



Minutes

Present: Jacqui Coulter, BHRS; Supervisor Lee Lor, Board of Supervisors; Janinda Gunawardene, County Counsel; Betty Hoskins, BHRS; Jami Johnson, Interim Deputy Director HSA; Susan Coston, MCOE; Judge Mark Bacciarini, Courts; Michael Noguera, Deputy Public Defender; Vince Andrade, Public Defender; Carol Hulsizer, Recorder

Call to Order / Introductions

Discussion: Betty called the meeting to order. Introductions were done. Judge Bacciarini announced that Judge Kirihara has been reassigned. Judge Bacciarini will now be attending these meetings. Carol stated she would remove Judge Kirihara from her contact list and replace with Judge Bacciarini.

Review Minutes from October 15, 2019 (All) (ACTION ITEM)

Discussion: No discussion

Recommendation/Action: M/S/C (Gunawardene / Coulter) to approve minutes from October 15, 2019.

Opportunity for public input. At this time any person may comment on any item which is not on the agenda. Testimony is limited to three (3) minutes per person.

Discussion: No public present

Behavioral Health & Recovery Services Update

- a. Number of new Short Term Residential Treatment Programs (STRTP)
- b. Number of Community United By Empowerment (CUBE) Participants (average)
- c. Number of Juvenile Hall Services
- d. Group Homes / Hospitalization Placements
- e. New Programs
- f. Other

Discussion: a. Betty reported that she looked at capacity. Currently, in the State of California, we have a 3,646 bed capacity for STRTP-level youth. For individuals in the application process – there are another 1,569 potential beds (they are interim-licensed facilities). It is important to note that there are a number of group homes that are not converting to STRTPs which means we are losing out on 3,411 capacity beds; in addition, another 138 capacity beds because of applications that were flat-out denied. Betty will send this information to Carol so that she can forward to the group. This brings the total in lost beds to 3,549 (almost the same amount that we do have for licensed STRTPs). This is a big impact when it comes to placements for youth which then impacts Juvenile Hall or psychiatric facilities and social workers having to spend the night with youth. She then gave an update of Creative Alternatives which is the male facility for STRTPs. They currently have 29 youth and 1 pending coming in; 6 of those are Merced County youth and the remainder are presumptive transfer youth from other counties. b. The census for the CUBE is an average of 22 to 25 per day. This is almost triple to what it was a year ago at this time. They have been doing many more outreach events – going to different schools and activities in the community. c. The current Behavioral Health staff member at the Hall runs 7 groups per week; she is there Monday through Friday, 7:00-3:30. There are currently 38 males and 5 females there. She does approximately 20 to 25 contacts per week; in addition she does any safety-risk assessments as needed. In about a month this staff member will be gone for a while and Betty is working with Heidi and Admin about getting her replacement in as soon as possible. d. Creative Alternatives has 29 with 1 pending.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES
Children's System of Care Interagency Policy Council
301 E. 13th Street, Room C222
Merced, CA 95341
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They also have Rainbow Valley which is an interim-STRT; they have 12 female beds and Betty thinks they are all filled. BHRS does meet with them monthly about the process; they invite Compliance and Quality Improvement at this time because they are going over the contract. Hospitalization placement – Creative Alternatives had no current Emergency Room (ER) or law enforcement contact. Prior they did have 1 crisis contact, but BHRS does have a Foster Youth Task Force with County schools and law enforcement agencies (HSA) working on building more rapport with law enforcement with youth so that they can catch them doing good or some activity so they can de-escalate which would not result in an arrest or crisis situation. For Rainbow Valley, they have had a little more ER and law enforcement contact because they are taking some of the high-risk females. e. BHRS is looking at partnering with the Learn Inform Network Know (LINK) Program with Probation. They are setting up some meetings; part of the SAMHSA grant (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) is going to fund part of an existing position, not a new position, so they can work more with exiting Probation youth (exiting Juvenile Hall). They do have the Juvenile Behavioral Health Court currently; youth on probation get referred to BHRS and sometimes they follow through and sometimes they don't. Judge Bacciarini commented that the numbers are way down at Behavioral Health Court; it is in collapse with Drug Treatment Court, but they still only have about 6 or 7 kids and they would like to have about 15 or 16. Betty stated there has been some discussion about setting up meetings to look at widening the birth for the referral process. It needs a bigger discussion. f. No discussion

Recommendation/Action: As noted above

Human Services Agency Update

- a. Group Homes / Hospitalization Placements
- b. WeCAN & DoWith Programs
 - Number of Children Saved
 - Number of New Referrals
 - Number of Closures / Discharges
- c. New Programs
- d. Other

Discussion: a. Jami stated that the information she was given to bring here is not the information requested on the agenda. But, she did have some written information which she handed out to everyone present. The document she handed out is information that is broken down by Child Welfare and Probation and the total number of youth that are placed in counties. Jami then went over the numbers shown in the document. The second page shows CCR (Continuum of Care) data in regards to kids in and out of different programs for voluntary family maintenance; three new ones going to STRTPs and 13 coming out. The third page breaks the information down by ethnicity. Jami does not believe they have any hospitalization placements; there was one at Valley Children's Hospital and the child was eventually placed in a Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC) home in Fresno. The last Jami heard the child is doing well but they are looking for a different placement because they don't think the current placement will last long. b. Jami stated that it's been a few months since she went to Placement Council so she is not current on this. Betty stated that DoWith had most of their slots filled. WeCAN recently did a presentation and they do have more opportunities for TBS (Therapeutic Behavioral Services). WeCan referrals are coming into them and they currently have good staffing to client ratio. Betty continued that one thing not on the agenda is looking at youth from out-of-county that are placed here; she thinks we are at 260+ for youth from other County Child Welfares. They don't always impact the Behavioral Health system because they may not need behavioral health services. c. Betty asked that the new program – Child Welfare Outpatient, through Aspiranet be discussed (used to be VOCA grant); Jami was not familiar with this. Betty continued that they used to do this through CASA where they were providing some services for youth for individuals who didn't meet criteria for medical necessity for BHRS but may still need some contacts. There is a current contact with Aspiranet for referrals that come from Child Welfare that may not need BHRS's level and need a little more than CHAT. It's just another level of service that BHRS has – an opportunity to utilize for foster youth. It is doing pretty well for Aspiranet. c. & d. No discussion.

Recommendation/Action: Discussion only



Probation Update

- a. Number of Children in Custody
- b. Recidivism Rate
- c. New Programs
- d. Other

Discussion: Jeff Kettering was not present today. a. Betty stated that she just talked about this in her report. b. Betty did not know this. c. Betty stated that Jeff did talk about new programs at the last meeting – having some animals at Juvenile Hall. d. No discussion

Recommendation/Action: Information only

Open Discussion

- a. What is Working Well in the Youth System of Care?
- b. Gaps Within the Youth Service Delivery System
 - Recommendations
 - Threats / Challenges

Discussion: a. Jacqui stated that they recently had three reviews – the Mental Health Services Act review, the Dept. of Health Care Services audit (Triennial review) and last week was the External Quality Review Organization (EQRO) that the States hires people to come in annually to review the programs. All three went very well. The feedback heard was that things are going very well. The Dept. should be getting those reports soon. They were very impressed with the delivery system for children and that BHRS works so well with HSA, Probation and law enforcement. They appreciated all the work that this County takes in order to work together – this was consistent across all reviews. Judge Bacciarini noted as a Judicial Officer is that he reviews the opinions published by the court of appeal usually every day and there are very few appeals out of Merced County as opposed to other counties. b. Betty would like to have more staff, more money, more placement opportunities, and more independent living supportive homes teaching basic skills. Housing is another obstacle for young people starting out on their own. Jacqui stated that she and Susan are working diligently to try and make that happen. They are looking at ways to partner and try to get some grant opportunities. Susan stated that Kim Lewis is looking at a grant for youth to give them some vocational training for something that would serve the community as well – maybe agriculture or something like that. There are two programs – one out of L.A. – that makes jeans. It is teaching them a skill where they build / create / make something that the community needs to try and keep them busy and make them employable. Kim is working with a couple of agencies to get that started. She believes they are focusing this on the continuation schools and putting something in place there. Betty continued that the youth feel they don't have opportunities. At the CUBE they will take the kids to tour colleges, assist them with the financial aid paperwork. They have had several youth go to college that thought they would never have that opportunity.

Recommendation/Action: Information only

Representative Agency Updates / Announcements (All)

Discussion: Updates were not done.

Recommendation/Action:

Adjournment:

Discussion: The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.