

**EL DORADO COUNTY  
MENTAL HEALTH JOINT COMMISSION  
Minutes February 22, 2012**

**TIME: 5:00 PM**

**PLACE: Video conference at:  
Western Slope – Mental Health  
670 Placerville Dr. Suite 1B, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
Placerville, CA 95667**

**South Lake Tahoe – Public Health/Mental Health Offices  
1360 Johnson Blvd #103  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150**

**I. Call to Order; Roll Call; Introductions**

Members: R.S. Lynn, Denise Burke, Claudia Ball, Jan Melnicoe, Linn Williamson

Guests: Bill Ball, Jim Abram, Lori Borrelli, Alison Ehlers, Bill Ehrler, Diana Hankins, Michael Pickens

Staff: Laura Walny, Joan Meis Wilson, Sophie Cabrera, Chris Kondo-Lister, Barry Wasserman, Janet Stevens

**II. Approval of Agenda**

Approved

**III. Approval of Minutes**

None available.

**IV. Public Comment (15 Minutes)**

Alison Ehlers introduced herself and said that she was attending with the intention of becoming familiar with the public mental health system of care. She recently graduated with her MFT and received an MHSA stipend while she was a student. She now needs to work in a County mental health or MHSA contract agency in lieu of repaying the stipend.

Jim Abrams shared his gratitude for the tremendous help the Mental Health Department recently provided to his daughter. He is now confident that she now has a plan for getting the services that she needs.

Ben Ehrler offered similar appreciation for the help provided by the tele-psychiatrist in South Lake Tahoe. Ben's son is doing well now, but was given incorrect medication while he was in Reno and Dr. Stone was able to correct the problem.

**V. Agency News**

- Jan Melnicoe participated in interviews to fill a position that was vacated when Kirsten Rodgers left the Department. This person will oversee the Medical Office Assistants and related office staff, the Dental Van staffing, and the MHSA Innovation project.

- The Department is actively participating in a CIMH-sponsored Program Improvement Project (PIP) focused on improving administrative and clinical practices, for example to ask “What are we not doing?” that might reduce the current 40% no-show rate.
- As the result of staff leaving or assuming new responsibilities within the Department, there are currently five open clinician positions in Placerville. In addition, some extra-help positions will be converted to permanent staff positions.

## **VI. South Lake Tahoe Updates**

- A. Rides for Clients to Safety Classes: The Seeking Safety group has not had a place to meet from the first week in February until today. Transportation is not being provided for the group but Jorge Orozco, the SLT Health Navigator, has gotten bus information for clients and is able to help clients to access public transportation if that assistance is needed. Gail St. James, the clinician who conducts the Seeking Safety group, has also spoken with class participants about transportation issues. Consumers and stakeholders continue to be concerned that the change in location will make it more difficult for people to attend. Bus transportation will increase costs for clients who now have to take the bus to attend group; some clients may not be able to afford that cost or may have to sacrifice other essentials to pay for transportation. BHC clients who cannot afford transportation will be penalized. Staff will be better able to evaluate and monitor this situation now that the group has resumed; this issue will be continued on the agenda for March 28.
- B. Move update: Michael Pickens and Diana Hankins brought many of the issues that have developed as a result of the move to the attention of the MH Commission. Many consumers and stakeholders feel that they were not included in discussions prior to the move; consumers have also said that they feel that unwelcome at the Senior Center, and that they no longer can come into and leave the Wellness room during the meetings, for example, to have a cigarette. Some consumers and stakeholders feel that the move represents another loss of services in Tahoe. SLT Group issues will also be continued on the MH Commission agenda for March 28.
- C. SLT Police Incidents: Diana reported on problems with new officers in the SLT Police Department

## **VII. Committee Reports**

- A. Membership Committee: Claudia read from an email that Bonnie McLane sent to her, indicating that the membership committee wholeheartedly supports the application for membership that Jim Abram has submitted.
1. Vote on Proposed New Commission Member Jim Abram:  
Deferred due to lack of quorum.
- B. Evaluation Committee: The Evaluation Committee is still looking for one to two more people to participate on the Committee. The group has met twice and has decided on a 2-prong approach to their duties:
- 1) Respond to requests from individuals regarding problems and issues. These issues should be brought to the attention of Linn Williamson and can be sent via email to [LinnDWilliamson@gmail.com](mailto:LinnDWilliamson@gmail.com). Claudia will monitor the situation in South Lake Tahoe in response to issues that have been brought to the MH Commission.

- 2) The Committee identified several issues they would like to evaluate in depth, and will start with the Grand Jury report, and evaluate the coordination of services between law enforcement, mental health outpatient services, and the PHF.
- C. Children's Committee: Minutes from the most recent Children's Committee meeting were distributed. The Committee plans to look at current children's programming, develop questions, and return to the full Commission for guidance and priorities. Among the questions currently under discussion are the following:
- How is Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) defined?
  - Why are there more traditional and fewer MHSA programs for children than for adults?
  - What will be the impact when reimbursement for children's services is reduced from 90% to 50% (due to changes in EPSDT)?
  - How are logistics handled – for example, forms, caseload, etc?
  - What is the wait time for children's services?
  - How welcoming are the facilities for children and adolescents?
  - How is the quality of contracted services monitored and verified?
  - How can we verify that there is equity in who gets services?
  - How can the Children's Committee be inclusive of Tahoe programs?
- D. Budget and Planning Committee: Committee members have nothing specific to report. Dr. Lynn will send out PDF documents that explain the State FSP guidelines.

### **VIII. Discussion and Vote on MHC Report to BOS**

Discussion and vote postponed until March 28, 2012.

### **IX. Commissioners Comments**

Linn Williamson verified that the South Lake Tahoe Commission members were not informed or consulted about the move of the MH Clinic. Dr. Lynn confirmed that he was not aware of the move until less than two weeks before the move date. Stakeholders and members of the Council reported that they felt shocked by the move and marginalized. The lack of services in SLT (no transitional care, no psychiatric hospital, no board and care facility) remains a significant concern.

### **X. Adjournment**

Next MH Commission meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2012