

DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Minutes

July 22, 2009

The Durham County Board of Social Services held its regular meeting on Wednesday, July 22, 2009, 8:00 a.m., at the Main Street facility in Conference Room 609R. The following members were in attendance: Chair Gladys Dunston, Vice Chair Newman Aguiar, Commissioner Joe W. Bowser, and Mr. Stan Holt. The Department was represented by the following: Ms. Jovetta Whitfield, Ms. Sharon Hirsch, Ms Toni Pedroza, Ms. Rhonda Stevens, Mr. Willie Gibson and Ms. Montrella R. Springfield. Other attendees were Ann Oshel, Terry Allebaugh, Rev. Peebles Lindsey- Lucas, Rev. William Lucas.

Mrs. Gloria S. Green received an excused absence.

The meeting was officially called to order by Chair Gladys Dunston. Chair Dunston asked for amendments to the agenda. The agenda was revised as follows: 1)add Minutes from the Call Meeting on July 8, 2009 and 2) Families First.

The DSS Board selected officers for the next fiscal year. A motion was made to have Chair Gladys Dunston and Vice Chair Newman Aguiar resume their positions. The motion was seconded and in the absence of Board member Gloria Green her proxy was submitted supporting Chair Gladys Dunston and Vice Chair Newman Aguiar.

There were no public comments.

Chair Gladys Dunston welcomed Ann Oshel from Durham Adult System of Care.

Ann Oshel proceeded to present information on Crisis Services and Homelessness Follow-up Report.

Overview of Initial Presentation

- Obtained names of person discharged to Durham from John Umstead Hospital between January and June 30, 2008
- Tallied the length of hospital stay and recidivism for person discharged into homelessness and then compared to a random sample of persons also on the list who were discharged to a private residence.
- Cross referenced names of persons discharged into homelessness with Eura to determine:
 1. What level of service they receive prior to hospitalization and post discharge
 2. What additional crisis services (DCA) they had utilized during the same 6 month period?

Highlights of Initial Data

- 26 people discharged into homelessness between January and June 2008
- Hospitalized for a total of 346 days compared to 187 days for non-homeless population
- 8 people arrested after hospital discharge for a total of 220 days
- 6 persons had been previously banned from the shelter
- 17 people were not engaged in mental health services at the time of admission
- 6 people were admitted to DCA for a total of 11 admissions
- 450 calls to UMD in a 9 month period requesting law enforcement or EMS - average 19 per week.

Summary

- Services that involve outreach and intensive case management are essential for engagement and retention in treatment.
- Engagement prior to hospital discharge is critical - particularly for people not connected to services.
- Housing is a therapeutic intervention and should be funded as such.

What we have Done

- Created a discharge policy workgroup
- Community partners have met multiple times with CRH social work staff to improve communication/coordination
- Met with Durham County Sheriff Dept to develop a notification system to alert PATH team when a person is dropped off on streets or the woods.
- Exploring evidence based practices that would target specific interventions to improve outcomes.

Chair Dunston questioned if there was a statue in place which defines when a person should be admitted to a hospital. If a person does harm to themselves or others is reasonable cause.

Terry Allebaugh informed everyone that the PATH Outreach works with people with mental illness to build a relationship. Wake County is providing housing for those discharged into homelessness. Chair Dunston asked Mr. Allebaugh to update the Board on the project in Wake County.

Chair Gladys Dunston asked the DSS Board to review the minutes from the call meeting held on July 8, 2009. Minutes will be revisited and presented at the August meeting. The leadership team will bring information on the contracts to the August meeting.

Chair Dunston requested the DSS Board to review the minutes from the June 24, 2009 regular meeting. A motion was made by Vice Chair Newman Aguiar to accept the minutes and seconded by DSS Board Member Stan Holt. The DSS Board approved the minutes.

Since the Board of County Commissioners meeting, Richard Edwards, County Auditor has been contacted concerning the Family First contract. Vice Chair Newman Aguiar will contact Chuck Kitchen, County Attorney to verify the legal aspects of the requested audit. Richard Edwards met with Jovetta Whitfield and Rhonda Stevens and requested copies of the contracts. The DSS Board Members requested clarification on the items to be audited in a written document. What are the specific responsibilities of the DSS Board and the agency? Jovetta Whitfield will take lead in the audit since this is not a financial audit. Vice Chair Aguiar expressed no actions should be taken until specific information is in place. Commissioner Joe W. Bowser informed the DSS Board of an engagement letter which will be provided by the auditor. The audit will be prepared as he requested. Chair Gladys Dunston emphasized the DSS Board legal responsibility and what should be expected of the Board. What will be the DSS Board's involvement? Once the engagement letter is received Commissioner Bowser will contact the DSS Board. Ms. Whitfield will find out the responsibilities of the DSS Board and report.

Chair Report

Chair Gladys Dunston expressed appreciation to the leadership team for their professionalism and attentiveness during the recruitment of the DSS Director. Vice Chair Newman Aguiar thanked the leadership team as well. Chair Dunston extended gratitude to Jovetta Whitfield for her willingness to accept the appointment of interim director. Geraldine T. Robinson will begin September 14, 2009 as Durham County DSS Director. Chair Dunston asked if board members will be available to attend the Annual Adult Care Celebration on August 4, 2009.

Interim Director Report

Jovetta Whitfield thanked the DSS Board for the appointment as interim director and opportunity to enhance her skills.

Ms. Whitfield did not have a written report. She requested approval for disposal of original records duplicated by electronic means. Approval was received and the Board Chair signed off on the document.

Child welfare audit went well. Did not have an area where they did not exceed. The agency was applauded for the process, due to the ten day notice. Child welfare will receive a correction action plan. Durham will serve as a model county.

Family Economic Independence

Rhonda Stevens requested approval of addendum to the wait list and changes to the waiting list policy. Because of the revisions of the addendum the wait list policy has to be changed. A motion was made by Vice Chair Newman Aguiar and seconded by Commissioner Joe W. Bowser to make revisions to the Wait List Policy and Addendum to be submitted to the State. The revised Wait List Policies will be effective August 1, 2009 and the addendum will be submitted to the State by July 31, 2009.

As of 7/14/2009, 1768 children were on the waiting list. The August report will include information in response to the question in the June Board meeting concerning CPS.

Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) participation with Employment Security Commission (ESC) which means individuals will no longer be disqualified from FNS for failing to keep scheduled appointments with ESC.

Child Support ranking is 64, this is the highest ever for the agency. Child Support ranking in 2003 was 87.

Accountability

Toni Pedroza informed the DSS Board child care overspent \$143,000.00 for June services. Since the smart start funding was awarded to another partner, the agency is funding the children who were under smart start which increased the funding from the DSS. Smart start funding was awarded to CCSA, however, the children remain under DSS funding. The state representative asked the agency to serve the first two categories: 1) Those who need child care to support protective services to remain in their own home; 2) Children who are in a licensed foster home or for whom the Department of Social Services has legal custody and the foster parent or custodial parent is employed or in school.

Ms. Pedroza suggested the following:

1. Meet with CCSA to see if they will take the children under smart start funding.
2. Serve the children who need care to support protective services and children in licensed foster home.
3. Project out and decide how many children to terminate to get back on track.

Chair Dunston asked if there were any other resources to pick up funding. Vice Chair Aguiar stated child care is a critical service. Chair Aguiar suggested meeting with the County to discuss item #3 and meet with Michael Palmer at Durham Partnership for Children. A meeting is scheduled for Friday with all the partners. Feedback will be sent to the Chair after the meeting Friday.

Ms. Pedroza notified the DSS Board of the internal audit. Medicaid cases from one employee were not accurate. The auditors requested pulling cases from twelve months. Medicaid will be in corrective action. The report will be received in September. The lead workers are in charge of the quality control and have other assignments.

The leadership team met with Beth Steenberg to plan a strategy to help the agency go paperless.

Chair Gladys Dunston asked if additional business needed to be discussed. Vice Chair Newman Aguiar asked if there were copies of the DSS Board Operating Procedures. Montrella Springfield will email the procedures to the DSS Board and add to the August agenda. Chair Dunston requested a motion to adjourn the regular meeting and a motion to move in closed executive session. A motion was made by Vice Chair Newman Aguiar to adjourn the regular meeting and move into closed executive session, seconded by Commissioner Joe W. Bowser. All DSS Board members approved.

Respectfully submitted

Chairperson

Date

Secretary to the Board

Date