Hennepin Adult Mental Health Initiative (AMHI) meeting

August 12, 2021

**Martin Marty,** Program Manager, welcomed the group.

**Marty, and Diane Kelley,** Hennepin County Human Services Contract Management, announced that Tom Alf is retiring from ResCare Minnesota, and Laura Kahler Loftness will be the new Executive Director.

**Marty** discussed the AMHI’s role in identifying unmet needs for adult mental health, receiving state funds for the initiative, and overseeing the mission of the Hennepin AMHI.

**Savannah Steele,** co-chair of the Adult Mental Health Local Advisory Council (LAC) provided an update. The purpose of the LAC is to provide input to the county Commissioners about unmet and emerging needs. It is a resource to consumers, providers, and family members. At the August 19 meeting, Sheriff David Hutchinson will speak. The LAC has interface with stakeholders involved with adult mental health in the county, including law enforcement and emergency response. Questions include: what does sheriff do to support providers in crisis response? How do providers relate to public and users of services? Please let Savannah know what you would like the sheriff to address at the meeting. LAC will be at MN state fair on August 30 to provide information on mental health. It will be mental health day at the fair. The LAC is surveying its 20 members to improve engagement. The LAC likes to hear from providers about needs and what is happening in our communities. Thanks for your work in Hennepin County. Marty- The LAC will identify unmet needs later this year. Wants to provide the perspective of persons with lived experience to identify barriers and issues. Please send Marty any input and requests to be included on meeting invitation list.

**Jessica Giordano**, Planning & Analysis Manager, Behavioral Health (BH), provided a PowerPoint discussion of AMHI reform and disparity reduction. DHS prompted reform, and Hennepin County BH is aligning our effort with disparity reduction, a priority for Hennepin County. How can we best use our dollars to meet need? We ask for help to identify unmet needs. MN Department of Human Services (DHS) is working on funding formula and legislation. Hennepin’s domains for disparity reduction include education, employment, health, housing, income, justice, transportation. Hennepin County is increasingly diverse, yet the adult behavioral health population served by the county is not increasing at the same pace. We have catching up to do for diversity. In 2021 our efforts include community engagement (we have participated in three events so far), analysis of current contracts, targeted case management (TCM) rate setting, redistributing transportation and client flex funds, and rewriting outcomes for IRTS and Employment contracts. We are focusing on culturally specific services. We are listening to people in the community to get their input. We need to act; it is beyond time to talk. We are looking at needs, gaps, and challenges related to language, mental health needs and connecting to services, limited budget for staff training, and recruitment and hiring of diverse staff. We are seeking feedback. Between now and 2022, we will continue with community engagement, investigate savings from new Medical Assistance (MA) billable services, investigate transportation and client flex fund needs, and increase the percentage of contracts with culturally specific agencies. This will take time. For the next AMHI grant application, 2023-2024, we will maintain the current vibrant system of support, shift outcomes to better meet community needs, and increase funding to culturally specific programming. Public value will be: reduce disparities, equitably distribute tax dollars back to all communities, lift community voice and choice, and create a model for other county efforts. What is your vision? Where do you see opportunities to shift? What disparity reduction efforts are you engaged in? What’s working? Please contact Jessica if you have ideas, input.

Marty noted that some agencies are also addressing disparities.

**Marty** discussed the scope of our AMHI. We have decided to meet twice a year, perhaps April and October. We will reserve the right to call additional meetings as needed. This will begin in 2022. Abigail Franklin, our DHS consultant, announced an adjustment to the timeline for funding formula adjustment, from 2023-24, now pushed to 2025. This will allow more time to develop stakeholder input and plan. Hennepin AMHI changes will go forward. There is no news about funding formula process; there is a work group that has had one meeting, more are planned. There will be a report in early 2022. Hennepin may receive more money, but process is not complete. DHS is looking at social determinants of health, risk, utilization, access to services. Greater MN has service access and travel issues and they are concerned about funding formula changes. We are looking at how the grant can grant be used where medical assistance housing stabilization dollars are now being spent. We don’t want to cut off needed services; we want to identify gaps and needs, such as housing, and preserve funding for what is working.

**Marjorie Schaeffer,** PhD, RN, a member of the LAC, presented on “Journey Through the Mental Illness Maze: How Families Find Hope and Acceptance”. Marjorie is a scholar on community engagement who conducted a research study on families and resilience. She is a volunteer with National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) who teaches classes and has an adult daughter with bipolar disorder who receives Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) services. She conducted interviews with 20 family members during 2017-2018. She wrote two journal articles and a book. The website [www.familybipolarstories.com](http://www.familybipolarstories.com) provides more information. Marjorie can provide the articles. The book is available on Amazon. Involving family contributes to inclusive care and family satisfaction. LAC advocacy at state fair is a good example of service. Social support is important, and so is the need to let go when it is too difficult. Self- advocacy is an important theme. The participants wanted to help others, that’s why they participated in the interviews. They were grateful to share their stories. Their involvement helped with loved ones’ recovery, and participants talked about their own self-growth through their experience. The study might be more diverse if done today; most participants were Caucasian.

Marty- what about outreach for more diversity? Marjorie- NAMI is helpful; also, outreach through organizations that serve BIPOC communities. NAMI is working on this.

Marty- the LAC has family members. The lived experience of family members can fracture families. Civil commitment is overwhelming, and support is vital. Marjorie- it is okay to pullback when needed. Marty- self-care is encouraged. Marjorie- there is help, there are support groups, and services for crisis. Marty- family to family groups important.

**Round robin:**

Ashley Trepp- Tasks Unlimited has learned a lot during the pandemic, is flexible for this wave. They are partnering with organizations to provide housing.

Barb Tisdle- Mental Health Resources is getting back into the community. Now most visits are face to face.

BJ McElrath- Avivo is back in the community but pulling back a bit due to delta variant of Covid-19.

Lam Truong- Avivo CSP is looking at art studio space, hoping to add a community art program in NE Minneapolis. Negotiating with Downtown Improvement District (DID) about possibly adding mobile CSP to downtown Minneapolis. Doing outreach with BIPOC community.

Gabe Becker-Finn- People Incorporated has added two new programs, intensive SUD outpatient in June, and corrections integrated support services. The opened a new crisis Intensive Residential Treatment Services (IRTS) in Chaska.

Lynn Tanaka- Avivo CSP had a picnic at Powderhorn Park, well attended. The CSP newsletter and calendar are now digital. An LGBTQ book club will soon begin.

Danielle Jeffrey – Blue Plus health plan is starting NEAR Science, a new training for providers, based on ACES training. 5 CEUs available. Cultural component. Contact her for details: Danielle.jeffrey@bluecrossmn.com

Sally Kratz- Hennepin County Mental Health Center is relocating October 4 to South Human Services Center, Lake and Hiawatha in Minneapolis. Will be on the 5th floor, co-located with Hennepin Health family practice clinic. Hope for an open house. Received expansion grant from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCBHC) and is proceeding to satisfy criteria, change programming, hiring new staff, and applied to DHS for CCBHC certification. Assembling a client advisory council, meeting in person is pending.

Rosie Kolman Stich- Mental Health Resources- the AMHI Housing Coalition provides a virtual tenant education workshop and curriculum. Tasks Unlimited and Touchstone IRTS had them present. Topics include housing services, subsidy overview, applying for housing, barriers, process of moving in, responsibilities of tenant, certification of completion at the end. The coalition is working on landlord recruitment, with some virtual meetings. Facebook page is in development; a platform for landlords and coalition members to connect, post openings. The coalition has a landlord presentation, FAQs on subsidies for landlords, trying to dispel misinformation about tenant subsidies.

Jodi Pritchard- BH Supervisor, her first AMHI meeting. BH reorganized some supervisors. Jodi supports social workers in jails and public defenders’ office, also civil court intake team and issues related to county of financial responsibility (CFR).

Shanna McIntosh- Touchstone is back in working in the community. Some persons are leery of meeting in person, staff meet them where they are at. Staff turnover, wanting to hire case managers.

Tara Inveen- Seward CSP, Mental Health Resources, is excited to reopen, with limited capacity. Had an event at Minnehaha Falls. Member appreciation day in the works. Brainstorming new ways to use commercial kitchen.

Jolene Peterson- Vail Place is meeting people face to face, clients and teams. CSPS are open three days each week, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays. 75 meals served. Online still an option. Rapid rehousing program and housing stabilization services.

Heather Bjork- BH Principal Planner, supporting AMHI efforts for Hennepin County. Hoping for increase in vaccinations and decrease in the resurging virus.

Marty- CLUES, serving Latinx and Spanish speaking persons, will start participating in our AMHI.