

## ARLINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD

### Mental Health Committee

October 25, 2012

Approved 11/28/12

**Members Present:** Anne Hermann (Co-Chair), Judy Deane (Co-chair), Brian Berke, Susan Lowry, Tom Quinn, Richard Smith, Betsy Greer,

**Members Absent:** Sam Howlett, Kathy Donovan, John Blount, Cindy Fagnoni, Caroline Bragdon, James Bradshaw, Scott Brannon

**Staff Present:** Alan Orenstein, PhD, Luis Marcano, PACT Manager

**Public Observer:** Alice Straker

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** The Committee approved the 10/3/12 minutes with correction.

**Presentation:** Luis Marcano, the new PACT Manager, provided an overview of the PACT program which serves the most seriously mentally ill adults. Services are comprehensive, team-oriented, outreach-oriented, and long term; staff include case managers, psychiatrist, nurse-case managers, and vocational, substance abuse and peer specialist-case managers. Mr. Marcano gave examples of the kind of hard-to-engage clients served. Ms. Deane and Ms. Greer raised a number of concerns about the high PACT staff turnover, at both the management and the staff levels and that the team has consistently served a smaller number of clients than targeted when fully staffed. Mr. Marcano replied that the team currently serves 72 clients, whereas it is targeted to serve 80-100. He attributed the low numbers to the fact that the team has not been fully staffed and that the manager is responsible for all intake interviews, which slows the number of intakes when there is no manager. He said that this problem should be ameliorated, now that there is a manager and an assistant manager who can both do intake interviews. One of his priorities is to increase the number of clients served. There was also some discussion of eligibility criteria and whether PACT serves individuals with psychotic illnesses who are shut in their apartments, not causing problems, but not getting any better. Mr. Marcano indicated clients like this do appear to meet criteria, but admission would depend also on other factors, such as the person's willingness to be served by an intensive PACT program. Ms. Greer questioned the degree to which the PACT team is office-based. Dr. Orenstein noted that PACT staff spend about 75% of their time in the field about at the PACT licensing standard.

Dr. Orenstein said that staff retention is a problem common to many Virginia PACT teams, although the high turnover among managers (4 in the last 10 years and 2 acting temporarily during recruitment) is not. He said he considered the reasons for manager turnover and concluded that in most cases it was caused by family issues. He was optimistic that Mr. Marcano, who has worked for DHS for 9 years and headed the PACT team on an interim basis for 9 months a few years ago, would have more staying power. Concerning staff turnover, Dr. Orenstein suggested that there is no financial incentive to serve on the team rather than taking a 9 to 5 job on another team, and the turnover of nurses has been a particular problem. He detailed steps that had been tried in the past, including seeking approval for accelerated step increases, discussion of position grade reclassification. He indicated also there is no special compensation for being on call. Captain Berke noted that the police department also has difficulty adequately compensating staff that are on-call. With respect to facilitating record documentation since staff are frequently out of the office, the team twice piloted the use of laptops which was not found helpful by staff. The team is now piloting the use of iphones to dictate notes while in the field.

Ms. Deane said that last year the Chairs had recommended establishment of a family advisory council for the PACT Team, partly to address these concerns and partly to help the MH Committee advocate more effectively for PACT clients. Ms. Deane described that such a council would benefit the program, by helping family members to better understand the services provided and also offer advice and support to PACT staff, especially during times of staff turnover. Ideally, a member of the family advisory council would join the MH Committee, which would give the Committee a better understanding of the program's needs and the ability to advocate more effectively for them. Ms. Greer and Ms. Hermann concurred on the need for a council, and there was some discussion about its possible composition (such as family members, clients, other community members) Actions: Dr. Orenstein will discuss with Ms. Kemp and Mr. Marcano possible incentives to increase staff tenure and the formation of an advisory committee

**MH Director's Report:** Dr. Orenstein gave a brief description of the 10/11/12 MIAW event that focused on consumer employment. He also briefly reported what is known about the FY14 budget outlook. The Committee reviewed and accepted the latest draft Committee schedule. It was agreed that the November meeting will continue to focus on the County's efforts to reach the most difficult-to-treat clients. Speakers will include Leslie Weisman who will discuss the Extraordinary Barriers List, Emergency Services and the Treatment on Wheels Program. Ms. Deane suggested that an A-SPAN representative be invited as well. Ms Deane offered to contact Kathy Sibert, Executive Director of A-SPAN, and invite her to participate. Dr. Orenstein indicated he would ask Ms. Weisman to do so. Action: Dr. Orenstein will alert the scheduled presenters. Also, he will ask Ms. Wiseman to invite an ASPAN representative.

**Chair's Report:** Ms. Deane requested confirmation of the next family orientation date. Action: Dr Orenstein will check with Ms. Kemp and get back to Ms. Deane.

Ms. Hermann reported on the Older Virginian MH Awareness month event. The topic was substance abuse in this population. Ms Deane noted there is a Board retreat this coming weekend, which will be combined with the attendance of legislators in the afternoon. She said that, given the austere budget outlook, it is likely that advocacy this year will focus more on protecting current programs and services rather than on expanding them or introducing new ones.

Ms. Hermann noted that she is discussing the draft agenda with the Substance Abuse Committee Chair, Jenette O'Keefe. Topic suggestions made by members of the Mental Health Committee and Dr. Orenstein follow: a presentation on the collaborative work done by Dr. Orenstein and Dr. Joe Bullock (Substance Abuse Bureau Chief) for integrated dually diagnosed services; differentiated treatments for different populations, for example, young adults; SA outcome measures; and plans for the new (to Arlington) Drug Court.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.