be approved by the state in the next week or so. This software will do all of the case management, and we want to make sure it is collecting all the needed data. This will include internal and post-release measures. All agencies will be using this same software tool. It was agreed that February 1, 2016 will be the starting point to begin collecting and tracking the comprehensive data points. At that point, RESTART will be fully staffed, trained, and the software will be in place.

#### **5. The heroin population and issues with mental illness**

Tom asked what is currently being done with Vivotrol. Bill Eckert said that we need to select an outpatient facility or referral source for follow-up once the medication is started at the jail. ITAP will be designated for follow-up once certain physical conditions are met. The Department of Health has certain requirements. Bill added that there have been meetings with the pharmaceutical reps and the jail staff. This is not a stand-alone treatment and is not meant to be long-term. Case management is the key.

Bill said that once the person(s) are identified they start Vivotrol while in the jail but 30 days prior to their release. They will work with a case manager to ensure that they have some type of insurance coverage. Colleen added that they will need more nurse practitioners to meet with persons multiple times in the week. ITAP consists of the day rehab and clinical care of clients, and this group will be different from those that go there once a week. There are discussions that those on Vivotrol would go to T-TAP (a program of ITAP) which would provide supportive programming. They are looking to start initially with five people.

#### **FOLLOWING MEETING DATES**

- January 11th (Monday) at 10:30 a.m.
- February 8th (Monday) at 10:30 a.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:05pm.

**NEXT MEETING: MONDAY, DECEMBER 7th at 10:30A.M.**  
**POUGHKEEPSIE**