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11/13/2023

Adult State Program Standing Committee Minutes

DRAFT

Present Members: Ann Cooper (she/her) Bruce Wilson Christopher Rotsettis (he/him) Dan Towle (he/him) Lynne Cardozo(excu)
 Marla Simpson (she/they) Michael McAdoo Zach Hughes (he/him)
DMH/State Staff: Lauren Welch (she/her) Eva Dayon (they/them) Trish Singer Katie Smith (she/her)
Public: Jessica Kantatan (she/her) Anne Donahue Thelma Stoudt (prospective member)

Agenda

- 12:30 SPSC Business: Introductions and Review Agenda, Statement on public comment, Vote on minutes
- 1:00 Q&A with Howard Center
- 2:30 BREAK
- 2:40 Draft recommendation letter
- 3:10 Public Comment
- 2:50 Closing meeting business and planning next meeting agenda

Agenda Item	Discussion (follow up items in yellow) Facilitator: Michael McAdoo Timekeeper: n/a
Opening	Meeting convened at 12:34. Quorum was met. Introductions were made. Approval of previous meeting minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christopher motioned to approve September 2023 minutes with recommended corrections. Marla seconded. All in favor. September minutes approved.• Christopher motioned to approve October 2023 minutes with recommended corrections. Marla seconded. One abstention. All in favor. October minutes approved. Announcements <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NAMI Vermont Conference is coming up on November 15th in Burlington. Full-house attendance is expected (over 200 people!) NAMI Vermont 2023 Conference - NamiVT Assign Howard Center questions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peer support: Christopher• Staffing: Ann• Housing: Michael

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suicide prevention: Michael • Strategic plans: Marla <p>Kudos for Howard Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong leadership and resilience given challenging region and the pandemic. <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining necessary staffing
<p>Q&A with Howard Center</p>	<p>Bob Bick, CEO Cathy Connolly, Board Member Sandy McGuire, CFO and COO Beth Holden, Chief Client Services Officer Charlotte McCorkel, Senior Director of Client Services – not here? Matt MacNeil, Director of Evaluation Elaine Soto, Director of Community Support Program Delaina Norton, Director of Long-Term Supports and Services Dan Hall, Director of Outpatient Services Jacquie Dragon, HR Director Beth Goss, Director of Client Care and Coordination</p> <p>Overview An overview of Howard Center programming was provided by the agency. Appreciation was shared for staff at the agency for continuation of services through a challenging time. Appreciation was also shared for the Board, a majority of whom are individuals with lived experience or family members of those with lived experience.</p> <p>Staffing Staying around 200 vacancies over the past year. To retain staff, the agency increased union wages (3.25%), nonunion wages increased as well. Trying to be competitive with other agencies in the region. Work-life balance is another part of the retention strategy- flexibility with work location when possible and being adaptable to the needs of both the staff and the role. The agency has also implemented a new Employee Assistance Program provider, which has resulted in significantly increased utilization of this service. There is also an annual wellness day event- which was particularly well attended this year. Staff wellness program with free unlimited yoga program, access to kickboxing, headspace mindfulness app. There is a scholarship fund for staff as well.</p>

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	<p>Peer Support The START program is specific to peer staff in the community. There are also peer staff working at the Westview drop-in center. The agency is hoping to expand the use of peers at HC. The START staff all receive Intentional Peer Support Training. Most of those staff have also been trained in Collaborative Network Approach. Most peer staff positions, as written, are unionized roles. Howard Center is mindful that salaries earned by peers may impact the benefits they receive, and the agency tries to accommodate peer staff preferences. Mobile crisis rolling out statewide will mean more staff hired by the agency. The agency is open to hiring two part-time staff to fill a full-time role if that works better for a peer.</p> <p>Housing HC has the highest number of residential beds for the CRT clients in the state. This is a challenge for staff and the agency's budget. The agency is working towards becoming a Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCHBC) – which is a model that doesn't include residential services or disability services. Howard Center doesn't plan to reduce the residential services provided by the agency, even as HC moved toward CCBHC. It's also a challenge for staff to find housing in the Chittenden region – which was cost the agency qualified applicants. The agency is continuing to work with housing partners like the local housing authorities and the Champlain Housing Trust. There is a partnership with COTS (with two clinician roles!) to support families with a child under six years old to attain and retain housing.</p> <p>Suicide Prevention The agency joined the Zero Suicide initiative over five years ago. The agency continues to dedicate funding to suicide prevention efforts. Offer gun locks for clients, staff, and community members. There is outreach to gun shops and firing ranges. There is training for staff in prevention best practices (using CAMS) and high interest from staff in this training. The agency offers post-vention support to the community after a suicide death has occurred. Partnering with primary care centers to strengthen suicide prevention across the system of care. HC will loop back to the committee about how many gun shops have had outreach from Howard Center.</p> <p>Mobile Crisis There will be addition of peer in a paired response to crisis needs in the community, which the agency is excited about. Many facets of the agency are organizing to move this into practice. This will require a coordinated response between mental health and substance use services, which is a change from current practice.</p> <p>Continuous Improvement/Strategic Planning The CRT program is creating a new building for the lakeview residential program – it will be open on one level in March 2024. Potential reorganize the staff structure to create multi-disciplinary staff team for individuals with complex medical</p>
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	<p>and mental health needs. These two initiatives are a result of staff and client input. The community needs assessment from the University of Vermont Medical Center has also named mental health as a core need in their system of care. Access to AOP services is a priority at the agency – the agency is developing short term quick access model, following an evidence-based practice. The agency is also placing a new position in congregate care living – trying to meet clients where they are. Also increasing partnerships with schools. Emergency Services is also expanding family crisis response specific to youth- this program is running currently but are hoping to add a family member with lived experience.</p> <p>Agency Vision The agency is actively recruiting a new Executive Director as Bob Bick will be retiring mid-2024. Bob hopes that the new hire will continue to focus on expanding cultural responsiveness and diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. HC is also developing a Mental Health Urgent Care space as an alternative to going to the Emergency Room. This is a collaboration between HC, UVMMC, and Pathways Vermont. The whole system of care needs to continue to make progress on stigma, both on an individual and systemic level. The agency also needs to be financially viable and ran a significant deficit last year and this financial year.</p> <p>Miscellaneous Regarding the discontinuation of representative payee-ship- this was both a financial burden for the agency and created a conflict of interest between staff and clients. HC supplemented the cost of this shift for the first few months. The agency acknowledged this was a very difficult decision knowing it would financially impact clients.</p> <p>HC has a local program standing committee that meets six times each year. There are regularly attending members who provide feedback to the agency and have longevity with this space. The agency has plans to outreach to newer people receiving services to make them aware the committee exists. This group will be involved in the recruitment of the new executive director. There is an across-the-agency standing committee that comes together a couple times a year to collaborate on feedback for HC.</p>
<p>Draft Letter to Commissioner</p>	<p>Kudos for Howard Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff engagement with new EAP; new wellness initiatives for staff including free yoga/kickboxing classes and annual wellness day (suggestion that wellness day be monthly) • Professional and knowledgeable leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Best wishes to Bob when he retires • Collaboration with local police and embedded staff • Statewide resource for suicide across the life span pamphlet “Across the Lifespan” • Training and promotion from within the agency

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision for mental health urgent care • Sensitive recognition of stigma as critical barrier in mental health • Investment in DEI/belonging • Gun locks are freely available; outreach to gun shops about suicide prevention • Nuanced understanding of the factors affecting staffing. <p>Lingering challenges or concern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing housing difficulty – especially for the recruitment of qualified staff. <p>Ann motioned to redesignate with no deficiencies. Christopher seconded. One abstention. All in favor. Recommendation to Commissioner will be redesignation with no deficiencies.</p>
<p>Public Comment</p>	<p>No members of the public present.</p>
<p>Closing Meeting Business</p>	<p>Vote on Membership</p> <p>Michael motioned to approve Thelma Stoudt’s membership. Marla seconded. All in favor. Thelma is in.</p> <p>Regarding no-call/no-show member, send stern email with policy document. Last chance. If necessary, vote on terminating membership at December meeting. Reminder that their absence affects the quorum and the committee’s ability to conduct business.</p> <p>Recruitment</p> <p>Send names and contacts for anyone who might be interested in joining to Lauren. She will reach out with an invitation.</p> <p>Proposed 2024 meeting dates</p> <p>Move October and November meetings a week earlier to accommodate holidays. Propose over email.</p> <p>Agenda for next meeting (December 11, 2023)</p> <p>Leadership update: Legislative session expectations.</p> <p>Leadership update: HCBS and Conflict of Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will these changes be transparent to clients? <p>Meet with Housing and Mobile Crisis hires</p> <p>Michael motioned to adjourn. Marla seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned 3:00PM.</p>

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Links	Info about the NAMI Vermont Conference: https://namivt.org/nami-vermont-2023-conference/ Howard Center Arts Collective: https://howardcenter.org/community-education/howard-center-arts-collective/
Parking Lot	