Local Advisory Council (LAC) – North

St. Louis County

November 19, 2020 Minutes

Present: Todd Swenson, Wendy Dickhausen, Jeff McNickle, Jennifer Rich, Ann Marie Lubovich, Lacy Podlogar, Jessica Meyer, Michelle Long, Bill Jacobson

Absent: Claudia Skalko, Daniel Triestman, Robin Laulunen, Christine Gunderson

Tod asked if there were any changes to the Minutes from October meeting. No changes.

Crea Larson was the speaker tonight from First Call to Help from Itasca County.

Crea started her presentation and said First Call for Help is funded through multiple funding sources and they also raise money for their services.

They have many different resources at First Call for Help. Below is the list of the services Crea explained:

Website for First Help - <https://www.firstcall211.net/>

-Resources for the homeless

-10 MNSure Navigators that will help people apply for MNSure over the phone

-Notaries for people with Advanced Directives and other things

-Crisis Services – they will meet the person where they are at whether they are at their home or outside in a tent. They will go to them

-Link people with meds, insurance and other services.

-24 Mental Health Practioners on staff for First Call (Itasca County, Northern part of Aitkin County and Eastern part of Cass County) They are available 24/7.

-They have had their Crisis Team since 1999

-Call Center that triages call over the phone or send out their mobile crisis team

-Protected Transportation to and from the hospital – (DOT Program) this is a car service so a person does not need to utilize an ambulance and have a big bill for using the ambulance.

The Protected Transportation is manned by a person certified in mental health and CPR.

 -Kids have access to blankets, stuff animals, IPads and movies for a long drive

-There is no cost for transportation to a person using this service. Whatever does not get covered under medical, they can bill out under a grant

-If family member wants to pick up person from hospital, the family can get a $50 gas card to pick up the family member in the hospital

-When leaving hospital, driver can stop to pick up meds or maybe groceries for a person before bringing them home.

-The team is also involved in discharge planning with hospitals to get transportation and other things are set up for the person to go home.

-Grant to pay for prescription copays – this would not be ongoing but to pay for meds coming out of the hospital to make sure they have the meds when they get home.

-Services for Vets. Vets helping Vets

She trained Vets in Mental Health Services and let them set up the program. She did it this way

due to her Uncle’s advice to let the Vets get the program started.

The Vets running the programs may meet with the clients for up to a year if needed and even

on a daily basis. She has 5 Team Members on this group that are available 24/7. She does the

clinical support but the Team handles the rest.

-IPads and Cell phones are distributed more now since COVID so a person can stay in touch and have access to other services. $10,000 to $11,000 in IPads and cell phones have been given out since June.

Crea recommends coming up with the top 3 things the LAC identifies as missing in St. Louis County and tasks on those three items. Crea is willing to help the LAC by giving us all the needed information she has for Protected Transportation.

She is willing to help out were needed. She can tell us about Crisis Grants too and how they were developed. You can reach Crea 24/7 by calling (218) 326-8565.

Crea spoke about keeping an open line of communication with the County Commissioners. She meets with them twice a year but if something comes up, she will contact them by email. They don’t know if something is needed if they are not alerted to an issue.

Itasca County also will alert Crea if they find out about a funding source that could help fund a service.

Possibly funding sources:

Department of Justice

Department of Human Services

St. Louis County Crisis Grants

Rotary Club

Community Foundation

Churches – Collectively not individual – they have a monthly meeting and Grace House manages

the fund. Educating the congregation on mental health needs is important.

Important to have different funding sources in case someone pulls out, Commissioners change or the County stops funding.

Crea can give us meeting minutes of anything we might needs

She meets quarterly with Itasca County Public Health and Human Services

Itasca County will be building a new jail and they will have a mental health wing with specialty providers. The Police Department also calls on Crea and her team to dispatch someone to the scene if they think the person is having a mental health crisis which prevents them from going to jail. If someone does go to jail, they can have a team member meet them at the jail. This has reduced the number of incarcerations this year. The new jail will be ready in 2022.

Crisis bed - New Leaf in Cohasset, MN

They work with alternative methods like yoga, light boxes, meditation and music monitors to avoid hospitalization.

Tod wanted each LAC member to list their top three items that are important to them. Once the top three items were identified, the LAC could then start working on those items. Tod had this on the agenda and it also ties in with what Crea had mentioned that the members should do.

Below is the list of what each member expressed was important to them:

Tod 1) Police 2) Jail (Mental Health)

Bill 1) Transportation to and from hospital 2) Vets

Jennifer 1) Collaboration with law enforcement

Jennifer also has a contact person for transportation for Vets that she can talk to

Jessica – 1) Police 2) Transportation

Lacey 1) Transportation to and from housing, shelter and hospitals 2) Help with pets for a person in a facility or hospital 3) Advocate for someone that is reaching out for help and maybe in jeopardy of losing their kids 4) Healthy food that is low cost for a person to fuel their minds and body.

Wendy – 1) Communication with school and County on kids that have special needs – teachers don’t always follow IEP’s. Teachers need more training

Michelle – 1) School – understanding of children’s needs. Schools don’t have the knowledge in the disorders that kids are experiencing or not sure how to work with those kids.

Ann Marie – 1) Schools don’t have the resources to deal with the different disorders. They have to report but need professional help for the kids with issues. Also need a way to help kids get the help they need at school without parents knowledge or maybe not having insurance. Sometimes kids need help as there are issues at home and kids need to talk to someone. School districts cannot fund this individually. 2) 211 help for St. Louis County residences.

Jeff – 1) Jail – Assistance coming out of jail (housing, jobs, meds) 2) Seniors in nursing homes or assisted living facilities – if they need mental health services, they get sent somewhere but when they come back, there is a lack of follow up services.

Todd mentioned he contacted Clay County about the River Project as they are partnered with Lakeland Health. They have 2 full time Mental Health Workers working in the jail to provide Diagnostic Assessments, Case Management and ARMHS services.

Tod will try and set up Lakeland Mental Health to be a speaker at the next meeting.

Next meeting will be Thursday, January 21, 2021. There will be no meeting in December.

Addition to the meeting meets was an email from Claudia Skalko that she would like added. Please see below:

"Hi Todd, I like the ideas submitted already. I think those are some strong issues to address. One idea that I have that could be in conjunction with these ideas is having an updated area lists of what is available for MH services. I was surprised to find out that Essentia Health was offering an inpatient program but no one other than Nurses that work there and those that I talked to seemed to know about it. I did not have updated lists at work to address with clients who might need more"