

ALCOHOL, DRUG ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS & ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

MARCH 6, 2013

Committee Members Present: Reginald C. Blue, Ph.D., Elsie Caraballo, Richard A. Folbert, J. Robert Fowler, Ph.D., J. Richard Romaniuk, Ph.D., Harvey A. Snider, Esq. / ABSENT: None

Board Staff Present: Scott Osiecki, Valeria A. Harper, Carol Krajewski

1. CALL TO ORDER & AUDIENCE INPUT

Committee Chair, Robert Fowler, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Community Relations & Advocacy Committee minutes from January 9, 2013, were approved as submitted.

3. LEGISLATION/ADVOCACY UPDATE

Scott Osiecki, Director of External Affairs, updated committee members on current legislation and advocacy efforts listed on the agenda.

- **SFY 14-15 State Budget**

Budget hearings are taking place in the House of Representatives. Tracy Plouck, Director of ODMH, held a webinar to highlight the benefits of the proposed budget for the mental health and addiction services system. While no new funding has been added to the proposed budget, she estimates that Medicaid Expansion is expected to redirect \$103 million in local Board spending over the biennium budget to community services such as housing, transportation, addressing waiting lists and other Non-Medicaid supportive services. The redirection of funds becomes available when consumers who are not currently eligible for Medicaid become eligible on January 1, 2014, thus freeing up state subsidy and county levy funds.

She also testified before the House Finance Committee and used Cuyahoga County as an example of counties receiving ample state funding -- "Cuyahoga County with 11% of the population receives 15% of state funding." In analyzing the figures used by ODMH to determine this percentage Mr. Denihan has stated that ODMH and the Board continue to talk "apples and oranges." The disparity referenced is Non-Medicaid funding that is not designated by ODMH for specific programs or services, it is funding that the Board uses for services to meet the mental health needs of our citizens. ODMH is including funding that is not in the control of the ADAMHS Board to reach the 15%.

The ADAMHS Board continues to support the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities' Budget Platform consisting of 2 major points: 1) to expand alcohol, drug addiction & mental health funding for Non-Medicaid individuals and services, while ensuring safety and stability in our communities, and 2) to expand Medicaid as allowable by the Affordable Care Act.

- **Medicaid Expansion:**

The ADAMHS Board and the entire statewide mental health and addiction services system is in the midst of many advocacy efforts to reach out to all members of the House of Representatives in an effort to convince them to vote for Governor's Budget that includes Medicaid Expansion. An advocacy action alert has been issued asking all stakeholders to make calls to our Representatives. Board staff members are making calls. Two buses are being chartered to take advocates to Columbus to participate in the Medicaid Expansion Extravaganza sponsored by OACBHA on March 14.

Our staff member, Chris Morgan, and his father, Chris Morgan, Sr., will be providing testimony about the importance of Medicaid Expansion as well as the importance of providing funding for support services not covered by Medicaid that truly help a person with recovery, such as employment/vocational training, housing and peer support. Also, we are also in the process of developing a letter to our legislature about the need for additional Non-Medicaid funding in the budget to ensure that Medicaid Expansion is successful by allowing people to receive the support services. Without these services, people may receive treatment but not the support services that truly sustain recovery.

- **SB 7: Law Enforcement Protection Act:**

SB7, introduced in the Ohio Senate on February 12, would require that a court report certain information to the local law enforcement agency for entry into the appropriate National Crime Information Center file if the court approves the conditional release of a person found incompetent to stand trial or not guilty by reason of insanity or orders a person convicted of an offense of violence to receive mental health treatment.

The information includes:

- The name of the court providing the information.
- The offense or offenses of violence to which the offender pleaded guilty or of which the offender was convicted.
- If the person has contact with a law enforcement agency after the information is entered, the agency shall report the contact to the court that ordered the treatment.

- **Senate Bill 43: Civil Commitment:**

S.B.43, introduced in the Ohio Senate on February 14, seeks to clarify Ohio's existing laws regarding court-ordered outpatient treatment for mental illness. Under current law, Ohio judges are empowered to use the civil commitment code to find the least restrictive alternative for individuals who meet the criteria for court-ordered treatment.

Unfortunately, the criteria states that a court order is issued when the person would benefit from treatment in a "hospital." While many judges understand that they are able to order outpatient treatment, the conflicting language means that this option is not always exercised. So basically, the existing law is confusing, and results in individuals being treated in hospitals and other settings at an increased cost, rather than the least restrictive setting. The bill also makes the state-approved affidavit form easier to obtain so that in the event there is cause to believe an individual is in need of court-ordered treatment, family members can more easily locate the form and file it with the appropriate Probate Court.

- **Federal Sequester Reductions:**

Mr. Osiecki noted that the \$85 billion across-the-board cuts went into effect on March 1. Starting April 1, cuts to the Mental Health Block Grant program would result in over 373,000 seriously mentally ill adults and seriously emotionally disturbed children not receiving needed mental health services. In addition, close to 9,000 homeless persons with serious mental illness would not get the vital outreach, treatment, housing, and support they need through the Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) program.

A cut of about \$46 million from the Block Grant, will reduce its total budget to less than \$413.9 million. An example of some things to be cut:

- 684,000 individuals will lose critical employment and housing assistance, case management services, and school based supports;
- 1.13 million of children and adults will be at risk of losing access to any type of public mental health support.
- 1,300 youth with severe emotional disturbances will lose access to treatment services;
- 500 individuals working in the field will no longer receive specialized mental health training.

Ironically, the risks from the sequester come at a time when federal and state legislators and even some budget-slashing governors are looking to increase mental-health spending in the wake of the Newtown, Connecticut tragedy.

- **S2257: Federal Excellence in Mental Health Act:**

S2257, was re-introduced as S. 264 on Feb 7, 2013. The bill aims to expand access to community mental health centers and improve the quality of mental health care for all Americans by basically addressing the type of mental health care that should be available at Federally Qualified Community Behavioral Health Centers and payment by Medicaid.

4. ADAMHS BOARD MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES LEVY DISCUSSION

Dr. Fowler suggested entering into an open discussion focusing on the question, "what if the County Executive and County Council approved the concept of a dedicated levy for mental health and addiction services?"

Committee Input:

- County Council is interested in hearing the Board's position which seems to be a positive sign.
- It is imperative that area provider agencies support the Board's stance regarding a dedicated levy.
- A letter written by the first Executive Director of the Mental Health Board in 1986 noted an interest in a dedicated levy that supports the consistent need for funding.
- We are in the same situation today combined with the fact of recent reduced state funding.
- Peer Support Services are dependent upon Non-Medicaid dollars. As an example, the Living Miracles, Peer Support Program, is saving thousands of dollars in in-patient costs as 97% of hospitalizations have been reduced for those people who are active with this program. This program is cost-efficient, a necessary factor in saving and improving lives, and could be used as a selling point for also saving money in the long-run.
- Individual Board members could be asked to appear before their local council body to advocate for the passage of a dedicated levy.
- Advocacy efforts should also be directed to municipal court systems to let them know that if this levy goes forward it might be possible to expand the referral system of non-violent offenders and other misdemeanors in the court system in a win-win proposition.

Audience member, Ericka Ford, from Oriana House, asked questions of committee members. Mr. Osiecki noted that throughout Ohio there are only two counties that do not have dedicated levies but depend upon Health and Human Service Levies for their location funds—Hamilton County and Cuyahoga County. With regard to the potential impact of Medicaid expansion, some people at the Board level think that it should have no impact at all because Medicaid expansion would only expand services that are covered by Medicaid. Consequently, as more people are accepted onto Medicaid, more support services will be needed to assist in recovery. A small contingency of counties worry that the public perception may be that Medicaid will cover everything. Ms. Harper, Chief Operating Officer, noted that there will still be a segment of the population that will not be covered by Medicaid. Additionally, there will still be a lag in Medicaid entitlements; therefore, resources will be needed to cover treatment services until Medicaid is obtained or approved for the individual.

Dr. Fowler asked whether Medicaid Expansion addresses the concerns of lapsed Medicaid, etc. Ms. Harper was hopeful that some changes will be made to the state plan to address the questions remaining around Medicaid. Ms. Harper will convey these issues to Ms. Starlette Sizemore-Rice, the Board's Public Benefits Administrator.

5. SPONSORSHIPS

➤ **Cleveland International Film Festival – *Here One Day*: April 3-14, 2013**

As the ADAMHS Board strives to educate the community on suicide, mental health and addiction issues and available treatments, Board staff recommends that the ADAMHS Board ratify the Basic Film Sponsorship of *Here One Day*, a haunting, beautiful documentary that explores the effect of bipolar disorder and suicide on a family.

Motion to recommend ratification of the Cleveland International Film Festival Basic Film Sponsorship of *Here One Day* in the amount of \$1,000.00 to Committee of the Whole. MOTION: H. Snider / SECOND: R. Blue
AYES: R. Blue, E. Caraballo, R. Folbert, R. Romaniuk, H. Snider / NAYS: None / **Motion passed.**

➤ **Suicide Prevention Education Alliance (SPEA) 2013 Into the Light Walk: October 6, 2013**

Given the collaboration of the ADAMHS Board to continue to support efforts to shine the light on depression and suicide prevention, Board staff recommends approval of co-sponsoring the SPEA Annual *Into the Light Walk* on Sunday, October 6, 2013.

Motion to recommend approval of co-sponsorship of the SPEA 2013 Annual Into the Light Walk in the amount of \$2,500.00 to Committee of the Whole. MOTION: R. Blue / SECOND: H. Snider
AYES: R. Blue, E. Caraballo, R. Folbert, R. Romaniuk, H. Snider / NAYS: None / **Motion passed.**

6. CVENT: CONFERENCE AND EVENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Based upon further consideration by Board staff, Mr. Osiecki suggested pulling this item from the agenda.

7. COMMUNITY FORUMS: ADDRESSING THE ROLE OF MENTAL HEALTH IN THE COMMUNITY

In response to several national tragedies or violence involving mental illness, Mr. Osiecki reported that a planning group has begun to prepare for a series of Community Dialogues. The initial purpose is to address the community's expectations of mental illness and what should we do to prevent such tragedies.

Members of the planning committee include Michael Baskin, NAMI Greater Cleveland; Eugenia Cash, Cleveland Schools; Liz Cornachione, Mental Health Advocacy Coalition; Rev. Stanley Miller, Nottingham UMC; Michelle Murphy, CWRU; Sue Neth, MHS, Inc.; Mark Singer, Ph.D., CWRU, Joan Synenberg, Mental Health Court Judge; Robert Triozzi, former Law Director/Judge; Mr. Denihan and Mr. Osiecki.

The workgroup met on January 31 and February 14 and 28, and has begun to finalize the scope, purpose and outcomes of the forums. Sub-committees were established to work on details of each forum in addition to: Sponsorship, Marketing, Media and Services. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 3/14/13.

8. MEDIA TRACKING REPORT

For the time period of January 1, 2013 through March 6, 2013, the ADAMHS Board had 29 media hits which were all considered positive. (The Media/Press Clipping Report distributed is attached to the original minutes stored in the Executive Unit.)

9. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

- Mr. Snider recommended sending a letter of congratulations to Judge Joan Synenberg for her appointment to the Court of Common Pleas.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Submitted by: Carol Krajewski, Executive Specialist

Approved by: J. Robert Fowler, Ph.D., Community Relations & Advocacy Committee Chair