

Sonoma County Advisory Board on Alcohol and Drug Problems

Monthly Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2008 5 – 7 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Trey Dunia
Marvin Mars
Dr. Bruce Oppenheim

MEMBERS ABSENT

Edi Patrick
John Abrahams

STAFF PRESENT

Gino Giannavola
Donna Newman-Fields
Maureen Donaghue
Art Ewart

PROVIDERS & GUESTS

Cheryle Stanley, WRS
Michael Spielman, DAAC
Dana Alvarez, CHD
Jenna McAdam, Athena House

Called to order at 5:10 pm, by Trey Dunia

I. Public Comment

None

II. Action Items

Two corrections to minutes noted. Minutes with corrections approved.

III. Mental Health

Art Ewart, Mental Health Director, gave a short presentation on the psychiatric acute care situation in the County. He offered to return next month or in the near future to give a detailed overview of the system. Recent local publicity has not been reflective of the mental health services in place. With the Memorial Fulton campus in-patient facility closing as of march 24th, there will be no locked unit in-patient services for those needing acute psychiatric care.

Improved psychiatric meds and a better range of homeless services may be two of the elements that contributed to a declining patient census at Norton Center over the last few years. Norton Center was closed earlier this year, due in part to declining reimbursements and increased costs. Acute care services have expanded into other modalities of service, such as increased capacity for crisis stabilization, more group homes, and more supported independent living options.

When patients needing hospitalization present at Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES), they may be referred to Marin, Napa or Solano counties. The County fully reimburses for these services for Sonoma County residents.

It is estimated that with the closing of the Fulton campus, PES will see two more patients per day. Additional staff may be required, but services capacity is considered adequate for the time being.

This County is in need of a locked psychiatric facility, and options are being explored. Planning has been ongoing for the last two years with Memorial Hospital and Kaiser on this issue. One solution may be for the County to purchase beds from a private provider. However the idea of a stand alone Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) is also being explored. A vacated convalescent hospital in Sebastopol has been considered.

In two weeks, and "In-patient Summit' will be convened. The expected attendees are Memorial, the District Hospitals, Northcoast Integrated Care, Kaiser, Petaluma Valley Hospital and Sutter.

A crisis intervention academy, based on the 'Memphis Model' was convened two weeks ago. Law Enforcement Agencies from around the county have been contacted regarding attendance. Another training is planned for May 2008. Outcomes include less injury to law enforcement personnel and fewer arrests of the mentally ill.

IV. SACPA (Prop 36) Update

NORA petition is going well and donations supporting this process are still coming in. The Drug Policy Alliance (DPA) will be sending five petitions to Sonoma County. Per the DPA, there is a 70% or greater approval rating for concept contained in this proposed initiative.

The 08-09 budget will include a minimum of \$512,000 in cuts, and possibly \$712,000 in cuts. As of this meeting, there are 69 people on a wait list in Sonoma County. Referrals have reduced from 55 to 38 per month. The local system is trying to provide a 'pre-treatment' group with existing staff to increase retention rates. It is estimated that 15-20 people per month are not getting treatment.

In the next month, funds will shift to provide a bed specifically for Native Americans. Immigration raids have hampered positive treatment outcomes for illegal alien Latinos. The Division is working with the Courts and with the Information Systems Department to improve communications with Probation, so that notification of immigration status is done sooner.

The next SACPA Steering Committee meeting is the quarterly public meeting. It will be on April 16th, 11:30am.-1:30pm, TASC Conference Room.

V. Subcommittee Reports

- Community Education:

The Older Adults and Substance Misuse workgroup is moving forward on the may 8th workshop. The focus will be on signs and symptoms of alcohol and other drug misuse. Learning objectives will include local resources and strategies coping with drug misuse. The workshop is sponsored by the Council on Aging and DHS. Exhibitors are being sought.

The brochures requested by the workgroup, "As You Age" (SAMHSA) and the locally produced pamphlet "Seniors and Substance Misuse" are in production and should be done April 9th. Copies of the recent NY Times article on older addicts seeking help will be made available at the next Advisory Board meeting.

VI. Prevention Division Update

1. Environmental Prevention Coalitions:

- Petaluma is planning a Town Hall meeting on April 8th. The meeting will include a presentation regarding underage drinking - what parents can do, and information regarding Project Success in the high schools (student assistance program).
- Guerneville is also planning a Town Hall meeting to be held on April 17th.
- The Rohnert Park Coalition was asked by the RP City Council to draft a policy banning alcohol in city parks. This will have its first reading sometime in April.
- Responsible Beverage Service Training: is now mandatory in both Petaluma and Rohnert Park. Classes are being held every month for both off-sale (grocery stores, mini-marts, etc.) and on-sale (bars and restaurants) merchants. Trainings are conducted by local law enforcement officers and trained volunteers. Both Trey and Elizabeth Ward expressed interest in becoming trainers (requirements to become a trainer are: attend one on-sale and one off-sale training, attend a two-day training, and co-teach a class with an experienced trainer).

2. Methamphetamine Prevention Project

- Several small workgroups have been formed and are meeting to review the data collected through the focus groups, key informant interviews, and treatment scan. The groups are Data Enhancement/Systems Collaboration (how to integrate data systems); High Risk Populations (how to identify the highest of the

high risk groups and how to serve them); Access to Treatment; and School-based Prevention (how to expand upon existing programs, like Project Success). A Media/Public Education group will be formed.

VII. AODS Division Update

The proposal to transfer services in order to meet baseline for the budget does not have direction or approval by the Board of Supervisors as of this date. The Budget Policy Workshop did not address the Orenda proposal. Departments were given direction to bring to the Board in April items that reflect reductions but show no sign of new revenue support and therefore no chance of success on the 'add-back' list. In the past, reductions were done on October 1st. This year, if we wait past July 1st, cuts are likely to be deeper. In addition, MOUs with Unions, and civil service rules require a 90-day notice for potential lay-off situations. The April Board date at which these items may be heard is still uncertain.

There is certainly an emotional response to transferring services from Orenda, in terms of 'losing the institution'. However, identical or similar services will continue to be available throughout the system of care if the BOS approve this proposed reduction option.

VIII. Roundtable Discussion

CHD: SACPA component dwindling, but DUI court growing. Application to be a Medi-Cal provider is underway.

WRS: Has been featured in the Journal of Psychoactive Drugs, in an article written by Marty Jessup. Census is up. A former client died recently, the good news is she had been clean and sober for nine years.

SRTP: Business as usual.

Athena House: Has had a slew of recent successful graduates, resulting in a house full of newer clients.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:48 pm.

Next Meeting: April 16, 2008
1250 Coddington Center Room "F" Santa Rosa, CA 95401