

**Advisory Committee to the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program for the Deaf,  
Hard of Hearing, and Disabled  
Meeting Minutes  
June 13, 2012**

**Members Present:** Jason Weiland, Lauren Casey, Nancy Yarosh, Carol Uckar, Frank Smith, Frank Latham and Kevin Sullivan

**DAS Representatives Present:** Adam Bucon

**Members Absent:** Julie Doerrmann

**Interpreters:** Monica Ayrer and Rachel Owens

**CART Reporter:** Jeanette Voight

**Guests:** Raquel Mazon Jeffers, David Alexander, Dave Fiorillo, Lisette Weiland and Amanda (Signs of Sobriety)

**Chairperson's Report/Jason Weiland-**

Jason reported that there is a lot of transition occurring at the Department of Human Services. The Division of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Division of Disability Services and Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired will be re-locating together in one building at Quakerbridge Plaza in Hamilton. Jason also reported that DDHH hired a new staff member for their Division who will act in the capacity as a Service Coordinator.

**Division of Addiction Services Report/Adam Bucon**

Adam reported that his Division will be re-locating to 222 South Warren Street sometime this summer. At this time, Adam will remain in his role as DMHAS representative for the Advisory Committee. Adam indicated that Raquel Mazon Jeffers, Deputy Director for DMHAS would be providing a presentation at today's meeting to discuss the Managed Behavioral Healthcare Organization (MBHO), to include transition of the majority of treatment services to a Fee for Service structure. Adam also discussed the on-going collaboration with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) which includes the development of a manual and policies that would enable DVRS counselors to work more efficiently with individuals who have substance use disorders.

**Subcommittee Update/ Carol Granaldi-**

Jason reported that Julie, Chairperson for the Subcommittee, was absent, therefore could not provide an updated report. Nancy reported that the subcommittee has not met recently. Jason indicated that he will follow-up with Julie prior to the next meeting.

**Old Business:**

**New Membership Application-**

Adam indicated that it was previously on hold to solicit new membership applications for this Committee due to the discussion surrounding possible abolishment of this Committee. New information provided has suggested that it

has been deemed acceptable to move ahead with the goal of soliciting new membership for the Committee. Adam indicated that there are currently three (3) positions open on the Committee. The goal is to attempt to get the new membership application out to the public and possibly have new representatives attend the next meeting, if possible. A goal would be to hold elections for the Committee in December 2012, if the timeline can be met. Nancy recommended that advertising for new membership should be high priority especially since the last time applications were solicited, not many were received. Jason and Frank Latham recommended that it be advertised on the Department of Human Services Division websites as well as the Monthly Communicator and other publications that go out to the deaf, hard of hearing and disabled community. Jason also recommended that Committee members should be responsible for spreading the information by “word of mouth” and discuss with colleagues or those in the community who they think would make appropriate members.

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

The Committee agreed 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. Carol admitted that she believes that the new age of technology may be more difficult for the Deaf, hard of hearing and disabled population to access services that are available in their communities. The Committee agreed that the services that are offered for this population need to be made more readily available so that everyone is able to access, if determined appropriate.

Jason reported that DDHH is currently working on developing a directory of organizations serving individuals who are Deaf and hard of hearing. He reported this manual will be made available in the future as a link on the DDHH website.

Carol conveyed concerns she has that things may be moving backwards and is disheartened to see that many treatment agencies appear to be reluctant to put a line item in their budget for accessibility services. Furthermore, Carol added that the new fee structure developed for services in the Fee-for-Service structure need to ensure funding for accessibility services.

#### **Recovery Support and Aftercare-**

Carol reported that staff at her agency were working with Eva’s Village Recovery Center to ensure recovery support to include AA meeting for a couple consumers but that the individuals eventually discontinued their attendance at Eva’s.

### **New Business**

#### **Managed Behavioral Healthcare Organization (MBHO) Presentation**

Raquel provided an overview of the Managed Behavioral Healthcare Organization (MBHO), which included discussion on the Affordable Care Act, Comprehensive Waiver as well as the proposed plans and changes that are

anticipated for both mental health and substance abuse treatment services across the State. She discussed the process of how mental health and substance abuse treatment services would be transitioned to a managed care arrangement over time. Raquel reported that DMHAS is working closely with Medicaid to recalibrate the rates for these services and explained how both the State and Managed Care Organization (MCO) will begin to assume different roles in this transition. Raquel stated that the main goal and objective for the MBHO is to ensure consumers throughout the State are not denied access to these services. She reported that the process for attaining the MBHO will be through a Request for Proposal (RFP) and that the target date for launching the new MBHO will be July 2013. Raquel is hopeful that the plan for expanded access will assist in the expansion of access for the population of individuals identified as Deaf, hard of hearing and disabled. Furthermore, Raquel discussed that the \$350K made available through State funds for this population can either be kept out of the MBHO or folded in. Further discussion in regards to the pros and cons would need to be conducted.

**Member Roundtable-**

Adam, on behalf of Lauren, provided information regarding an event entitled “Roll, Walk or Ride and Advance People with Disabilities.” This event is being sponsored by Advancing Opportunities and will take place at Mercer County Park on Saturday, September 8, 2012.

**Meeting Adjourned**