

Forensic Interagency Task Force

3-28-17

Meeting Narrative

Those attending the meeting held in the DOC Training Academy Complex on the above date were: **Tricia Baffa** (Forensic Case Magr Supervisor); **Michelle Baxter** (OMHSAS); **Daniel Beauchamp** (Regional Forensic Liaison); **Lisa Brame** (Social Worker); **Tori Bright** (Regional MH Services Coordinator); **Lance Couturier** (Psychology Dir. Annuitant); **Hazel Dacus**(Forensic Coordinator); **David Dinich** (President FTAC); **Heidi Fuehrer** (Psych Services Specialist); **Jillian Gosselin** (Forensic BCM Sup); **Amy Groh** (Dir. Of Crisis/SAM); **Mariah Harms** (North Hampton Co); **Laurie Hess** (FCCII-Forensic Corrections Counselor); **Michele Jeszenka** (Siena House Program Dir.); **Michael Keefer** (ME Court Coordinator); **Marirosa Lamas** (Superintendent); **Ray McManamon** (Dir. Emergency & Court Services); **Donna McNelis** (Dir. BH Education); **Kerri Miller** (SPORE Case Mgr.); **Heather Pack** (Forensic Case Manager); **Sharon Potter** (Counselor); **William Price** (CMU Admin. Case Mgt); **Marco Pugliese** (School of Pharmacy); **Amy Ramiza** (Parole Agent 2); **Jennifer Reed** (Program Supervisor); **Jessica Reichenbach** (OMHSAS); **Melissa Repsher** (Reentry Division Director PBPP); **Amanda Rhoads** (Social Worker); **Nicole Seiple** (Forensic MH Caseworker); **Jessica Penn Shires** (OMHSAS); **Deborah Shoemaker** (Ex. Dir. PA Psychiatric Society); **Penny Sines** (PBPP); **Vivian Spiese** (FTAC); **Rebecca Stevenson** (CMPHDS); **Stacy Tekely** (Sup. JRS Unit Mgr.) **Sally Walker** (Dir. Admin Unit); **Josh Warfield** (Court Coordinator); **Lloyd Wertz** (VP, FTAC); **Nancy Wieman** (Consultant); **Elaine Ziegler** (MH Mgr. Chester Co. Prison); and **Lisa Zook** (PA Assoc. County Administrators).

This is the eleventh meeting of this resumption of the Forensic Interagency Task Force(FITF) convened by FTAC with approximately 41 attendees.

Facilitator, Dave Dinich of FTAC, welcomed the group and asked attendees for introductions and a relating of new things that are happening in the Commonwealth from their varied perspectives. During introductions, Dave asked for those counties which are involved in the “Stepping Up” initiative to share their current status and the results of that involvement. It was noted that there can be

a problem with the data collection and sharing. Some of it is of a more highly protected nature, thus preventing it from being shared.

During introductions, Dave asked Jessica Shires of OMHSAS to share some information regarding Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) and any initiatives that are being planned with the Department of Corrections (DOC). She shared some of those in hard copy with the attendees. As to benefits being reinstated on an expedited basis, she related a program which is directed toward inmates with Seriously Mentally Illness (SMI). There are certain timelines which have been established to suggest activities that should be initiated and completed prior to the planned release of those inmates from the DOC system.

Dave then took an opportunity to share some of the issues relevant to information sharing, which can be very different depending upon the county in which the effort is being mounted. The issue of Criminal History Record Information Act (CHRIA) was discussed with a person who had worked in the DOC System for an extended time. He asked that the participants be made aware of the where to locate the Act on the internet. It was stated that entering "CHRIA" into Google will take the interested person directly to that act, as it was originally passed in PA. It was noted that there may be no alternative but to amend CHIRA, and Jim Fouts has begun the process by discussing this with two attorneys from Philadelphia as well as with two attorneys from the DOC legal division. This would likely be a long-term process, as it probably would involve a number of entities that have a stake in the current law. Anyone interested is welcome to contact Jim.

Dave polled the group about whether this has been a problem in counties. It was shared that all counties have some level of awareness and that the system in Allegheny County, while it seems to be exemplary, is also very complicated in addition to being very expensive to create and maintain. It was noted that Allegheny Co. has a highly-developed and successful data-sharing process, which seems to work well for them. However, it does not, at this point, seem to be transferable to other counties, especially Philadelphia. There seem to be high costs and local law and custom that need to be addressed. The Philadelphia

Forensic Task Force has plans to continue learning from the process established in Allegheny County.

There was a suggestion that information which is highly protected can and will result in the inability to provide effective, integrated care to those who have a history in treatment for Substance Use and Mental Health Issues within the corrections system.

There was a question from an attendee about the potential of discussions with some of those involved in this issue on a state-wide basis and how this might be accomplished. Dave noted that there seems to be some high level of interest in discerning the levels of interference in community readiness and placement when approaching release. The attendee suggested that this is a good time for this type of discussion to occur and that there needs to be a willingness on the part of counties to share the information from treatment in those settings upon initiation of DOC incarceration. It was suggested that this issue will take more than a few informal discussions to address this problem. However, a change in legislation with a specific goal in mind is a difficult task to accomplish.

The first Agenda item was the sharing from the FITF Committees and their future meeting dates. These were:

The Housing Sub-Committee Report was offered by Michelle Baxter. She noted the meeting of this Sub-Committee and its concentration on certain recommendations of the Re-Entry Committee.

She listed the following topics and expectations of the committee participants as foci of the Sub-Committee:

- Highlight attention on recognized programs nationally which have proven to be successful.
- In addition, there is a determination to use Evidence-Based Practices in the settings involved.
- Attend the Criminal Justice Advisory Board
- Attend re-entry coalition and foundation meetings.

- Attend Continuum of Care Meetings
- Compile notices of potential grant opportunities outside the norm, such as PCCD
- Invite guest speakers from meetings we attend
- Work with OMHSAS Housing Coordinator

Furthermore, this Sub-Committee decided to attend the Mental Health and Criminal Justice Advisory Board Committee Meetings to learn more about its activities. In addition, Jessica Shires shared that there are Regional Coordinators who work through this group in effecting change across the Commonwealth. There are members who attend other, relevant, meeting venues which speak to the issues surrounding housing for the criminal justice population. While the PCCD is an important funding stream for this population, there are others that need to be recognized and can be referenced by the Committee Members.

The potential of getting speakers from other areas and counties to share initiatives with the FITF as a whole was also recommended.

There was a representative from the Lehigh Valley Program known as MISA who expressed a willingness to share with and serve on this Sub-Committee.

Dave expressed his appreciation to Ms. Baxter for the work that her Sub-Committee and asked how that might be shared with a person considering entering the field, such as the Student Interns attending this meeting.

Michelle also addressed the success of Allegheny County in garnering an SSI, SSD Outreach Access and Recovery(SOAR) program grant.

Re-Entry Committee by Tory Bright. Tory distributed a single copy of the report that she generated from the extended work of the Re-Entry Committee of the FITF. Since it is in DRAFT, as of this juncture, it will not be generally distributed until later.

Documentation Sub-Committee Danny Beauchamp. There was no meeting since the last FITF Meeting. However, there was a full workshop presentation at the most recent Forensic Rights Conference on this topic which was well attended

and well received. There were a number of counties, both large and small, which were willing to participate in this effort. Attendees present noted that the workshop was well prepared and very relevant to the topic and for the participants.

Benefits Sub-Committee, James Fouts.

Dave closed with a comment on the need for presentations for upcoming FITF Meetings and asked for them to be brought to his attention in order to schedule these for future meetings.

The next Agenda item was a presentation on the PA Heroin Overdose Prevention Technical Assistance Center by Marco Pugliese, M.S., from the University of Pittsburgh.

The presenter agreed to forward a copy of the power point he used for this purpose in order to have it accompany this Meeting Narrative to all FITF participants.

The mission of this project is to reduce overdose deaths in PA eventually to zero. There are multiple strategies involved to achieve this goal which include:

- Expanding the use of Narcan in PA counties.
- Create a local panel/committee which is tasked with addressing this issue
- Assuring that services for people with Substance Use issues are available in sufficient volume to allow for their access to all of those with SU problems.

Upon initial contact with a county, the primary contact between the county and this Project comes from and through the Single County Authority. There is no requirement that this be initiated by the county, it simply seems to have generated in this manner.

After the initial planning discussions, there are tasks that have been assumed by the local groups in a given county, with regular follow-up contacts from the Technical Assistance Center to assure the implementation and to help with any issues that may have arisen. There are also “data asks” that are made from the

county programs to their local Hospital Emergency Rooms to gather information of overdose treatment and admissions, as well as death data that might be relevant to his issue.

Marco also shared some information on the collection of overdose death data at the county levels. He shared some information which is specific to one of the counties and how that data is broken down by statistical splits of gender, age, and others. All of this data has its identifying information removed. In the cases where there are very small numbers, they might not be listed to prevent any identification through its being posted.

There was some discussion of the levels of cooperation with the County Coroners across the Commonwealth. This varies, of course, County by County. There can also be variations as overdose deaths from being accidental versus homicide, due to someone's having supplied the drug to the person who eventually overdosed.

There is additional support provided by the Technical Assistance Center to help support and problem-solve with the local Committees.

Marco shared that a great deal of this information can be accessed through OverdoseFreePA.pitt.edu He also noted that there is an effort to access availability of treatment slots and refer that information to anyone using the website and asking that question.

There was a question about pricing for the filling of a prescription of Naloxone. There seems to be a difference in cost in getting a prescription filled for Narcan for those with Medical Assistance Benefits who use a written prescription from an MD versus the use of the "Standing Order" in PA. It was suggested that there be communication with the Office of Medical Assistance Programs (OMAP) to address this topic.

The next meeting will be on May 23, 2017 beginning at 10:00AM. It is scheduled for Classroom 11 again in the DOC Training Academy in Elizabethtown.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lloyd G. Wertz, FTAC/FSS.

