

St. Mary's County
Department of Social Services Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
November 27th 2018

The regular scheduled meeting of the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services Advisory Board was held on Tuesday, November 27th 2018 in the board room of the Joseph D. Carter building.

Member's Present:

Michael Blackwell, Chair
Annette Wood, Vice Chair
Katie Paul
Adam Dyson
Richard Buckler
Cynthia Brown
Wanda Brown, Via conference call

Also Present:

Alexis Zoss, Director
Ashley Nelson, SMC Health Department
Terry Procnowar, SMC Health Department

- I. Call to Order
 - Order was called at 5:30PM.
- II. Establish Quorum
 - A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 5:30PM.
- III. Approval of September 25th Minutes
 - A motion was made to approve the minutes from September 25th, 2018. A motion was made and seconded. Motion carries unanimously.
- IV. HARM Reduction Presentation
 - The board opens the floor to Ashley Nelson to discuss the HARM reduction program.
 - Ashley Nelson, BS, NCPT St. Mary's County Health Department. Opioid Addiction was described and how it affects the physiology of user. The contributing factors and the remedies were discussed. www.smchd.org/opioid is a website that gives the full breakdown for factors that influence the uses. Expanding Access to Treatment and Preventing Disease Outbreaks. Harm reduction was expanded upon and explained its importance. Harm reduction services are legal in Maryland- there are many components of the Maryland Harm

Reduction. The Indiana Story-Scott County. In one year 200 new cases of HIV arose from the use of shared needles. The syringe exchange helped to lower the number of reported cases of HIV to 1-2 cases per month. Over 97,000 syringes were collected. Developing Local Capacity is being established in areas such as St. Mary's County.

- i. Questions were opened. One question asked was if the Physicians board had seen the presentation. It had been presented recently and there was a large amount of positive feedback. It was requested where needle exchange is currently taking place and how discreet the exchange is. Different counties use different methods. Churches, Pharmacies, and even people in the community are taking part in the process. St. Mary's may have a mobile unit and a central location. It was recommended that the library could be a focal point for the community. Terry Procnower stated that the health department is taking syringes for legal and illegal drug usage. Multiple take back events are being scheduled to help anyone in need of discarding syringes. A question was posed about what kind of training is being given for narcotic distribution. The harm reduction program would help allow more training via a mobile unit. The training would be no more than 5-10 minutes. Ashley Nelson gave out feedback forms for the board to give thoughts on the presentation. Alexis Zoss was asked what the final decision is for expanding the program. It is a matter of the timeline for the roll out based on the next presentation to the county commissioners. Ashley Zoss requested that any community events that they can participate in be reported. The health department is available for overdose trainings for anyone that wishes to participate. It was questioned if the board would like to be trained. There was a request for a revisit to train the board to assist in any potential overdose situations.

V. Directors Report

- Alexis Zoss continued to speak on the issue of substance abuse. This includes adults and children especially in foster care. To help work with these families about 18 months ago there is a certain amount of money given to DSS.
 - i. Lisa Ford wrote a proposal to help implement evidence based programs. National Families which was awarded to the family resource center. It is the hope of the agency to expand the age range from 11-16 to a younger age group to be included in the evidence programs. Alexis went on to mention the Child Advocacy Center was recently awarded a One-Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollar grant to help fund more medical assessment programs. Many of the evaluations for physical abuse take place at the CAC, which is what part of this grant will go towards. Two parts of this grant: Non offending parent's group- a support group for parents who are not the abusers and 61,000 to fund a ASIS coordinator. This will partner with the health department who will do the hiring of the medical professionals.
 - ii. HR continues to be a focal point. The new hiring manager started back in August from the Health Department. The agency was running 25-26

vacancies which went down to about 18 and is now backing to 21. In the next few weeks about 5 new hires will be joining the staff. Six interviews are being conducted as well as numerous in house promotions. The agency is also in the process of quality improvement. Numerous surveys are being given out to the community partners as well as internal staff to help put together a current snap shot of where the agency is for a strategic planning meeting on January 25th. It was questioned what programs the vacancies occupy: 6 Services, 7 Family Investment, 2 LGA, 2 fiscal vacancies, 2 IT, 2 other. Many of these spots are being reclassified to make them more marketable. It had not been done for many years. It was said strengthening family grants will be a great asset to the agency.

VI. Chair Report

- Michael Blackwell opened by stating Diane Glycner replied to the bylaws conversation from the previous meeting and stated they do not have to be signed off on by the county commissioners. Social Services can reach out to community members, small businesses etc. The board owes a regular report to the county, which will need to include the highlights from the last several meeting new director, budget reviews, strategic plan, etc. Michael Blackwell will draft this from the notes to present to the county. The budget process will be happening again and will need to be submitted by January 11th.

VII. Other Items

- The next meeting will be on Tuesday December 11th in the board room of Joseph D. Carter building. It was asked if multiple community partners were being given the resources they need to assist children in the community for Christmas. Christmas Caring was mentioned and how they help distribute Toys for Tots toys to DSS customers. In addition to food for the holidays. Any concerns for whether the families are being serviced can be submitted to their database. Alexis will be meeting with Sheriff Cameron to possibly recruit a board member from law enforcement. Lt. Robert Russel special operations of St. Mary's Sherriff's Department is also recommended for the position. Michael Blackwell thanked the board for their service.

VIII. Adjournment

- Call for adjournment was made and seconded which carried at 6:28pm.

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