



Tompkins County
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD

Tompkins County Whole Health
201 East Green Street
Ithaca, New York 14850-5421

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Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee
July 11th, 2023, 10:00 a.m. Via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

Approved 9.12.2023

Present: Jeffrey Boles, James Beaumont, Nancy Saltzman, Sheila McEnery, and Allison Weiner-Heinemann

Guests Present: Briggs Seekins, Challenge; Anne Seepersaud, LifePlan; Jessica Connor, Northeast Pediatrics; Christopher Kiser, Racker; Lila Balliet, Springbrook; Michelle Gravel, Springbrook; Janette McKay, OPWDD; and Dave Seely and Kristen Colbert, Presence Counseling Services.

Excused:

Unexcused:

Staff: Harmony Ayers-Friedlander, DCS; and Karan Palazzo, LGU Administrative Assistant

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The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by James. Sheila motioned to approve June 2023 minutes, seconded by Nancy; all were in favor.
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Privilege of the Floor: None

Announcements/Correspondence: Jessica reported having productive conversations with Anne Seepersaud of LifePlan and Jessica Colon of Southern Tier Connect about the level of awareness and training of the OPWDD care managers who serve youth in Tompkins County. Christopher shared that the 75th annual charity benefit for early childhood programs at RACKER will be held this Saturday, at Cornell. Donations are accepted if unable to attend. Briggs announced that Katie was promoted to director of OPWDD services. Jeff shared that the American Disabilities Act's 33rd Anniversary is July 26th.

Provider Updates:

Racker: Chris shared that individuals are coming off the emergency list; admissions are planned in Tompkins County; all open spots should be filled by the second week of August including residential beds.

Springbrook: Michelle shared that Springbrook is providing Prevocational services and pre-employment supports through Access VR to individuals living in Tompkins County; offering self-directed services; and the State Street office in Ithaca is looking to hire another employment staff.

LifePlan: Anne shared that LifePlan's customer service center is open to members, families, and service providers for inquiries or concerns; the clinical team expanded support to care managers with a focus on building their knowledge of medical services and resources to support members.

Challenge: Briggs shared that they continue to take referrals; working on the Access contract which will provide an easier transition for transition-aged students.

Unity House: James shared that residential – beds are being filled; Day Services – continued staffing issues but a few were hired; they are working on a backfill list.

FLIC: Jeff shared that FLIC offers peer counseling services.

Tompkins County Workforce (TCWF): Cassidy was not in attendance but shared via email that The Employment Resource that TWFNY holds is a cohort of Community Partners who work with job seekers, particularly those facing multiple barriers, that meet quarterly to discuss opportunities for employment, training, and resources to assist clients and customers. A platform DRC Stanley uses to keep local service providers aware of resources available to community members and to serve as a liaison between customers/clients and those resources. If anyone is interested in attending these meetings, please email Cassidy at CStanley@tompkins-co.org to get added to the group.

The Re-Entry, Recovery, Mental Health Resource Fair will be held September 14th at the Tompkins County Public Library. from 11:00 to 1:00. Save the Dates will be going out soon along with invites to specific Providers and Community Service Members.

There was a lengthy discussion of the particulars of the quarterly meetings.

OPWDD: Janette McKay covering for Jamie Kelly, shared some discussions from a recent regional leadership meeting in July

- Recruitment and retainment strategies tactics on the workforce shortage across the State
- Public health emergency changes
- Intensive treatment placement opportunities
- Stakeholders meeting on the Strategic Plan to be held in July and August (webinar attendance is encouraged)

Discussions:

Presence Counseling Services: Dave Seely is the Founder and Creator of Presence Counseling Services. Presence, based in Seneca Falls, NY, is a company that recruits clinicians as independent contractors and staff to provide clinical services in various communities. Funding through the IPSIDD mechanism allows for service needs to be provided at non-certified clinic sites, in their homes, programs, and at private offices. Kirsten Colbert, a mental health counselor based in Ithaca, promotes Presence Counseling in Tompkins County. Many providers around the state are interested in joining Presence as Presence is interested in offering and growing services in Tompkins County.

Presence Counseling serves about 400 individuals in NYS and serves everybody who has a documented developmental disability and is on Medicaid. NYS requires billing other insurance first and then Medicaid if anything is outstanding. Medicaid is the payer of last resort. There is no requirement for people receiving services to pay anything as Presence created a PLLC allowing access to funding mechanisms. Recruited providers must have certain credentials in order to be eligible to provide services through IPSIDD and access the fee system.

Anne Seepersaud is interested in building out psychiatry support for youth and adults with medication management at Presence through IPSIDD. Dave Seely said that the State would have to authorize it through their fee schedule and as part of their regulations, but he is not able to confirm if the clinicians would get paid to provide medication management. He believes someone would have to advocate for those provider services.

Harmony added that Family & Children Services (FCS) offers psychiatric services and possibly Mozaic. Jessica added that children at FCS can receive medication management after being established with a therapist there and there is a wait time of 6-12 months. There was a lengthy discussion on double dipping or overlapping of service systems (OMH/OPWDD) Article 16, and clinical services.

Day Service Options (211): James shared that there is a lack of Day-Hab services in Tompkins County and in conversation with Harmony it was suggested that we start collecting data on Day Service options such as open residential beds, process for open slots, day services, waitlists, workforce/jobs, etc. to be discussed in the September meeting as well as camps.

The meeting adjourned at 11:09 a.m.

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**The next Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee Meeting is
Tuesday, September 12th, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.**