



Tompkins County
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD

Tompkins County Whole Health
201 East Green Street
Ithaca, New York 14850-5421

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Jacob Parker Carver and Marley Brooks, Co-Chairs
Substance Use Subcommittee

Substance Use Subcommittee Meeting
November 8, 2023 – 12 to 1 p.m. Via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

Minutes Approved
April 10, 2024

Present: Marley Brooks; Jacob Parker Carver; and Ron Schoneman

Excused: Stu Bergman; and Tom Lipa

Unexcused:

Guests: Briggs Seekins, Challenge; Roy Murdough, St. John’s; Brad Walworth, CARS; Noah Valdez; Eli Baez, St. John’s; Stacy Cangelosi, ADC; and Brandi Remington TST BOCES

Staff Present: Rich Shaw, TCWH; Frankcheskia Pyrtle, TCWH; Zoe Lincoln, TCWH; and Karan Palazzo, LGU-Administrative Assistant, TCWH

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The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by Jacob. Introductions were made. A quorum was not met and the October 11, 2023, minutes could not be approved.
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Privileges of the Floor:

Announcements/Correspondence: Roy shared that St. John’s Community Services received conditional approval for licensing through OASAS to provide services for reintegration programs. House tours can be scheduled by contacting Roy or Eli. St. John’s is presenting at the next Mental Health Subcommittee meeting. Eli shared that there is a Hunger and Homeless Awareness event on November 12th from 5-7 pm at the Statler Hotel at Cornell University, registration is required. Cassidy shared that survey data from Tompkins County Schools, grades 7 – 12 about current substance use and mental health trends is out and will share that data in January 2024. Jake proposed sharing that data in one of the Spring meetings.

Review of the Local Services Plan: Jake stated that today’s meeting will focus on the workforce shortage and will discuss the type of data needed from the Local Governing Unit’s contracted agencies as well as any changes needed to be made specific to the substance use subcommittee. The next couple of months will be devoted to housing issues.

Workforce Goal – Support the implementation of recruitment and retention strategies by mental hygiene service providers in Tompkins County as measured by a reduction in staff vacancies.

Workforce Objectives - Understand the scope of the workforce shortage as defined by soliciting staff vacancy information from provider agencies to better understand the scope of the workforce shortage.

- Solicit data on the reduction in services related to the workforce shortage
- Require contracted agencies to provide data annually
- Quantify the impact of the workforce shortage on service delivery

Timeline of SUS meetings:

September 2023 – Reviewed the Local Services Plan

October 2023 – Closer review of workforce shortage goals and objectives due by the end of 2024

Jake and Marley met with the chairs and co-chairs of the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities subcommittees to collaborate and identify data to be measured as well as consistency. It was discussed that the contracted agencies provide data quarterly. He shared the draft template for review.

Reporting – The group supports quarterly reporting from the agencies.

Quantitative Data Gathering – Measured by specific agency programs to demonstrate community needs and requests for financial backing.

- Total # of positions that should be staffed
- Total # of open positions
- Total # of individuals on the waitlist
- Total # of individuals approved but not being served (waiting to be served)
- Total # of individuals getting served (engaged in care/services)

Approved = qualified for level of care having supplied all required documents; ready to receive services

Not approved = waiting on required documents

There was a lengthy discussion on the challenges for substance use agencies to quantify data for waitlist; being approved and not served; and referrals for treatment at other providers/services.

*Add a column for the number of people being seen pending referrals to different levels of care.

*Add a column for the number of vacancies created this quarter or the number of staff that left the program

Contracted agencies will report back on the feasibility of providing this data.

Additional data measures

- Rates of turnover
- How many vacant positions or made vacant in the last quarter

Qualitative Data Narrative (*Optional quarterly*)

- A couple of sentences of personal impact stories
- A couple of sentences about the gaps in services and staff retention and recruitment

It was suggested to include personal stories of impact from staff and clients in the program, highlighting diverse perspectives. It was noted that administrative staff shortages look different from clinician shortages than management shortages. Anonymous job satisfaction surveys are valuable and client surveys in a variety of formats can increase the amount of completed surveys.

*Separate out personal impact for clients vs. personal impact for staff as both are important

Jake and Marley will share these recommendations with the other subcommittees and Harmony.

Provider Updates:

St. John's Community Services – Roy shared that SJCS is now anticipating an opening in January 2024 due to house renovation work needing to be completed before opening and a postponed September meeting with the advisory committee in Albany. Tours of the house are available by reaching out to him. Eli added that an open house is scheduled for December 2023.

As a former clinician, Ron feels more paperwork may contribute to more burnout from clinicians.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

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**The next Substance Use Subcommittee Meeting
will be held on December 13, 2023, from 12 – 1 pm**