

Mental Health Connection Membership Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 8, 2010 at 8:30am
The Women's Center

Attendees:

Gwen Bain	Cassie Gordon	Melissa Opheim
Joan Barcellona	Michele Gortney	Sherri Pratt
Kay Barkin	Chuck Hoffman	Carolyn Presnall
Andre Bennett	Jennifer Johnson	Michael Steinert
Cindy Bethany	Lubna Khurshid	Patsy Thomas
Joe Burkett	Debra Kowalski	Cynthia Thompson
Deborah Caddy	Todd Landry	James Turnage
Melinda Cantu	Patrick LeBlanc	Richard Vickers
Wayne Carson	Lee LeGrice	Tamra Walker
Pat Cheong	Susanne Luebke	Mark Ware
Margaret Cohenour	Sandra Lydick	Grace White
Kristen Conner	Kelly Mays	Lyn Willis
Shawn Curtis	Patricia McGrew	Artie Williams
Dale Edmiaston	Steve McLaurin	Brenda Wingo
Jennifer Farnum	Michelle Morgan	Lena Zettler
Michelle Garcia	Clea Moss	
Susan Garnett	Santos Navarrette	

Susan Garnett called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. Carolyn Presnall, co-chair of the Membership Committee, led the group in introductions.

Presentations

Sundance Women's Services

Dr. Debra Kowalski reported on the Sundance Adult Women's Program. She explained that Sundance began the program after seeing many of the mothers of children in treatment also needed help. As they continued to investigate, they learned that many women in the community would like a program to help them work on their issues. The Adult Women's Program meets Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The program includes psychotherapy, art therapy, psychiatric support and medication education. The women see a physician twice a week, and are also able to participate in yoga classes twice a week. Sundance has started looking at evening programs, but most of the women in attendance do work. The program helps them to reintegrate into the working world. Sundance accepts almost every insurance, and it will work with individual patients on payment plans where necessary. Debra said the Sundance Web site has additional information. She also provided flyers on the women's program as well as the child/adolescent program.

Fort Worth ISD Crisis Services

Cindy Bethany of the Fort Worth ISD gave a presentation on the district's crisis services program. She explained that a child's mental and physical health is related to academic outcomes, and FWISD's goal is academic achievement. The district's crisis services program is a comprehensive, integrated, multi-component support. It is for short-term supports, focusing more on prevention and reinforcing students' defenses. It works to keep children focused on the here and now. However, it does not provide therapy. Crisis services might refer students for therapy. The district has set up a Safe Room for students, and parents have also used it after traumatic occurrences. During the Crisis Services program, presenters educate about the effects of stress and assess the students for risk of suicidal or violent behavior. The program also includes crisis management briefings, debriefings and defusing for students and adults; information provision to parents; trauma/grief coping groups; education on a variety of prevention topics; and referrals. The information is provided in small group settings so the presenters can see who is having difficulties. Cindy asked that the mental health community continue to support the crisis services by becoming trained in trauma-focused care and by encouraging first responders to attend Critical Management Stress Training. It was suggested that Mental Health Connection distribute notices of the trainings when they are available.

Utilization Review

Cook Children's Medial Center - Carolyn Presnall reported there are currently 10 in the Partial Hospitalization Program and eight inpatients with some blocked beds. She said they are seeing twice as many children in the Psychiatric Emergency Room as they had been seeing in previous months. In one 22-hour period, the ER conducted 15 assessments. This increase has occurred in the last month to six weeks. When beds are full, children are placed on a waiting list for the next available opening. There is no other inpatient care for very young children in Tarrant County.

MHMR Crisis Services - Artie Williams reported on crisis services for the fiscal year beginning in September 2009. Since that time, the Crisis Stabilization Unit has had 340 adults; the Crisis Respite Care has worked with 91 families; 55 adults have been in the Crisis Residential Unit; and the Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT) has received 20 new, unduplicated referrals. Only 20 MCOT calls have been about children, and only 5 of the respite calls. Artie is looking at ways to market the services to families with children. There is only a 1% recidivism rate in all services.

DataLink – Tamra Walker reported 100 referrals went through DataLink in February. Most came from Fort Worth ISD and from the Fort Worth Police Department, which is beginning to make frequent use of the system. Several additional agencies are looking at joining DataLink. The Federated model pilot is about 70% complete, and there should be a report on the results at the April meeting. IIT is still seeking a full-time developer to be based in Tarrant County. If anyone knows someone who might be interested, contact Tamra.

Hand in Hand – Grace White reported there are now 18 children with plans through Hand in Hand. Tarrant County's slots are full, and five referrals for Hood County were received last week. Hand in Hand is still seeking more referrals in Palo Pinto and Parker

Counties. Hand in Hand is also looking at ways to develop respite care for communities outside of Fort Worth.

Announcements

Kay Barkin announced the family-oriented Hand in Hand brochures are available today in English and Spanish. Additional copies are in the Hand in Hand offices.

Lee LeGrice announced the Suicide Prevention Coalition will meet on March 26 from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at the Mental Health Association offices on West Fourth Street. Everyone is invited to attend.

Kristen Conner announced Excel is collaborating with ACT on a Parent Support Group. Child care and dinner will be provided at the meetings, which will be held on the first Monday of each month from 6 to 8 p.m. at The Excel Center. The program is open to the community.

Sherri Pratt asked MHC members to support The Women's Center in its Annual Anti-Violence Walk-Run on April 10. Flyers are available, and individuals or groups can register while at The Women's Center today or online. There will be special activities for children.

Sandra Lydick announced the Fourth Annual Worship Service for Victims of Crime will be held April 18. The date coincides with the first day of National Crime Victims Rights Awareness Week.

Carolyn Presnall announced that Pat Cheong will provide an update on United Way of Tarrant County at the April meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held Monday, April 12, 8:30 a.m., at The Women's Center.

Adjournment

With no announcements or further business, Susan Garnett adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m.