

Mental Health Connection Membership Meeting Minutes
Monday, September 12, 2011, 8:30 a.m.
The Women's Center

Attendees:

Cherisse Ashcraft	Jennifer Gilley	Santos Navarrette
Stefan Ateek	Estrella Griggs	Justin Nsenga
Gwen Bain	Tabatha Gunn	Toby Owen
Joan Barcellona	Nate Mendove	Sherri Pratt
Kay Barkin	Ginny Hickman	Carolyn Presnall
Faye Beaulieu	Chuck Hoffman	Matt Robison
Stephanie Books	Virginia Hoft	Jane Sanford
Kristi Brown	Paula Hood	Alan Schonborn
Deborah Caddy	Elin Jacks	Dan Sutherland
Brent Carr	Cynthia Jensen	Patricia Sylve
Wayne Carson	Tracy Koller	Stacy Thomas
Pat Cheong	Debra Kowalski	Cobi Tittle
Sharlene Christiansen	Barbara Lamsens	Mark Ware
Dale Edmiaston	Todd Landry	Vicki Warren
Jennifer Farnum	Lee LeGrice	Grace White
Debbie Fillmore	Susanne Luebke	Brenda Wingo
Jan Finch	Jennifer Martin	Wayne Young
Bruce Frankel	Mark Mendez	Kathy Zeigler
Melissa Gibbons	Bart Miller	Lena Zettler
Allison Giles	Carol Nati, M.D.	Abdul Ziad

Susan Garnett called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. and welcomed attendees. Patsy Thomas introduced a photographer from TCU who will be creating a videotape of Mental Health Connection activities and achievements to show at Bridging the Gap.

Carolyn Presnall led the group in introductions.

Special Reports

Legislative Update

Susan introduced Dr. Jim McDermott, chair of the Mental Health Connection Advocacy Committee, and Dan Sutherland, chief of staff and legislative director for Representative Vicki Truitt.

Dr. McDermott distributed minutes from the most recent Advocacy Committee meeting, which discussed the impact of budget decisions in the recent Texas Legislative Session on various services in the community.

Adult Probation – Cobi Tittle reported Adult Probation received a cut of only \$460,000. As a result, there will be no major changes. The mental health program was fully funded.

Juvenile Probation - Dr. McDermott said there is a lot of change within Juvenile Probation, including the merging of agencies at the state level. There were no direct cuts in state funding, although there were some in county funding. It was reported that Tarrant County Juvenile Justice does have concerns about 10- and 11-year-olds coming to the Juvenile Justice Center. The Center cannot fully prepare because there is no estimate of the number of children who will be included.

Substance Abuse - DSHS will continue to fund the 12 Outreach, Screening, Assessment and Referral (OSARs) at 81.7% of their current funding. However, that group will no longer be doing assessments, approvals or waitlists. The approval function for admissions and extensions will be taken in-house at DSHS. Treatment providers will handle their own assessments and interact with DSHS on waitlist management and admissions. OSARs will now focus on Outreach, Screening and Referral, similar to what they did before 2005. Each region will work to develop its own transition plan to adjust to the new OSAR role. Jennifer Gilley reported that, before OSAR, treatment providers in Tarrant County had a good network of communication. The Challenge Treatment Providers Coalition is looking at reinstating that network so agencies will know which ones have openings for treatment.

Mental Health – The budget for adult mental health services was reduced 4%, with crisis funding intact. Children’s mental health services received an increase of 15%. NorthStar received a 14% increase, and state hospitals received an increase of 1%. Overall, the level of mental health funding remained level.

Education – There were significant cuts to Fort Worth ISD and other districts throughout the state. However, mental health and school clinic services were not hit as much as other areas. FWISD had a significant change in strategy, ending its alternative school contract with Lena Pope Home and returning the service in-house. Vicki Warren said most cuts are coming as people retire, so no teaching positions were cut. There were no cuts to the Family Resource Centers. The district anticipates even larger cuts next year. Chuck Hoffman said it was encouraging that community advocacy prevented major cuts in support services. Dale Edmiaston reported the Family Resource Centers did not lose any of the 9.5 full-time employees. They did, however, lose funding to have their own parent education programs and similar indirect services. The FRCs will look to partner with others in the community for these programs. School-based centers are growing, with a JPS Pediatric Clinic added this year. The district partnered with a church to make the new clinic happen. Dale reported community partners donated almost \$4 million in one year through the mental health and school-based health centers. Patsy Thomas pointed out the importance of making school board members aware that these centers are the result of community partnerships. Pat Cheong said that, over the biennium, Fort Worth ISD will lose \$39 million, Arlington ISD will lose \$29 million, and Birdville ISD will lose \$11 million.

Psychiatric Hospitals – There was minimal impact for psychiatric hospitals.

Homeless – Most of the state funds are pass-through funds from the federal government. Toby Owens said the biggest cuts have come through the City of Fort Worth’s Homeless Directions program. Bruce Frankel said major funding has been placed in the state’s

Emergency Shelter Fund, which is more difficult to access. Presbyterian Night Shelter will lose one staff member as a direct result of funding cuts in Directions Home. The Day Resource Center will lose four of its five case managers. The Catholic Charities Street Outreach Program was eliminated.

Criminal/Probate Courts – Judge Carr’s Veteran's Court will not lose funds.

CPS - Wayne Carson reported foster care rates were not cut. Prevention programs were cut drastically. Internally, positions have been reduced, and the agency is looking at higher caseloads. On January 1, 2012, two regions will privatize child welfare, and plans are in place to roll out statewide privatization. It will probably be three to five years before it has an impact on our community. If this area is privatized, it would be Dallas and Fort Worth together. A lawsuit filed against the state charging that children stay in foster care too long is moving into class action status. The previous commissioner retires October 1 and will be replaced by Howard Baldwin.

Dr. McDermott said there is still much work to be done. Announcements for the next Advocacy Committee meeting will be distributed soon.

Dan Sutherland Report

Dan Sutherland explained that Mental Health Connection does advocacy very well. The key components to good advocacy are relationships; clear, concise messages that are translatable to public benefits and to dollars and cents; and organization. He said the Texas Council of Community Centers has also done a very effective job for mental health advocates across the state.

Going into the 82nd Legislative Session, the dynamics included a revenue shortfall of about \$21 million caused primarily by the recession, along with voter anger and frustration about government inaction and waste. As a result, many expected a disaster for mental health/substance abuse funding. However, advocates were successful because mental health funding remained flat, and funding for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities was cut only 10 percent.

Going into the 83rd Legislative Session, the dynamics will shift somewhat. There is now anger over deficits, which has exacerbated voter frustration with the government. People also fear for their own entitlements. The anti-tax bias is more pronounced. There is major concern about the future of Medicaid, primarily because of long-term care, nursing homes and assisted living. The Federal government writes the rules in these areas, but has not addressed the issue. Because of the growing number of older Texans, the costs will hurt Texas’ budget for the next decade. The first victim will be school districts.

Dan congratulated Mental Health Connection on its successes in the 82nd Legislative Session and said we can count on Vicki Truitt to help us do all we need to accomplish our goals.

Bridging the Gap/Leadership Training

Lee LeGrice announced the Bridging the Gap brochure has been mailed and might have reached people over the weekend. The fifth and final symposium will be held on

November 7 and 8 at TCU. She promised intellectual stimulation, new information and laughter. The speakers include Ellen Kagen, Steve Murdock and 4 Day Weekend. The cost is \$75 for members, and the deadline for registration is October 28.

Susan pointed out that Mental Health Connection has talked for years about transformation and how to achieve it. First, we must ensure that we have the right leaders in place to help make transformation happen. Virginia Hoft and Estrella Griggs were both selected to participate in SAMHSA training presented by Ellen Kagen, who will be presenting the same workshop locally in October. The goal is to provide evidence-based leadership training and consultation for a multi-dimensional team of 50 qualified individuals who have the knowledge, skills, attitudes and interest to serve as agents for transformational change for their own agencies, partner agencies of Mental Health Connection and key community stakeholders. It will be an amazing opportunity to bring 50 people together to train and work as a team on change activities. An application form will be developed so agencies can nominate as many as four individuals from their own staff or key partners who may not be part of Mental Health Connection. A committee will review applications. The participants will be involved in more than the two-day training. Leaders will be mentored by Ellen over the course of the year. They will play a key role at the November Symposium and will have opportunities over the course of the year to work in strategic fashion with Mental Health Connection. Patsy Thomas said the information and application will be on the Web site tomorrow. Applications are due two weeks from today. Individuals are welcome to nominate themselves if they are part of an agency and have written approval from their executive and immediate supervisor. Patsy asked members to think strategically about their partners in the community. We want to develop a common language and give new perspectives on how we manage change as leaders. The 50 selected people will be “special agents” for transformation and will help keep that process growing. The work will be serious, but there will also be fun. The hope is that all Mental Health Connection agencies will have at least one representative. Susan explained that Hand in Hand funds are available to help defray some of the costs. There is little direct cost for agencies except in allowing staff members to participate. Virginia said the training addresses problem solving from an adaptive perspective, and she is looking forward to having a larger group of people working with the same language. Estrella said Ellen is very excited about coming here, especially since this is her first opportunity to work with this type of group. Contact Patsy for additional information.

Utilization Review

Tarrant Cares - Kay Barkin reported there were 1,376,000 hits on Tarrant Cares between March 30 and September 1. There have been 686,128 pageviews and 115,655 sessions. Mental Health received the most hits in August, followed by Veterans and Seniors. Veterans had the most pageviews, and Mental Health had the most sessions. Tarrant Cares is conducting a survey of participating agencies to determine whether they have received increased calls since the site launched. Patsy asked that everyone respond to the survey.

DataLink – Dale reported there were 217 referrals in August, up from 100 in July. Over the past 12 months, there have been 2,247 referrals through DataLink.

Cook Children's Medical Center – Carolyn Presnall reported there are 14 young people in the Partial Hospitalization Program, which has capacity for 15. There are seven children in inpatient beds this morning

Hand in Hand – Allison Giles reported outreach activities are focusing on developing and formalizing governance structures in the outlying areas. An initial meeting will be held in Parker County on September 20 to discuss development of a System of Care. Hand in Hand is involved in the CCHAPS health coalitions in each county with a Hand in Hand presence. Wraparound has served 71 children to date. A new Johnson County facilitator has been hired, and referrals are especially needed in Johnson, Hood and Palo Pinto Counties. As part of an initiative to take wraparound services statewide, there was a training for supervisors in San Antonio recently. Next year, Tarrant County will be able to bill for wraparound services. Chuck Hoffman reported the Family Advisory Board is operating and putting together presentations. This week, there will be a training for families to help them tell their own stories to a variety of audiences. Hand in Hand is also working with the state to develop a family mentor credentialing process. Feedback from families has shown that many cannot attend meetings at any time of the day. As a result, Jamie Souders has participated in setting up the technology so parents can participate in live meetings from their homes. Kay reported she has begun planning for Children's Mental Health Awareness Day in May.

Crisis Services - Mark Ware reported the satellite office in Arlington will open next week. Crisis Services has also expanded its office space on Hulen. There will be an open house on September 21 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. A notice will be sent later this week.

CCHAPS – Ginny Hickman reported CCHAPS is gearing up to conduct the survey again. Cook Children's has committed to conduct a re-survey every three years. The surveys will go to families in a six-county area. Mental Health Connection members gave feedback on survey questions, which is greatly appreciated. There are some changes since the last survey, but it is primarily the same so progress can be benchmarked over the years.

Announcements

Virginia Hoft announced the next CBMCS training will be October 28 and 29 and November 3 and 4. Deadline for registration is October 21. A space for the training is still needed, and Estrella Griggs asked that agencies let her know if they can provide a room and offer it in-kind. In January, there will be a CBMCS training open only to managers as the result of several requests. Open discussion can be compromised when managers and the people who work for them are in the same session. The dates will be January 19 and 20 and January 26 and 27. CBMCS is now moving into the sustainability stage. Trainers need two years experience before fully mastering the material. There is now a new call for trainers that has been extended to October 4. Those who have been through training will have an opportunity to participate in a book study. The first session will be held on October 6 at Italy Restaurant from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Susan thanked all of those who have been providing the leadership for the Cultural Competence initiative.

Carolyn Presnall announced the October meeting will feature a report on ACH Respite Services from Mark Heilman and a report on Texas Health Resources Cultural

Competency from Karen Matos. There will be no November meeting; instead, everyone is encouraged to attend the Bridging the Gap Symposium. The December meeting will be a breakfast, and members are encouraged to bring toiletries for the homeless.

Carolyn announced that Maury Booth passed away recently.

Matt Robison announced the Child Study Center will be holding its Fun Run and Walk at the Benbrook Ball Fields on November 5. The event is child and family friendly. For information about vendor space and registration, visit www.cscfw.org.

Dale announced he brought O.P.E.N. Doors posters for Mental Health Connection members to display. The posters are designed to help Fort Worth ISD locate children in homeless situations.

Faye Beaulieu announced the United Way Northeast Report to the Community will be held October 5 at the Hurst Conference Center. Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley will be the celebrity emcee.

Pat Cheong announced the United Way Legislative Update will be held next Monday, September 19, at 1:30 p.m. at the Botanic Garden.

Patsy Thomas announced the City of Fort Worth is having an All America City Celebration on October 3 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The purpose is to formally present the All America City plaque, and Mental Health Connection has been asked to participate. All but one member agency has agreed to be there, and Patsy will follow up with that final one. There will be tables so member agencies can display information. The City is hoping for 1,000 people and expects the media as well. It will be a good opportunity for Mayor Price to see the depth and breadth of the mental health coalition in Tarrant County. The celebration will be held at City Hall on the breezeway, 1000 Throckmorton.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held Monday, October 8, at 8:30 a.m. at The Women's Center, 1723 Hemphill.

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:17 a.m.