



## Minutes

**February 15, 2018 10AM to 12:30PM**  
**Quality Inn, Batavia NY 8250 Park Road Batavia NY**

Andrew O'Brien called the meeting to order at 10:09AM and reviewed the agenda for today's meeting. Board members, Key Partners, and ex-officio members introduced themselves including organizational affiliation (if applicable). Guests seated in the gallery introduced themselves. Margaret Varga shared that guests are invited to observe WNY RPC Board Meetings and will be present at future board meetings.

Andrew introduced the new RPC Project Director – Donna DeWan. Donna greeted the board and gave a brief overview of her background and what she hopes to accomplish as the new project director. She invited board members to contact her with any questions and stated that she looked forward to working with the western region representatives.

Kirsten Vincent made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2017 meeting. Chris Syracuse seconded. With no changes, the motion was unanimously approved.

**OCFS:** Dana Brown from OCFS was unable to attend today's meeting and did not submit a report.

**OMH:** Chris Doherty Smith from the OMH WNYFO shared the following information:

- 19 BHCCs were selected across NYS with 4 in the WNY region
- Year 1 workplans are due March 22<sup>nd</sup>; Fidelis will be contracting with all BHCCs outside of NYC.
- Crisis Intervention under 1115 waiver: guidance has been issued to MCOs and counties – this is focused upon mobile outreach including draft rates. A vision statement and draft rates were also distributed. Counties are asked to submit their crisis plans to OMH/OASAS by early April.
- Anne Constantino added that these rates are only applicable to those with MMC; she also asked if OMH is working with 820 providers and OASAS to collaborate on regulations to work towards integrated care.
- The second phase of crisis residential beds is also being implemented. There will be \$50m for capital for expansion. All beds will be licensed. At this time Chris is unsure if there will be an RFP for expansion. Definitions and regulations on this process will be forthcoming.
- Children's SPA and HCBS will be delayed – possibly up to two (2) years. At this time the state budget has not been passed so there can be advocacy efforts to put into the budget,

the timeline can be revisited, or nothing other than the delay will happen. We will keep board members updated on this process.

- Chris Marcello will discuss SDEs during his presentation.

**OASAS** – Jerry Puma shared that there has been an “explosion of activity” in the WNY region. Seven of the eight counties have received approvals for residential expansion, new or expanded clinic services, and expansion or new MAT programs. He reports that several agencies are moving forward with conversion to 820 regulations. See the attached list for county specific details.

Laura Kelemen shared that their LGU is working with the local Sheriff’s office as are many LGUs across the state. She reports that they are working on developing programs to provide SUD treatment to individuals currently incarcerated. The CLMHD has produced a white paper to help address this issue. Data shows that incarcerated individuals receiving treatment have lower recidivism rates than those not receiving treatment. LGUs have been in touch with state senators to continue funding for this project. Questions arose about curriculum and MAT; Laura stated that she was not sure if jails were using a specific curriculum but added that MAT was being discussed and that some jails are starting individuals on MAT prior to discharge.

**OMH WNYFO Data Presentation** - Chris Marcello shared data slides re HCBS (see power point presentation for today’s board meeting for details). The data demonstrates that there has been an increase in HCBS services over the past three (3) months, particularly in peer support services. Niagara County has highest percentage of HARP enrolled individuals in Health Homes in New York State (54%). Wyoming County has highest percentage of HCBS assessed individuals in New York State (93%). Chris noted that Erie County has three (3) CCBHCs – this may account for the lower than expected numbers of services provided for the county and region. The board requested that, if possible, OMH research the impact of CCBHCs on the provision of HCBS.

**Report from Children & Families Subcommittee** - Vicky McCarthy was unable to attend the board meeting for personal reasons. Town halls were held in Buffalo (25+ attendees) and Arcade (20 attendees). Similar themes were heard in each meeting including access to care, working with multiple state agencies, state delays implementing SPA and HCBS, services available outside of MMC. The subcommittee has decided to continue meeting and will be convening a workgroup to develop action plans.

**Reports from ad hoc work groups:**

Health Homes - Bruce Nisbet was unable to attend today’s board meeting; he will report at the May meeting.

HCBS - Michelle Scheib shared that the first meeting of the workgroup was held on January 25<sup>th</sup>. Several barriers to services were identified. The group requested that HH work group members

be invited to the next meeting on February 21<sup>st</sup>. The group will be working on identifying the steps in the process of entry into the system of care to payment for services rendered.

Systems – Anne Constantino shared that there will be a meeting in March with Erie County DSS, DMH, and Niagara County DMH to discuss what can be resolved regionally (i.e. use of localtr, elimination of 3<sup>rd</sup> party assessments) and what needs to be advocated for at a state level (decrease time getting a client signed up for MMC). Margaret shared that many of the issues that Horizon is dealing with at this time will be faced by other SUD organizations as they transition to 820 regulations. Progress on this issue will be updated to the board as it occurs.

### **WNY Regional Issues:**

Margaret reviewed the status of issues submitted for prior state co-chairs meetings. Laura Kelemen requested that instead of labeling issues as resolved that they are labeled “decision made” as the board did not agree with the resolution of some issues (most notably the answer received regarding APG rates).

Seven (7) issues remained that have not been discussed at the state co-chairs meeting. Board members eligible to vote were asked to vote on the top three (3) issues that they would like to submit for the meeting in April. Members were also asked to fill in any other issues that they thought should be brought up at the meeting. The top three issues (with recommendations) are:

1. Stakeholders report concerns re sharing of information between partners - there are questions re HIPAA regulations, 42CFR Part 2 covering substance abuse services, etc. and reports that knowledge of regulations differs between partnering organizations.

#### Recommendation:

- a. Issue guidance regarding information sharing for all "O" agencies that is sanctioned by the NYS Attorney General; this will ensure that there is consistency regarding information sharing across state agencies.
  - b. Utilize Legal Action Center to clarify information re 42CFR Part 2 – exactly how should these regulations be utilized within a multi-system process (e.g. MH & SUD clinics, health homes, CMAs, etc.).
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2. Concerns have been expressed that not all HCBS services are available in this region and/or not within a reasonable distance of many consumers. **(This issue was chosen and recommendations developed prior to release of information re HCBS stimulus project).**

#### Recommendation:

- a. Conduct survey of CBOs who provide referrals and/or provide services to potential HARP clients and of CMAs to determine what the barriers are to current clients accessing HCBS.

- This is ongoing through local HHH group with preliminary results to be shared prior to April meeting.
- b. Conduct survey of current HCBS providers who are ready to receive referrals asking what are the barriers to receiving referrals and enrolling clients for services. This is ongoing through local HHH group with preliminary results to be shared prior to April meeting.
  - c. Conduct survey of those agencies that did not move to active status to determine what the barriers were to not starting services.
3. There are several concerns re workforce issues. Some of these will be addressed regionally – a new workgroup focused upon this area was developed at this board meeting and is in the process of scheduling their first meeting. However, several organizations across stakeholder groups stated that they are not able to recruit, train, and retain qualified professional staff due to their inability to pay professional salaries commensurate with the level of education and experience required to provide quality services. Organizations also shared that they have staff members carrying high caseloads and associated workloads. This inability is a result of rate payments that are inadequate to support a quality professional work force.

Recommendation: Although the response received by the RPCs at the October co-chairs meeting indicated that there would be no significant rate changes and that FFS would be phased out by 2020 the WNY RPC believes that the issue of adequate rate scheduled must be re-visited, re-examined, and re-thought by OMH, OASAS, and DOH. With the drive towards VBP and quality care, we must ensure that we have a quality workforce in place; we will do what we can on a regional basis to develop a quality workforce, we ask the state to assist us in retaining them.

#### **Discussion/Formation of new ad hoc work groups:**

As referenced above, there will be a workgroup to address work force issues. Kirsten Vincent volunteered to be the board lead for this group. Jennifer Earl, Laura Kelemen, Ken Sass, and Michelle Scheib volunteered to serve on this work group.

Board members discussed the need for quantitative data for use in decision-making. Discussion centered on the types of data that are available, how agencies can exchange data when system platforms do not support easy exchange, timeliness of data, non-integration of technology, use of RHIO, Psyckes, EMR, HH data. Board members stated that they would like to have further education on how different platforms work. Margaret will have discussion with some board members on what the specific issues are to be addressed and then will develop a survey to determine what the task will be for this new work group.

#### **New Business:**

1. Elections – the coordinator task force is clarifying rules for the next election. Andrew will be stepping down as the co-chair of this RPC and we will be holding

elections for his position (co-chair only) at the May meeting. Please contact Margaret if you are interested in being considered for this position. In addition, you were elected for a 2-year term; think if you wish to consider remaining on the board after your initial 2 years.

2. Update on BHCC – Ellery Reaves from the Integrity Network shared that they are working with Fidelis on their submission for March. Howard Hitzel from the Value Network shared that they are putting together an advisory group and will be doing webinars to gather information and keep partners updated. He shared that they about thirty (30) licensed OMH/OASAS providers and an additional 30 affiliates.
3. Michelle Scheib shared that on May 3<sup>rd</sup> there will be a flash mob at the Buffalo Central Library including a mental hygiene fair. They are looking for vendors. She distributed flyers regarding the event.
4. Margaret shared a slide listing suggestions for an educational segment for future board meetings. She requested that members provide feedback and additional suggestions.

#### **Questions from the Gallery:**

Katie Trombley asked if elections would be reopened to the public. Answer: Yes. The WNY region would like to hold a stakeholder event similar to those held in October/December 2016 to update the community on the work of the RPC and to register voters for the next board election.

She also asked if BHCCs had consumer input and both representatives answered that there is consumer input. Lastly, she asked if RPC workgroups and subcommittees were open to the public; Margaret responded that they are and requested that board members feel free to send staff to meetings and to publicize to consumers of services.

**Adjournment:** The date of the next board meeting was changed. It will be held on May 9<sup>th</sup> from 10AM to 12:30PM at Horizon University, 60 E. Amherst Street, Buffalo.

With no further business, a call was made to adjourn the meeting. Jennifer Earl motioned to adjourn the meeting with a second from Laura Kelemen. The meeting was adjourned at 12:22PM.

Approved 5/9/18