

DUTCHESS COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL
SPECIAL POPULATIONS COMMITTEE

November 7, 2016
Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Ronald Knapp, Chairman, City of Poughkeepsie Acting City Administrator
Thomas Angell, D.C. Public Defender's Office, Re-Entry Committee Chair
Sam Busselle, Citizen representative
Dr. Gary Christensen, CJC Consultant
William Eckert, D.C. DBCH
Jonathan Heller, D.C. Probation & Community Corrections
Kevin Hazucha, Hudson Valley Mental Health
Martin Lynch, Project M.O.R.E.
Winifred Milkovich, D.C. Jail
Honorable Frank Mora, Poughkeepsie City Court
Mark Sasvary, Hudson Valley Mental Health
Mary Ellen Still, D.C. Probation & Community Corrections
Kevin Warwick, ASAI, Consultant
Geneva Claire Hamilton, CJC Coordinator
Charles Robitaille, D.C. Dept. of Behavioral & Community Health
Jason Bailor, Lexington Center for Recovery

Kevin Warwick called the meeting to order.

1. Approval of October 2016 meeting minutes.

Approval of the October 2016 meeting minutes was made on a motion by Tom Angell and seconded by Mary Ellen Still.

2. Second Chance Act

Kevin reported that we were not awarded the grant. Although there were eight programs that could have been funded, there were only two that were selected this year. The application that was put together was strong and received many favorable comments. Sam suggested that it would be appropriate to ask for additional funds from the county; Kevin replied that if we receive federal funding, we cannot use county funds as this would be considered supplanting. Mary Ellen mentioned that the next round of funding is only months away. Kevin suggested that we pursue other options if we do not receive funding this cycle. Mary Ellen mentioned the ATI grant that was just received by Project MORE will cover some of the needs identified in our Second Chance application.

3. RESTART Program Updates

Kevin asked for updates on RESTART. One of the Hudson Valley staff is out on child care leave and the other workers are filling in as much as possible. Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is now being used. The RESTART staff will have two-day training on Motivational Interviewing, a core skill. Martin Lynch mentioned that people who are properly trained do measurably better in all aspects. Gary asked if the training could include correctional officers. Marty replied that

the program can only take thirty people at one time so we need to set priorities, but after January 1st there will be a new cycle of funding; we could consider a separate training program specifically for officers.

Kevin discussed the importance of having all correctional staff trained in trauma. Winifred said that some of their staff attended eight hour crisis intervention training. She added that George Krom wants everyone to have this training. Kevin Warwick praised those in Project MORE and Hudson Valley Mental Health for the cooperation between the two agencies on this project.

4. Quality Assurance Committee Updates

Jonathan Heller reported that they had a discussion regarding closing codes, the different systems of tracking, coding release types and the best way to follow up. Sam asked if there were any results yet; Gary Christensen said it was too premature. Jon said that they have anecdotal information on certain individuals who completed the program.

Tom Angell said he is still concerned about MRT not being made available to all RESTART participants. Bill Eckert said that the New Directions curriculum is similar but not identical, although some of the targets are the same. Bill said most are participating in New Directions.

Kevin added that while all the programs are important, the MRT component is the most critical-- people must get into it quickly. New Directions is important, but it is not a substitute. These are important conversations to have and part of the process as the program evolves.

Gary Christensen said that if you must default, it should be to the main curriculum which is MRT since it is the core of the program. He added that if you want to measure success, you need to know if participants went through MRT.

Marty said we should reevaluate staffing since needs may have changed since the original staff was hired. He added that it is important to have enough people to cover all program needs. Jon said that the Northpointe computer program is labor intensive. Bill Eckert said that all staff are working to capacity under somewhat challenging physical conditions.

Kevin Warwick recommended that we look at all relevant factors. RESTART is a test model and we should evaluate such things as cost, functions, space requirements, staffing and collecting complex data. We now have some good data and can evaluate progress.

Mary Ellen asked if we need trained MRT facilitators to step in and help with the MRT groups in the meantime. Bill said that it is a matter of logistics, not staffing. Sam asked if there is follow up MRT after someone goes out into the community. Participants can continue with MRT upon release from jail at CTC or the Women's Center.

Tom described a situation in which some RESTART participants are not immediately getting into services upon release which may cause them to lapse into their prior behavior. Gary clarified that Tom was describing cases in the lower courts. Tom added that this is complicated by the fact that many justice courts meet monthly so communication may be problematic. Mary Ellen and Gary agreed that communication and timing are critical. Mary Ellen added that the QA committee and individual agencies need to take a closer look at the transition phase.

Kevin said that it is important to coordinate with the courts. Kevin said that Tom has been very helpful by identifying this concern. Mary Ellen and Gary are scheduled to attend a Magistrates Association meeting on November 21st and will discuss RESTART.

Sam inquired when the next Quality Assurance meeting on court processing will occur. Tom replied that additional staff will be needed by the DAs Office in order to proceed. Therefore, a January meeting is anticipated.

5. Continued Discussion on Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)

Tom mentioned that he observed his first forensic evaluation where MAT was recommended; he considered this a positive step. He also mentioned several issues of concern. The first is when people are placed on MAT in a facility and then are not permitted to continue using the medication, such as suboxone, upon release into the community. He thought that people should be given an opportunity to participate in more supportive treatment programs. Tom also expressed concern about people leaving the jail and overdosing. Winifred Milkovich said that a very large population coming into the jail has an opiate addiction.

Kevin concurred on the need for more individualized evaluation, as well as acknowledging control issues faced by a jail or similar facilities. He added that MAT should be offered on a case-by-case basis since not everyone needs it. He stated that this is a complex matter that needs to be addressed and fully evaluated.

Marty talked about several issues related to suboxone, especially in a residential setting. Marty mentioned the potential benefits of vivitrol, and Bill Eckert agreed it has benefits but said it is not always medically appropriate for certain people, such as those with liver damage. Discussion followed and the consensus was that this issue fell within the purview of the Special Populations Committee. Mary Ellen recommended that we evaluate all the concerns and benefits mentioned in order to come up with a plan. Tom asked if there are any places that are doing this correctly. Kevin said that Franklin County in Massachusetts is discussing this; he added that we should discuss this more fully at the next meeting to clarify the overall vision of the committee. We will need to outline future steps. Bill Eckert is going to present on MAT at the next CJC meeting.

Sam asked if we should discuss the jail census in relation to the new facility. Sam continued that we still don't have all the data to accurately determine the future census. Mary Ellen responded that the architects will consider the information that we already provided and will continue to provide. At some point in the future, a decision will need to be made based on actual data. Tom replied that although every effort is being made to reduce the numbers, we have to be realistic.

6. Announcements

None.

7. Adjournment

Kevin Warwick made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, December 5, 2016 at 10:30 a.m.