

**Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment Committee**

**May 9, 2023, Meeting Notes**

**Present: Gudrun Parmer, Drew Doll, Quanesha Archer, Alex Rubenstein, Donna Rosser, Keith Gibson, Roshanna Parker, Kay Sanford, Lacie Scofield, Helen Tripp, Anjni Joiner, Tremaine Sawyer, Marc Strange, Cindy Haynes, Sheriff Birkhead, Stephen Loney, Ronald Henry, Monique, Arthur Payne, Kimberly Chansen, Tammy Vaughn, Captain McKinney, Michelle Easter, Eric Morse, Ronald Henry, LA Cuttler, Lawrence Greenblatt, Jane Crowder**

**Welcome & Introductions:**

Chair Gudrun Parmer called the meeting to order, welcomed all present and began introductions.

**Review of May Minutes:**

The minutes were reviewed and approved unanimously.

**Peer Support Network**

Drew Doll, with the Religious Coalition for a Non-Violent Durham (RCND), shared that coming out of the pandemic they witnessed extraordinarily high levels of burnout amongst their Peer Support Specialists. To address and help relieve the levels of stress Drew brought in Reflection Circles. Reflections Circles provide a place where Peers can connect and reflect to work through their stress and experiences. They held the first session in April. The hope is that these will be beneficial in helping to develop coping skills and relive the stress and burnout Peer Specialist experience. Additionally, Drew shared they are working towards building capacity and will be training 12 Peer Support Specialists a year. It was shared that individuals would apply, be interviewed by current Peer Specialists, and once approved for the program they will be assigned a current Peer to mentor them. These individuals will go through Durham Techs training program and meet weekly with their mentors. Once this training is completed, individuals will have 32hrs. of paid work experience, this will cover 4 areas of peer support and provide the opportunity to see where their strengths are and better equip individuals for careers in Peer support.

Lacie asked Drew to clarify their definition of a Peer Specialist, is the requirement that they have a history if incarceration, substance use or both. Drew shared that all individuals that are currently Peer Specialist have a history of substance use and/or mental health. Unfortunately, the State of Nc does not currently offer a certification for individuals whose background in solely incarceration. That said, most individuals with a substance use background also have a history of incarceration. Sheriff Birkhead asked is Drew was leading this program or has he brought in other individuals to help. Drew shared that he is leading the program Rev. Dr. Threat is leading the circles. Kay Sanford asked if all conversations were kept private and not recorded. Drew shared that all participants sign a confidentiality agreement. Michelle Easter asked if there was a plan to measure before and after and providing quantifiable support of this program. Drew shared that he would love to speak with Michelle on this matter after the meeting. Arthur Payne asked if there was a space for MOUD and his desire to assist if there is. Drew shared that he was not 100% sure but asked that Arthur reach out to him post meeting. Gudrun Parmer shared that CJRC is currently funding this program with one time funding received from the Department of Adult Corrections gave to the Local Reentry program.

**Housing Barriers for justice involved Populations**

Gudrun shared that she attended the Bringing it home conference and there was an amazing presentation that she wanted to bring to this committee. Se reached out to Alex Rubenstein who graciously agreed to attend and present.

Alex shared that he works for the North Carolina Housing Coalition (NCHC), every year the Coalition co-hosts the Bringing it home conference that focuses on homelessness and engages individuals from all over the state. The NCHC is contracted with NC DHHS: Department of Public Health and Violence Prevention Division via a CDC Covid Recovery Grant from early 2022 through Spring of 2024. This Project is focused on housing barriers for justice involved individuals who are at risk for homelessness. Alex shared that the first year of this project was focused mainly on research with the last 18 months of this project being focused more on action and advocacy. In 2022-2023 NCHC and Technical Assistance Collaborative conducted qualitative interviews with stakeholders, developed and distributed surveys for stakeholders and people with experience and completed a landscape analysis report. Alex shared a summary of the extensive cross-sectional interviews completed and the major themes of these interviews. Alex shared that he is continuing to build networks for this program and would love to meet with anyone interested in connecting to share more comprehensive information. The links for the project and additional information were provided via chat and email. For further information and questions please reach out to Alex at arubenstein@nchousing.org

Helen shared that recovery housing doesn’t allow medication kept on site and she was looking into lowering these barriers by administering MAT meds via paramedics. Gudrun Parmer shared that there were two items on the consent agenda. The first is the Carver St. Project and there is an attempt to pull city and county money to continue to be affordable housing but, also to convert some of the units to permanent housing. The second is the combining of county and city ARPA funds to fund affordable housing.

**Next Steps for Durham**

Gudrun Parmer shared that she made a presentation to the BOCC for Opioid Settlement Funding based off community engagement and feedback received. The top 3 strategies that the community wants the county to look into is evidence-based addiction treatment, Reentry supports and housing. Gudrun also recommended the BOCC establish a new structure that addresses these strategies, an evaluation committee and they hire a coordinator who will take this settlement and create a strategic action plan for behavioral health. Gudrun also recommended that funding be set aside funds to purchase the spectrometer equipment to read illicit substances and the continuation of funding for CLC. Additionally, the County Manager shared her recommendations to the BOCC. The county manager recommended that Opioid settlement funds be used for harm reduction efforts in the detention center including a medical director and continued funding for CLC.

**Program Updates**

CLC- Lacie Scofield thanked Gudrun for championing the CLC program. Lacie shared that they hope to receive and increase in funding and have already started preliminary conversations with DRRC to develop a plan. This plan consists of potentially 3 full time Peer Support Specialist and working to add more referral sources i.e., Durham Urban Ministries and adding support for individuals utilizing Methadone.

Lacie shared that Claire has enrolled 21 new participants. 4 of those participants came from her EMS visits and 5 came from Duke Regional Hospital. 12 of the participants enrolled in the follow up program. Lacie shared the fact sheet (attached in email sent via Gudrun) with up-to-date data that was presented to City Counsel and Public Health. Also, Lacie informed the group that a series of 5 recovery-oriented trainings are now being offered to all Durham County employees.

MAT- Helen Tripp shared that the Grant to allow field inducted MAT started on 05/08/2023. Helen introduced Monique the program manager for the SAMSA Harm reduction grant and asked that everyone welcome her to the team.

Tammy Vaughn shared that in March their office applied for the NC Sheriffs Medication Assistance Treatment in Jails grant and they were awarded the grant and are excited to use the funds to purchase the medication Vivitrol.

Captain McKinney shared that to date they have severed 393 detainees, 291 in Phase1 and 112 in Phase2 and expressed her excitement for all that their team has coming up and will provide a more detailed report next month regarding the annual grant.

Oxford House- Keith Gibson shared that Oxford houses is housing for individuals recovering from substance use disorders. Keith shared that Oxford House is comprised of 40+ homes and are continuing to look at expansion. Carolynn Crowder asked if any Oxford Houses accept individuals on medication assisted recovery. Keith shared that all Oxford Houses house these individuals, and they are working to break the stigma.

**Transitions**

Gudrun Parmer shared that she was retiring at the end of the month. Due to work engagement, Carlyle Johnson is also stepping back from his leadership role on this committee. Gudrun announced the Tremaine Sawyer and Lacie Scofield will be MHSUD’s new Co-Chairs.

**Meeting Adjourned 4:30pm**

**Next meeting**

06/13/2023 at 4:00pm