

Dutchess County Special Populations Work Group Meeting

April 6, 2015

KEY AGENDA ITEMS AND INFORMATION:

Agenda:

1. Crisis Center Update
2. Training for Corrections Staff
3. Curriculum Development
4. Quality Assurance Updates
5. Next Steps Regarding Software

Present:

Ronald Knapp, Chair, City of Poughkeepsie Police Chief
Shirley Adams, Catherine Street Community Ctr, CIC Chair
Thomas Angell, Public Defender, Re-Entry Chair
Onaje Benjamin, DC Jail
Sam Busselle, Citizen
Gary Christensen, Consultant
Bill Eckert, DMH
Colleen Feroe, DMH
William Grady, District Attorney
Jon Heller, Dutchess County Office of Probation and Community Corrections
Margaret Hirst, DMH
Noel Knille, Commissioner, DPW
George Krom, Administrator, DCJ
Marty Lynch, Project MORE
Honorable Frank Mora, City of Poughkeepsie Judge
Eunace Skelly-Senatore, DMH
Mary Ellen Still, Director of Probation, CJC Chair
Kevin Warwick, Consultant, ASAI

The meeting began at 9:07 a.m. On a motion by Tom Angell and Gary Christensen, the minutes of the February 2015 meeting were approved. The February minutes will be posted on the website.

Due to scheduling conflicts, the May 11, 2015 meeting has been changed to May 18, 2015.

1. Crisis Center Update

Kevin said that Steve Miccio would not be available for this meeting. Margaret Hirst, who is also on the committee, reported that they are currently working with Noel and the DPW, as well as

various stakeholders, on the space for the Crisis Center. Noel Knille said that the plans are moving along.

Margaret said that they met with the NYS Department of Health (DOH), OASAS, and the Office of Mental Hygiene (OMH) regarding certifications and waivers for this project. It was decided that the DOH does not need to be involved. OASAS and OMH will work together. Their lawyers will be looking at the regulations and the next steps that will be needed for the project to be granted certification.

The target population will be those with behavioral health issues that either law enforcement or others encounter within the community, who may not need hospitalization or arrest, and can be better served through this center. Gary asked about lower risk individuals who may have behavioral issues, but have come into the jail and have been identified by Probation as potential candidates for the program. Jon Heller said they discussed this possibility and the ability to make referrals from the jail when appropriate. Bill Grady asked how things will work if a person does go to jail after being remanded by a judge. Margaret said that we could advise the judges to call the 24-hour mobile team. They can go see the person, develop a plan and ask the judge to consider those options instead of sending them to jail. Mary Ellen added that if this is not possible, individuals could still be interviewed at the jail with subsequent contact to the judge. Margaret noted that the center will involve many new processes such as the 24-hour mobile team, and it will take time to develop these new procedures. She noted that this is not a housing program. There may be issues with stabilization and case management. There will be 24-hour stabilization, but they will be able to come and go - it will not be a locked facility.

Kevin added that the Transition Center could also take some of the people from the Crisis Center. It will take time to build the processes and procedures, and to determine which persons are appropriate for the Center. It will also take time to coordinate the flow into and out of the Center. Kevin suggested that perhaps a meeting could be arranged to coordinate among the different groups involved. The Crisis Center will be a great option on the front end, but like other similar options will only be appropriate for a certain targeted population. We will need to establish what the actual capacity will be. Again, unlike San Antonio where there were no other services in place, we will need to fit this into a dynamic existing system of diversion, ATIs and interventions here in Dutchess County. In the near future, perhaps the Flow Sub-committee could meet with this committee.

CIT Training

Ron reported on the CIT Training. There were two officers who graduated in March, with five more scheduled in May. Steve is working on scheduling training for June with the expectation that we could then train our own trainers. The County Executive announced that the county would pay for part of this training, with details still being worked out. Tom Angell asked how the State Police would be included. Ron said that we want to include them, but need to determine how this would be done. The Sheriff's Office is looking at creating a Diversion Team that will be available.

2. Training for Corrections Staff

Onaje said that they met with existing staff and are continuing the planning process. There will be a supervisors meeting later this day. Incentivizing the program among inmates will increase interest and excitement in the program.

Kevin also mentioned the need for trauma informed training for corrections staff. George has that program in their training schedule for October/November. This will also be part of their basic training.

3. Curriculum Development

Kevin provided updates on the curriculum. The Restart Program should begin fairly soon, perhaps late May or early June although there may be some groups started in advance of the full program being implemented. Our subcommittee has been working on the curriculum for the programs. New Directions, Seeking Safety, and the NIC curriculum (Ready, Set, Work) are in place. When a vendor is selected, there may be additional training needs.

Tom asked about responses to the RFP. The selection is expected to be completed this week. The actual start date would depend on getting contracts finalized. Onaje asked if the vendor would provide space to meet with clients once they are out. Mary Ellen said that would depend on the needs of the person and the program referred to, but there would be coordination and a transition plan for re-entry.

Bill Eckert reported that the New Directions curriculum would have two modules. One module is for Drug and Alcohol education, and the other module is for Criminal/Addictive Thinking (CBT). There are large quantities of material and it is now a matter of narrowing it down. We are ordering the facilitator's manual for Seeking Safety. This can be used right away in the women's unit. Probation has a facilitator for the Ready Set Work program, and they have offered to bring in someone for that portion of the curriculum. Onaje recently completed the training for Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT), and we have the workbooks. The SAMHSA Anger Management module is also set up and ready to be used. Once the vendor is selected, we will determine other training needs. There are still issues regarding space. Seeking Safety and MRT are now being used in other agencies, such as Lexington and by Project MORE. Colleen said that ITAP is ready to start MRT once they receive the materials. Mary Ellen added that Project MORE has volunteered to provide MRT and Ready, Set, Work as well.

George asked when a schedule would be in place so he can identify space for the programs in the jail. Mary Ellen said that we need to work with the facilitators regarding their availability and an efficient use of time and resources. We will not be able to finalize scheduling until the community-based vendor is selected. All the women will likely attend one program/curriculum. Kevin noted that we need to sort out our options, and then we can look at a final schedule. There will often be two or three classes running at the same time. A draft schedule will be reviewed with the flow committee, and will be reviewed again at our May 18th meeting.

4. Quality Assurances Updates

The Flow Committee has been working on quality assurance. They have been working on the logistics and schedule for the curriculum. Bill Eckert said that there would be staff supervision for those facilitating groups and that space for groups and other activities is also being addressed.

5. Next Steps Regarding Software

Mary Ellen reported that she has contacted OCIS and Jon Heller will coordinate a meeting. Jon said that the software committee would consist of himself, Marty Lynch, Margaret Hirst, Eunace Skelly-Senatore, Bill Eckert, Onaje Benjamin and Kevin Warwick. Once the vendor is selected, they will also need to be included. The first meeting of this group will be scheduled for late April.

Discussion

Sam Busselle commented that there are some gaps identified in the report that have not been worked through. Kevin explained that they are being worked on within some other committees and that some tasks need to be completed before others can be started. There are many issues being addressed simultaneously as well. The same group of people is working on many issues, so we must be careful we do not spread them too thin. We need to implement some things now and address other issues later. We have a plan and a time line. We cannot jump from one thing to another. We need to have a thoughtful approach and recognize that there are capacity issues, especially when we depend on the knowledge and skills of a few people to plan and implement programs. It is important to develop a plan with fidelity that is best practice driven, and this takes some time. The development of a full jail transition program along with quality assurance and evidence-based curriculum has been a major task the committee has worked on over the last three months. We have done a remarkable amount of work in a relatively short period of time.

George added that they are planning to bring back inmates in mid-April. Tom is concerned about providing adequate consultation services for attorneys. The sooner we have a schedule in place, the better it will be for program development and adjusting to the additional 250 inmates.

Tom reported that the MacArthur Foundation Grant was submitted. The focus is on case processing. This is something that the Criminal Justice Council has identified as a need.

The June meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2015.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, May 18, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.