

**Council on Deaf and Hard of Hearing Equality
Behavioral Health Committee Meeting
September 18, 2012 - 1:30 P.M.
Delaware School for the Deaf – Newark, DE**

Present: Christy Hennessey (Chair); Lois Steele (Vice-Chair); Karen Miller, Deaf Ministries; Loretta Sarro, DODHH; Dara Schumaier, DSAMH; Carol Stevens, Deaf Ministries; Kyle Hodges, Staff.

Interpreters: Alicia Van Cleve and Pam D’Occhio

Additions to the Agenda

- Recent Experience – Karen Miller

Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the minutes of the July 17, 2012 meeting as amended: Dara Schumaier was not in attendance, but Carol Stevens was in attendance and not listed.

Chair Report

Included in Business.

Business

Group Home Services for People Who are D/HH

Christy spoke about group homes for several D/HH clients. Carol spoke about several deaf clients who are located in different group home settings who cannot receive therapeutic interaction from others living in the home due to language barriers, including staff who can only sign a little or cannot sign and have no knowledge of deaf culture. Carol runs a camp for adults for people who are D/HH; one of those attending lives in a group home and has no contact with deaf people all year, except for going to camp. Carol stated that we may want to look at establishing a group home for people who are D/HH. Carol confirmed that one has behavioral issues and one has cognitive issues. Dara will bring this information back to DSAMH, but said it goes beyond housing. Kyle explained that more specific information is needed on the 4 D/HH people so the appropriate Division can be contacted. Dara commented that services seem to be the issue more than housing everyone together. Carol stated that communication is the huge issue.

Kyle suggested that as a first step is to try to determine who is out there in the community and from what agency they receive services. Kyle asked if Dara could check with DSAMH to see how many deaf clients they have, who is the service provider and where they are located. He will check with DDDS to get the same information, including housing issues. Carol questioned

how well statistics are kept about clients who are deaf. Dara commented that DHSS is revamping how data is collected in terms of disabilities and how different categories are coded.

Kyle suggested bringing the appropriate staff from the Divisions to a meeting to discuss a path forward. Kyle will ask how many are deaf, how many use sign, who are the providers, where are the deaf clients located (by county).

Dara was asked if DSAMH was involved in the Warmline or hotline type of programs. She explained that DSAMH has mobile crisis units and will find out how TTY or TTD calls are handled.

CAPES Program

Loretta and Christy attended a consumer meeting at DSAMH. At this meeting, CAPES and the mobile crisis system were addressed. Instead of placing someone in an inpatient setting, the mobile crisis unit can do an assessment and handle a situation. Christy wanted people to be aware of this service. Dara explained that the Delaware Legislature recently passed H.B. 311, which changes how 24-hour holds are accomplished; this is to ensure that people get the most appropriate level of care in the most integrated setting possible. Dara explained that some people may need more intensive community care, rather than hospitalization, which is also more cost effective. New contracts have been established for new types of treatments. H.B. 311 also allows for mental health screeners, which we do not have currently since they have a year to complete implementation of the requirement of H.B. 311. They have two mobile crisis centers—one in Wilmington (CAPES) and CAPAC, which is located in Ellendale (Sussex County). A new provider in Delaware, Recovery Innovations, is providing crisis intervention services at their Recovery Resource Center, which is located at DSAMH's facility in Ellendale. They will be doing screening and assessment and offering 24/7 respite care in a mental health crisis. This will result in fewer people going to the emergency rooms and committed to psychiatric hospitals. Christy asked if CAPES or CAPAC have a contract in place to get an interpreter on a 24/7 basis should the need arise. Dara will research this and get back; she will also ask how DSAMH will ensure equal access. Dara explained that they also have telemedicine available to ensure that psychiatrists are on call; this equipment can also be used to provide interpreter services. Carol commented that she strongly recommends not using this type of communication since the visual quality of interpreting would be poor and many interrelationship subtleties are missed in a psychiatric situation. Christy asked for the specific phone number to call. Dara said the number is 1-888-652-2929, but will find out if there is a separate line for TTY/TTD. Comment was made that TTY is becoming absolute and most are making calls by videophone, using relay. Dara asked how they ensure equal access to the hotline. Explanation was given that calls are handled through a relay system, where an operator interprets the phone call as opposed to an operator typing what is being said. Loretta explained how video phone works and commented that it much more effective, especially in a mental health crisis.

Conference/Mental Health Fair

A list of possible topics was provided. Kyle reported that it had been decided at the last meeting to have a larger conference which would address several issues such as: bullying, sexual harassment, domestic violence, emergency preparedness and planning, addiction, internet safety, legal issues and rights, and medical issues. Josh sent an email saying that if we wanted to focus

on bullying that he has some contacts, one of whom is Marsha Miceli (Director of Schoolwide Programs & Student Development Team, Pennsylvania School for the Deaf); he has other contacts as well.

Kyle stated that he had contacted Andrea Guest who is still interested in collaborating, but would like one tract to be an employment issue. Further discussion can occur at today's meeting and at the CODHHE meeting this evening. Lois distributed a list of topics and this was reviewed. Kyle commented that a contractor may have to be hired depending on what is decided. Someone commented that CLASI recently conducted a seminar on mental health and human rights and collaborated with the Delaware Health Care Coalition. Carol spoke about a possible speaker from Seattle, involved with DeafCAN, and will forward that information to Kyle.

The conference is tentatively set for 2013, but Kyle would prefer not to set a date until things are worked out more concretely. Harrietann Litwin could not make today's meeting, but plans to attend future meetings. Possible employment topics could be: What are Rehabilitation Communication Specialists' role - DVR contracts with two Rehab Communication Specialists and Jill Jicha could present CapTel program; Employment First Act; SSI, SSDI and the Ticket to Work Program.

Possible conference locations: DSD (parking/availability may be as issue); Sheraton Hotel (Dover), having one large conference room for keynote and lunch and smaller rooms for workshops. The hallways are ample for exhibitors. Kyle commented that location will also be decided by how many tracts we decide to do. Kyle asked Loretta if Andrea and/or Harrietann wanted all these topics included; Loretta clarified that they were recommendations. Loretta added that she will be meeting with Andrea and Harrietann, and will provide an update on what was discussed.

Kyle suggested having a separate group focus on the conference and bringing information back to the full Committee. Loretta agreed that having a planning conference committee would be ideal and make sure that Harrietann is involved.

Adjournment

The meeting ended at 3:23 pm.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, November 20, 2012, Delaware School for the Deaf, Newark, 1:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jo Singles
Administrative Specialist
S:\bhc/minsep12