

**Advisory Committee to the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program for the Deaf,  
Hard of Hearing, and Disabled  
Meeting Minutes  
December 12, 2012**

**Members Present:** Jason Weiland, Frank Smith, Frank Latham, Kevin Sullivan and Nancy Yarosh

**Member Present (Phone):** Lauren Casey

**DAS Representatives Present:** Adam Bucon

**Members Absent:** Carol Uckar and Julie Doerrmann

**Guest Speaker:** Devin Fox

**Interpreters:** Monica Ayrer and Rachel Owens

**CART Reporter:** Jeanette Voight

**Chairperson's Report -**

Jason Weiland reported that he was not at the September meeting due to attending the GCADA Conference. Jason stated that it gave him and his Division an excellent opportunity to network for the purpose of increasing services for the deaf and hard of hearing population.

Jason discussed the movement of substance abuse treatment services to managed care and his concern for how it may affect services, specifically for the deaf, hard of hearing and disabled communities.

Jason reported that DDHH recently hired a new employee whose name is Catie Purrazzella. She has been hired as a Service Coordinator and her role is to provide support, advocacy and direct individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the most appropriate services in the community.

Furthermore, Jason informed Committee members that DDHH was scheduled to move offices in July 2012 but that their move has been continuously delayed. His Division is concerned of losing their Video Phone capabilities, a resource that he and other staff members depend on for communication accessibility.

Jason discussed the effects of Super Storm Sandy on services throughout the State and admitted that it negatively impacted the deaf and hard of hearing community. Due to storm impact on electricity and electronic devices, many individuals in the deaf and hard of hearing community were unable to obtain information on services that were available in their communities. Committee members discussed the increased needs for emergency and disaster planning. Frank Latham discussed that the NJ Council on Developmental

Disabilities provides an emergency preparedness training focusing on services that may be needed in an emergency situation for individuals who have a developmental disability.

**Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services Report/Adam Bucon**

Adam reported that Devin Fox the Recovery Liaison from DMHAS will provide a presentation on the Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) that he coordinates at DMHAS.

Adam conveyed that Raquel Mazon Jeffers had her last day with the Division was on November 30<sup>th</sup> and that she will now be working for the Nicholson Foundation. DMHAS continues its goal to move all of its services to a Managed Behavioral Healthcare Organization (MBHO) entity. At this time it appears this could occur January 1, 2014.

Adam discussed that DMHAS continues to meet with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and are currently working to schedule training on substance abuse assessment and other substance abuse treatment services for DVR counselors.

Adam reported that the Library for the Blind and Handicapped has notified him that the room that is currently used can only be reserved thirty (30) days in advance of our meetings if continued to be held on the second Wednesday of the month (every quarter). The Committee agreed to attempt to continue scheduling for this room on our previous scheduled dates. If the room is not available, Adam will coordinate another location for the next meeting.

**Accessibility Subcommittee Update/ Julie Doerrmann-**

Jason reported that Julie was absent so would discuss reconvening the subcommittee with her. It was proposed that the Subcommittee could meet directly following the main Advisory Committee in place of the Disability Coalition, which used to meet.

**DMHAS Citizen's Advisory Council (CAC)/ Devin Fox**

Devin, the Recovery Liaison for DMHAS, provided the Committee with both a description and goal of the Citizen's Advisory Council (CAC). He reported that the CAC advises the State and the Division to be more recovery oriented and to continue to focus on carrying out their mission statement. The CAC is a public meeting and meets on the third Thursday of every month. He reported that there is a rolling application process and would welcome any membership applications from either those in the room or those in the community who identify as deaf, hard of hearing or disabled. He stated there are currently approximately 14 members but have capacity for 25. It was discussed that information on the CAC could be advertised in the Monthly Communicator as well as other disability publications throughout the State.

**Old Business:**

**Membership Application-**

Adam reported there are currently three (3) positions open on the Committee, two positions for an individual identified as being Deaf, hard of hearing or having a disability and one other for a member of the public who has an interest in substance use disorders

and the population of individuals identified as being Deaf, hard of hearing or having a disability. Adam indicated that the initial application was due to DMHAS no later than January 7, 2013 but was extended until January 28, 2013 to allow more time to apply and for advertising.

**Advertising for Advisory Committee and Services Available for Deaf, HOH and Disabled Populations-**

The Committee continues to agree that a goal for both the Committee and for DMHAS is to increase the amount of quality services for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing and disabled. Jason believes that services, especially the ones contracted by DMHAS, need to advertise their services in a more efficient way so that services can reach the population of individuals who need them the most.

**Member Roundtable-**

Jason reported that DDHH has partnered with Northeastern University's Regional Interpreter Center to set up a deaf advocacy training. This training was postponed in December and is scheduled to be held in March. These trainings will be held at Kean University and at Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf (MKSD) in Ewing. The training will be provided in ASL.

**Meeting Adjourned**