

Behavior Health on Deafness Sub-Committee Meeting
January 17, 2008
Independent Resources, Inc.
Wilmington, DE
9:30 am

Present: Christy Hennessey (Chair), Denise Enger; Helen McDonnell; Hank Passi; Cliff Rodman; Barbara Schroeder; Loretta Sarro; Lois Steele and Kyle Hodges, Staff

Interpreter: Pamela D'Occhio

Additions or Deletions to the Agenda

- Loretta provided a hand-out from NAD on a complaint against a mental health provider
- State of Delaware/DFS Services will not provide and pay for an interpreter on any open cases

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the October 18, 2007 meeting minutes as submitted.

Chair Report/Review of meeting with DSAMH

Christy reported that last Thursday Loretta, Kyle, Hank and her met with DSAMH. Steven Dettwyler, Helen and representatives from substance abuse programs, consumer advocacy programs as well as crisis intervention were in attendance. We explained different areas of services available in Delaware and various forms of technology that are available as well. We also explained what needs are not being met and recommended an outreach coordinator and/or program. We suggested that this outreach coordinator could have the responsibility of coordinating interpreting services for any DSAMHs requests because what tends to happen is that some of these requests tend to get bounced back to one of our agencies. This would not happen until at least 2010. There was a concern on how to provide interpreters on a 24-hour basis (e.g. crisis intervention). Steven will schedule a meeting with DVR/DODHH to discuss technologies and the outreach coordinator position. It was also suggested that each State Service Center should have the video phone capability. The goal should be to develop some sort of best practices by working with community mental health and DSAMH. Kyle added that Steve agreed to take this back to the department to see about the possibility of having this position in 2010. Our committee will need to advocate at the Budget and JFC hearings. Kyle added It was discussed about having an intern from Gallaudet with a mental health background help us research issues and be a contact. Hank added we needed to focus on one step at a time. Once the outreach coordinator is approved, then we could concentrate on getting an intern.

There was some discussion on the eligibility criteria for DSAMH clients. Helen will send the criteria to Kyle.

Interpreter Contract in Mental Health Settings

There was discussion regarding how to determine who is qualified to interpret in mental health settings? Christy commented that some deaf clients are passive and accept whoever is interpreting. Some clients could be displaying certain behaviors that an interpreter would need to know how to handle. It was stated that Lois participated in mental health trainings in three states so she gathered skills on how to translate certain medical technology that is prevalent in mental health settings. Not too many interpreters have that training and experience; however, it could be made a standard to have a certain number of hours of mental health training in order to interpret for a client in that setting. Hank suggested that DSAMH go on Gallaudet's website to get more information on interpreter studies in mental health issues.

Deaf Sensitivity Training at DSAMH Follow-Up

Loretta reported that an April date for DSAMH's deaf sensitivity training has been scheduled, but the location has not been decided. Once the location is confirmed, Loretta believes that DSAMH will take care of advertising for this training. Loretta will be presenting this training on how to use a sign language interpreter. Laura, from DSAMH, is the coordinator. Loretta will ask Laura if this open to the public and let this Committee know. The Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing workshop presenter canceled, so Loretta has to find another presenter. Hank stated that in the past seven or eight years, workshops and trainings have been provided to the local mental health agencies. The feedback and information provided has been well received.

Reports/Announcements

CODHHE--Kyle gave the following report. CODHHE met last night and the by-laws were revised and finalized. A visor card for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is being developed. This has been approved by the State Police and the Police Chiefs' Council. This will be distributed from Loretta's office. A press release will be held in the Spring--the Cabinet Secretaries from the Departments of Labor and Safety and Homeland Security want to be involved. When the press release gets coordinated, Kyle will let the A task force has made a recommendation to the Department of Education that ASL be considered a foreign language. Kyle said that he believed the Department of Education has not approved this recommendation.

BHDC – The committee discussed changing the meeting dates by alternating the months between CODHHE and the BHDC meetings. It was agreed that this committee will meet in February and then hold meetings every other month. Kyle will follow-up with an e-mail confirmation of the February meeting date.

It as announced that there are free trainings on March 5 and April 3 at the Delaware County IU in Morton, PA for mental health providers - a hand-out was provided.

Denise stated that a Counselor from Child, Inc. was told by a social worker that she tried to refer a deaf client to Connections last month and was told that they are longer servicing deaf clients. Denise will send Kyle an e-mail with the pertinent information and Kyle will forward this situation to Kirsten for a response.

Denise also added that she was not aware that dollars have been set aside for interpreters for open cases that have been mandated by the Division of Family Services (DFS). This will be announced at the next Child Inc's clinical meetings.

Kyle stated that if you know of a certain state agency that is not providing an interpreter, please let Kyle know. This is part of his role as the state's ADA coordinator. It was added that it would be beneficial if the deaf client lets the agency formally know ahead of time that the agency needs to provide and pay for the interpreter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kyle Hodges
CODHHE Administrator

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