

CFAC Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2008

Present: Leslie, Edward, Marcus, Linda, Rhonda, Pam, Gwyn, Shira, Bradley, Vicente, Heather, Steve, Suzanne, and Michael

Guests: Judy Truitt, Chris Carmichael, and Diane

Minutes: The minutes of the February meeting were approved as written.

Members introduced themselves to Chris Carmichael, a graduate student in journalism from UNC who was working on a photojournalism project with Vicente. CFAC members agreed it would be okay for Chris to take photographs during the meeting.

REPORTS:

Update from CFAC Vice-Chair: Leslie provided a brief report on her meeting with Judy Truitt, which included a discussion of the OPC budget as well as the idea of a Peer Support Center, which has been raised frequently during CFAC meetings. Since both of these topics are included on the meeting agenda, Leslie provided only a summary of her meeting.

Update from OPC CFAC Liaison: Michael shared that Virginia had sent an email thanking CFAC for the lemon cypress tree and lotion, and that she missed seeing everyone. He provided an update on the CFN transition. Therapeutic Alternatives and Freedom House have both begun to offer services in Chatham County as of Monday, March 17th. The following day OPC held a consumer forum in Pittsboro to provide updated information and introduce consumers/family members to the new providers. CFN has agreed to continue providing nursing services in all 3 counties through the end of March. This agreement is intended to prevent persons who need medication injections from falling through the cracks during this transition period. OPC is still in negotiations with a new provider for Orange County, and Freedom House is planning to begin operations out of the Estes Drive offices formerly used by CFN in Chapel Hill. Finally, Michael noted that the Pass Around Folder includes information on the \$300 IRS stimulus payments, which can be available to persons whose Social Security payments total more than \$3,000/year. Although persons on disability income do not typically have to file income taxes, anyone who wants to receive the \$300 stimulus payment must file their 2007 taxes. This does not mean they will have to pay tax, but unless they file, they cannot receive the \$300 payment. Michael noted that SSI will not count as income for the purposes of this stimulus payment.

Update from State CFAC Liaison: Suzanne invited feedback from anyone who attended the CFAC Conference a few weeks ago. She also reminded CFAC members of the Regional Training in Henderson on April 24th. This training will include information on Quality Management in the morning and LME crisis plans in the afternoon. There will be no limit to the number of CFAC members who can attend this training. If members have other ideas of topics to include in the training, they should feel free to contact either Suzanne or Michael.

NEW BUSINESS:

OPC Budget Presentation

Judy Truitt presented information on OPC's budgeting process. She distributed and reviewed a spreadsheet on the allocation of IPRS (state) dollars, and noted that the state allocation letter includes money designated for services as well as money designated for LME operations. Judy shared that the entire state budget has to be approved by the legislature and then certified before the Division can begin to develop allocations based on the approved state budget. This can lead to delays in the LME receiving its allocation letter, and during the current year the allocation was not received until January. The LME has to develop a benefit plan (a description of the types and

amounts of services that may be available to a consumer, depending on his/her diagnosis) that will be used at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1). This process involves looking at what has been spent in previous years, since most people continue to need those services. For example, OPC allocates a significant portion of IPRS funds to residential options such as group homes and apartments. The people who live in these residences continue to have needs, and so the LME needs to continue to fund them. The process of developing a benefit plan also involves looking at what the LME needs to do to "grow" the system. By using the approach described above, OPC's planning takes into consideration the needs of those already involved in services as well as the needs of persons who will be entering the service system for the first time during the current fiscal year.

When they developed the current state budget, the legislature did something unusual. They made specific requirements as to how some of the money in the budget was to be spent. But because the budget did not include significant amounts of new money, the Division had to find the money somewhere and the only option was to take it from line items/services where the money had been used in previous years. The cuts in OPC's allocation were spread across the board rather than focused in particular areas where we might have been unable to draw down all the money from last year's allocation. And while OPC has some latitude to shift money within the allocations from the Division, doing so would mean taking money away from one area to provide more funding in another.

In addition to this allocation letter, LMEs receive letters throughout the year notifying them of additional funding that will be made available. This new money is nearly always tied to a specific purpose. For example, OPC has been awarded \$1 million to expand substance abuse services this year. The money will go to Freedom House, Horizons, and Family Wellness & Recovery Services.

Judy reminded CFAC members that IPRS is a capitated system, with a significantly lower amount of funding available than Medicaid. But LMEs do not manage Medicaid funds, only IPRS.

Report from the CFAC Conference

Pam shared some of her recollections of key points made by Cindy Hopkins, the keynote speaker on both Friday and Saturday. Cindy pointed out that most successful change happens after a lot of conflict, and that North Carolina's system change needs to be driven by consumers and family members. "It needs to be *our* agenda." It is important for consumers to recognize they have a voice and feel empowered to use it. "True empowerment comes from ourselves." CFACs need to join advocacy groups like NAMI and to get involved at the county level in what is happening.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

AQIC

Pam reported that this committee continues to review policies that are being revised for CARF accreditation.

Area Board Sub-Committees

Leslie shared that these committees met jointly last week and discussed committee tasks and assignments. Members were given a list of acronyms and definitions that was very useful. They will each meet separately at the next meeting (April 10th).

PSW (Peer Support Workshop)

Edward noted that planning was progressing well. The 2008 workshop will still be held at Camp New Hope, but in a larger facility. And while the format will be the same, the PSW committee agreed to invite back roughly half of the speakers from last year, along with new presenters. CFAC members are welcome to make suggestions for presenters. The PSW committee will present a budget request at the April meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Peer Support Center

Leslie proposed that CFAC set up a sub-committee to work on this idea. There are numerous tasks at hand for the members of this sub-committee, such as determining where it would be located, who it would serve, who would run it, what would be the hours of operation, and how it would be structured. These would all play a role in determining the budget needed to operate a peer support/drop-in center. Michael shared that he met with Theric Holt from Triangle Empowerment Center. Their annual budget is \$225,000. Suzanne suggested that it would be worthwhile to look at other peer support centers, such as Open Door in Mecklenburg County. She also pointed out that Graham had a peer support center. Rhonda, Gwyn, Diane and Bradley expressed interest in working on this committee. Members noted that Cheryl and Allen (who were not present at this meeting) might also be interested.

Check-in and Proposed Agenda for April Meeting:

Leslie recommended including OPC's phone number with other information at the top of each agenda, along with the CFAC web address.

Michael encouraged CFAC members to take more ownership of the meeting agenda. He noted that this was a theme addressed at the CFAC Conference as well. Typically, Michael develops the agenda in consultation with the CFAC chair, OPC staff, and Suzanne. But this is an opportunity for CFAC to look at what the issues are that are of real interest to them, in keeping with CFAC's statutory responsibilities. Suzanne noted that recruitment is an ongoing issue for CFACs, and that this has come up only once or twice on this agenda since she has been our Division Liaison. Many CFACs keep recruitment as a standing item on their agenda. Edward suggested we add recruitment to the April meeting agenda.