

**STEBEN COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
MENTAL HEALTH COMMITTEE
Tuesday, March 7, 2022**

PRESENT: Dr. Henry Chapman, Director, Department of Community Services
Bill Caudill, Director, Steuben County Youth Bureau
Kathy Muller, Commissioner, Social Services Department
Cora Saxton, Wayland-Cohocton School District
Jeanne Robinson, Aspire Hope
Doreen Patterson, Arbor Development
Craig Pomplas, Steuben County Probation
Gina Reagan, Catholic Charities of Steuben
Cynthia Gee, Family Service Society
Dawn Campaign

OTHERS: Lynn Lewis, Deputy Director, Department of Community Services
Auralee Jefferds, Department of Community Services
Jessica Frawley, Department of Community Services
Rick McInroy, Center for Dispute Settlement
Rachel Trudell, Clarity Wellness

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Chapman called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. OLDN/NEW BUSINESS

A. **Retirement** – Dr. Chapman announced his retirement date will be May 8, 2023. The County has advertised for his position and applications are due March 10th. He noted that Ms. Lewis has submitted her application. In the meantime, she will be helping with the transition and will be your contact person. Dr. Chapman stated this was a difficult decision as he had not planned to retire at this time, but his recent health issues played a part in his decision. He noted that he has worked for the agency in several capacities over the past 28 ½ years and is he is thankful for everyone’s support.

III. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. **Clarity Wellness Presentation** – Dr. Chapman introduced Rachel Trudell from Clarity Wellness who is here today to provide a presentation on the home based crisis intervention services that her agency provides. Ms. Trudell stated when St. James closed their psychiatric care unit several years ago, Dr. Chapman write a proposal to OMH to provide these services and they accepted the proposal and granted \$250,000 for that purpose and they continue to receive that amount each year. One condition of the grant was that services had to be used for the three county area of Allegany, Livingston and Steuben. The rationale was that the vast majority of referrals to St. James had been from those three counties. Clarity Wellness submitted their proposal to provide these services and the County has contracted with us ever since.

Ms. Trudell stated HBCI services are directed to children and youth aged 4 to 21. The programs has two providers; one Bachelors level and one Master level, that provide these services. They typically work with 4 – 6 families at a time for 6 weeks in an intensive program with frequent contact with the individual and family members. These services can be extended up to 12 weeks to ensure that a higher level of maximum stability has been established. They provide immediate in-home services to reduce emotional distress and improve the overall stability of those served. If a child needs a higher level of care like hospitalization or residential placement, that child is un-enrolled from the program. Upon discharge they can then be re-referred through SPOA for services. However, with three counties vying for services, the slots fill up and SPOA may need to make referrals to other services. She stated she does not have the exact number of how many families are served in each of the three counties. Cases are assigned regionally so the providers have less travel time between

appointments. There currently is not a waiting list. She stated they would like to hire a third provider but due to funding, the budget will not allow for that.

Ms. Trudell commented the number of hours spent per family varies depending upon their need. It can be a half-day, a one hour visit with three contacts the first week and then trend downward. Additionally, they provide handoff to the next level of service. She noted their program did not close down during COVID and they worked around the restricts. Discussion followed regarding the methods they use including parent education and support, behavior modification, linking the family with additional services and motivational interviewing. She noted at times they may use WRAP funds to help stabilize a situation with perhaps a fenced yard to provide a safe environment for a child to play in, or other resources to use in the home or to help with transportation, such as gas cards. Since 2018 their program has served 305 families. As good as our program is, the shortfall is not having enough counselors. She noted that OMH is expanding programs across the State and would like to make the programs uniform and that may eventually help.

Dr. Chapman stated prior to COVID he had submitted another proposal but funding was unavailable at that time. He is hoping to join with other agencies in submitting another proposal that would allow for one provider for each county due to the number of referrals and geography covered. Although the age range is 4 – 21, the most frequent age served is 7 – 13.

B. Youth ACT Programs – Dr. Chapman noted the Youth ACT Programs are different from the Adult ACT Programs. This is a new pilot program in Chemung County and they will partner with Steuben County. The provider will be Hillside. There will be 46 slots total, with 23 slots for each county and it will be modeled after the Adult ACT Program. Services will be provided in the home and the teams will be made up of a social worker, nurse and a psychiatrist. He stated they will be sharing updates as the services are put into place.

C. Crisis Services – Dr. Chapman stated since February 16, 2023, Tompkins County has been the agency assigned the new 988 crisis service that was implemented nationwide. They are the back-up for the 211 Finger Lakes who has served as our area crisis for suicide prevention and crisis services. Locally, 2011 receives calls from Tompkins County counselors who serve as backup. Our crisis service is still available through the clinic. Tompkins County will start giving us monthly reports showing how many calls they actually field. We already get those reports from 211 and in any given month the range is between 50 – 70 calls. So there is about an average of 60 crisis calls that 988 gets. Interestingly, as helpful as that number is, we have not seen any decrease in terms of our volume of crisis calls that we received in the clinic. The grand total last year was 3,561 crisis call contact. Just to provide some perspective, that number is more than double what we got a few years ago. Last year the numbers were almost double from the previous year. In 2022, we doubled that number. We are over 3,500 calls. Some of the work is done over the phone, but a lot is done in person since COVID restrictions have let up. However, prior to that we would always go out as needed and provide 24/7 coverage. He noted that 988 also provide 24/7 coverage. He stated 211 also takes daytime calls, but they cannot break that down to just after-hours numbers. Our numbers are significantly less and have been. Fewer people call after business hours versus during business hours. When 988 is called the call goes to a 211 counselor. If they are not able to resolve the situation, then the call comes to us. Over a two-month period during the fall we had a total of 5 calls that were routed to us from 211. That is a good testament to 211 and their handling of the crisis calls. The 3,500 calls we have received are separate from 211. We are told that 211 calls received from Steuben County residents is around 60 per month. That has not decreased the volume of our calls. We are busier than ever, even with 988 and 211.

Ms. Gee asked are there any statistics to identify those callers who are in counseling versus those that are not? Ms. Jefferds replied most are not connected to services. If they are our clients, then we connect them back to our services.

Dr. Chapman noted for the first time in several years, OMH has awarded funds to help with crisis services. We currently have three social workers and one care manager. We have a fourth social worker who has limited outreach with crisis oriented individuals and he carries a small caseload. He will carry less than 20 clients who will eventually transfer to another counselor for services once they are stabilized. Ms. Muller asked of the 3,500 calls received, do we know how many were enrolled in services. Dr. Chapman replied he did not know. Ms. Muller stated it might be useful to know that number while planning. Dr. Chapman replied that he feels the new electronic health record system may be able to help with tracking those statistics.

D. **Local Services Plan** – Dr. Chapman stated the format changed last year. Revisions were not completed, but we worked on goals and objectives and we will plug that information from last year into the new plan. The site is not currently open, but should be soon. The due date for 2023 is not yet know, but it is anticipated it will be October. He noted with his impending retirement that Ms. Lewis will have a copy of the goals and objectives from last year to carry forward for 2024.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. **Family Service Society** – Ms. Gee provided information on the new Psychosocial Skill Building program they are offering. She stated they have 20 slots available between Bath, Corning and Hornell. There currently is no waiting list and many openings are available.

V. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, June 6, 2023 and will be held in Conference Room B of the Annex Building.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN MADE BY MS. MULLER, SECONDED BY MS. GEE AND DULY CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted by

Dawn Champaign
Senior Stenographer
Department of Community Services