

MENTAL HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE
CORTLAND COUNTY
COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD MEETING

Meeting Minutes – October 15, 2019 – 3:00 P.M.
Room 302 – County Office Building

Chair: Shari Weiss, Ph.D.

Vice Chair: Ellen Wright

Director: Mark Thayer

Members Present: Shari Weiss (Chair), Ellen Wright (Vice Chair), Cynthia Guy, Elizabeth Larkin, Susan Thomas and Leslie Wilkins

Members Absent: Christopher Hyde and Darlene Latten

Others Present: Mark Thayer, Director, Lt. Dave Guerrero (Cortland City PD), Jackie Leaf (Executive Director, Seven Valley Health Coalition), Todd Freeman (Superintendent of Cincinnatus Schools), Julie Partigianoni and Brittany Van Winkle (Catholic Charities of Cortland County), Myriah Dolson (Guthrie Cortland Medical Center), Michael Barylski (County Legislator), Jennifer Talarico (Family & Children’s Counseling Services), Tiffanie Parker (Director of Adult Services, DSS), Jeannette Diplo (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention), Douglas Hart (Hillside Children’s Services), Julie Antoniou (New Justice Conflict Resolution Services) and Gail Spitzer (Secretary)

Call to Order: 3:03 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Note: Chair, Shari Weiss thanked and welcomed everyone for attending – explained that this is her last meeting, as she accepted a position out of the area

Agenda Item: Introductions

Agenda Item: Approve Minutes of September 9, 2019 Motion requested Chair Shari Weiss

✓ Motion made by Elizabeth Larkin, seconded by Ellen Wright, no discussion or changes – unanimously approved

Agenda Item: Presentation: 2-1-1 Information, Statistics and Updates

Jackie Leaf, Executive Director, Seven Valley Health Coalition: Receive quarterly reports from 2-1-1 host in Tompkins County – have results from July through September 2019 – this is an especially high volume of calls, as it also includes the dental appointments made during the IRT military visit in July

There were 737 contacts to 211, average length of call is 2 to 4 minutes / 211 has added “Chat” and “Text” to the service, only 4 were text, 733 were phone calls – over 500 calls were health related – 34 calls were looking for basic needs; food, shelter / also quarterly, are feedback surveys which was done last August – 20 provided feedback: 74% very satisfied, 26% satisfied – 95% would use service again / there has been an overall increase in calls

SVHC underwrites the 211 system and always looking for funding to support – fund raising is done to help promotion of the service – work hard to promote / other money comes from Cortland County Community Services and will also begin receiving funding from United Way – those two sources provide approximately \$17K of the \$20K needed to support service

Discussion – usage, referrals, etc. / Jackie recommended logging into 211 (www.211Cortland.org) to check your agencies information, ensure accuracy / Mark asked about time of day with highest usage – Jackie will find out – calls go to Ithaca during regular business hours and to 211 Finger Lakes (Rochester) after hours and on weekends / Mark thanked Jackie for continuing to spearhead 211 – fantastic service

Agenda Item: Emotionally Disturbed Person Response Team – Update

Lt. Dave Guerrero, Cortland City PD - began as a class six years ago, City PD officers are trained to respond to individuals in crisis or who have mental health disorders – prior to that, there were only 16 hours of mental health training in police academy / EDPRT – 40 hours of training, offered annually – officers volunteer to be trained / today 90% of all the City’s officers have completed the training / training includes other law enforcement; i.e. SUNY police, Sheriff’s Department, Homer police, State police – if space is available it can include out-of-county individuals and other departments in the County i.e., Probation, DSS, TLC Ambulance – moderator is retired police officer from Rochester – five days of classes, instruction from area agencies, individuals with mental illness (peers)

Monthly meetings held at 2:00 p.m. on the fourth Friday, in Room 202 – includes trained officers, representatives from Mental Health Department, CCOCC, F&CCS, DSS, etc. to discuss specific cases / Officers will also proactively, when requested, to check on someone’s safety or situation / most proud of follow-up work to connect with individuals when not in crisis – do they need more assistance, did they follow through with plan, help with referrals, etc.

Training has help divert people from hospitalizations and jail – make efforts to deescalate, find underlying cause, troubleshoot and divert – Wellness Center began at approximately same time and became a way to connect individuals with peers and services – referrals are also made to Mobile Crisis Teams, though not as often as would like (MCT increased availability of teams, extended hours of operation would be helpful)

Average 28 calls per month – last four months, number of calls has increased dramatically – 38 calls in August and over 50 calls in September – Lt. Guerrero and Susan Thomas discussed the increase in law enforcement involvement in children, outside of school / Jackie Leaf (SVHC is the primary facilitator, organizer of these classes) discussed the special Youth MH First Aide two day training held several years ago – discussed possibly holding this again / discussion about the chronic cases, calling repeatedly and the high number of drug and alcohol users

Officers who complete the training are surprised to learn about the many resources in the County – seasoned officers often comment that they wish they had taken the training years before / Mark discussed the change in outlook by those who complete the training; in both professional and personal aspects / after the training, officers complete a survey and are given an opportunity to share their thoughts – comments are overwhelmingly positive

Mark: EDPRT has made an incredible impact on the community and he thanked Lt. Guerrero for all his efforts and ensuring the classes continues with the high quality results – he thanked Jackie Leaf and SVHC for the facilitation and hard work she and her staff do to organize and prepare each year / this program is different from every other community with similar programs – it's start was more "home grown", never had special funding resources, but rather relied on agency donations; both financially and through allowing staff to donate time to be part of the week-long training – the only real cost is the facilitator, Eric Weaver

Lt. Guerrero: since its inception, use of force has decreased 30%, injury rates have dropped / Tiffanie Parker (DSS) and Shari Weiss (CCOCC) spoke of the dramatic change brought about due to these trained officers – special feedback about the follow up visits to individuals' homes

Chair, Shari Weiss thanked both Jackie and Lt. Guerrero for attending and for their presentations

Agenda Item: Agency/Department/Coalition/Hospital Reports and Updates

~Doug Hart (Hillside Children's Center) – two vacancies family peer advocacy (parents of children who have been in the MH system, lived experience) 1 full and 1 part time, serving 6 counties: <https://hillside.referrals.selectminds.com/jobs/search/570170> State continues to challenge with new rules and criteria – intention to serve more children is there but requires a long process – to provide family support intakes, insurance, authorizations, safety plans, disclosures, etc. are required – very often takes weeks and the family may not need services at that point – the State has been getting feedback from providers and families and seem to be listening

~Jen Talarico – leaving Family & Children's Counseling Services and will be working for SUNY Cortland – Mandy (Amanda) Stout will be transitioning to become Regional Director and overseeing the COTI Program / Intakes seem to be slowing, however Hospital referrals have been coming in, just fewer walk-ins

~Julie Antoniou (New Justice Conflict Resolution Services, Inc.) – funded by NYS Unified Court System – providing services to anyone having any type of conflict; referrals from family courts, housing authority – landlord, family, neighbor, etc. / office on Crandall St. and are regularly at the court house, flexible schedule

~Julie Partigianoni (Catholic Charities at the Wishing Wellness Center) – job openings; program assistant and senior peer specialist positions – as such, shorter hours of operation at WWC – no evening hours / employment opportunities, contact CCOCC or <https://www.ccocc.org/careers>

~Susan Thomas (Racker Center at OCM BOCES) – Children's Day Treatment is near capacity / noticing a new trend – high school girls with dual mental health and severe personality disorders – working with staff to improve their skills – more involvement with law enforcement outside of school hours – more children coming into program with PINS diversion – school is continuing to work hard to adhere to NYS OMH recommended practices / After school program just hired a second SUNY Cortland student to coordinate and run programs – latest is a Fishing and Hiking Club, Horseback Riding, Bowling

~Shari Weiss (CCOCC Housing Program) – Community Housing Program busy and full, taking referrals – Tim Lockwood will be overseeing referrals and waiting lists / Rapid Rehousing program (Homeless Housing Prevention) started October 1 – Jessica White is the Program Manager, hired an emergency housing coordinator and will be filling one other position – short term housing assistance – go through coordinated entry

~Ellen Wright (Retired Mental Health nurse) asked if there was an update on the Red Binder project – binder kept on top of anyone's refrigerator, in case of an emergency, responders would have access to the individuals personal, medical information – Mark is hoping to receive DSRIP funding to support project, approximately \$8k and will be writing a grant proposal for the next round of funding opportunities

Jeannette Dippo (AFSP) – "Out of the Darkness" fundraising walk – in Liverpool, estimate more than 1,000 people participating, raising over \$128,000 – people can still donate until end of the year on the AFSP website: <https://afsp.donordrive.com> / Additionally, SUNY Cortland Hockey team volunteered to sponsor a fundraising event and resource fair on Saturday, November 8 – Jeannette has tickets, they can be purchased that day or online: <https://www.cortlandreddragons.com/index.aspx?path=mhockey> 1/2 money stays in Central NY, 1/2 goes to National to fund research on suicide prevention and educational programs

Tiffanie Parker (DSS Adult Services Director) – have an EMDT (Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Team) investigates cases involving financial exploitation of seniors in our community – 2 cases in the last month involving over \$30,000 in funds being taken – event on October 22 open to the public and law enforcement 9:30 to 3:30 at Cortlandville Fire Department / Federal Government has legislation, Family First, that will be implemented in 2021 – goal is to protect children not safe in home environment; attempting to place child with a family member or close friend (kinship care) and keep out of a higher level of care

Michael Barylski (County Legislature) – another budget meeting held today – deficit is still \$3.4M – no one was able to identify additional cuts – very difficult period of time – when he became a Legislator, key positions were not filled: County Administrator, Finance Director, Deputy Finance Director and Auditor – difficult to see how long term budget structural changes could be made – recently, have hired all but the County Administrator – have turned a corner and can do better budget planning in the next year and in the long term – focus on mission in the long term

Todd Freeman (Superintendent of Cincinnatus Schools) – always looking for the best possible services for students – open to any opportunities and would appreciate any suggestions tfreeman@cc.cnyric.org / also, he and wife have triplets who are graduating this year with degrees in Social Work – job opportunities welcome, too

Agenda Item: Director’s Report (copy provided) Mark Thayer

In the interest of time, Mark will review just a few items in the report – happy to answer any questions, once report is reviewed

Finally received contract from Columbia University today relative to the HEALing Communities Grant (formerly CHASE grant) – will be hiring a Project Director and County Data Coordinator (Epidemiologist) as part of the funding – timeline will be clearer when it is determined which of the two cohorts will include Cortland County

CNY Directors’ Planning Group recently met with Commissioners of OMH and OPWDD at annual planning retreat – trying to focus on highest needs individuals with developmental disabilities, who are in crisis – they face many levels of inappropriate care – commitments have been made from both “O” agencies and will be proposing pilot program to build onto the Mobile Crisis Team, new resources to push into ER – funding considerations from State

Met with OMH about the Mobile Crisis Team – talks of ways to make service available 24/7 – at least this year, financial piece makes it unfeasible – teams are currently all per diem staff, who are local providers during the day, familiar with services and systems in the County – 24/7 would require hire many full time staff; service is not financially self-sustainable and would ultimately be close to 5 times the cost of its current operation

Positions open at the Cortland County MH Clinic: Account Services Manager/Fiscal Officer, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, Licensed Master of Social Work and part time Mental Health Program Aide – contact Personnel Office to complete an application:

<https://ny-cortlandcounty.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/3883/Exam-or-Job-Application?bidId=> or contact MH Department for more information: 607-758-6100

THANK YOU, Shari for all of your hard work – your involvement and leadership has been invaluable (applause)

Agenda Item: Adjourn Chair, Shari Weiss thanked everyone for attending and asked for a motion to adjourn

✓ Motion by Ellen Wright at 4:07 p.m. meeting adjourned

Next Regular MH Subcommittee meeting Tuesday, November 18, 2019

Minutes submitted by Gail L. Spitzer

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Approved minutes available on County Website:

www.Cortland-Co.org/433/Mental-Health