

**CATAWBA HOSPITAL  
CATAWBA, VIRGINIA**

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE NAME:** Local Human Rights Committee

**MEETING DATE:** December 19, 2007

**MEETING TIME:** 3:00 PM

**PLACE:** Building 24 Conference Room

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Reba Keen, Chairperson; Rena Ferguson; Will Childers; Courtney Hewitt; Bo Miller; Millie Rhodes

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ken Rush; Carolyn Heldreth; Valarie Robinson

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jack Wood, MBA, VCO, Facility Director/CEO; Walton Mitchell, Vice President of Patient Care Services; Valerie Epperley, Executive Secretary (Administrative Support); Nan Neese, Regional Human Rights Advocate

**GUESTS:**

**MEETING AGENDA – MAIN POINTS DISCUSSED:**

1. **Review of Minutes:** The minutes from the meeting of October 17, 2007 were accepted as previously distributed.

**Review Date:** No further review

2. Ms. Keen welcomed Nan Neese, Regional Advocate, who announced Sonia Smith's resignation. Ms. Smith made the difficult decision to resign from the Office of Human Rights for family reasons. Ms. Neese hopes to begin the recruiting process as soon as possible. She also distributed a staff directory for the SW Region Office of Human Rights with the request to contact any of them for any issues that arise in the interim.

3. **Restraint and Protective Restraint:** Mr. Wood presented the report in Ms. Fisher's absence. Most behavioral restraint hours were related to a couple of incidents, but generally the numbers have been really down. One individual who accounted for numerous hours was the same person as in May and June. There is improvement in the management of incidents. The staff is working hard to prevent restraint usage. For protective restraints (enclosure bed only), the number of incidents remain low, as well as for protective restraints (excluding enclosure bed). Again, this is attributed in part to the medical staff having sufficient attending coverage and working closely with the treatment teams to ensure minimal use of protective restraints.

**Review Date:** No further review

4. **Complaints Managed in the Informal Process:** Mr. Wood presented the following report: for October and November: two (2) complaints were resolved informally. Both complaints were normal issues that Don deals with regularly, such as attitudes and differences of opinion.

**Review Date:** No further review

5. **Director's Liaison Report:** Discharges for October and November are running average. We continue at or near capacity every day (106 or 107), which is unusual. We have a regional utilization management team prioritizing persons who come to Catawba. Our average and median lengths of stay are what we usually see; we did discharge a couple of geriatric, long-stay individuals in October which is causing the average to be higher. The question was asked as to number of our patients who return home or go somewhere else within the community. Mr. Mitchell responded that our geriatric population is about equally divided between returning home, going to a nursing home, or to an assisted living facility upon discharge. The question was asked if the family is better prepared to take care of a discharged patient. The reply was that our treatment teams do a lot of work with preparing families before discharge, and family members are usually very invested in acquiring information.

**Review Date:** No further review

6. **Director's Report:** Mr. Wood mentioned the proposed new state budget adds more emergency positions within the system which could potentially impact Catawba because of increased patient admissions. There will more than likely be a change in the commitment codes language. Ms. Neese interjected that she is seeing a mushrooming for children/adolescent services; six group homes for adolescents are now open in this service region. Mr. Wood announced a leadership change in that his manager has retired; currently, there has not been a definite decision about filling the position.

**Review Date:** No further review

7. **Advocate's Report:** Ms. Neese reported in Ms. Smith's absence. There were no complaints filed under the formal process in the October/November time period. Interestingly, in 2005 there were 36 complaints handled through the formal review process. In 2006, there were eight complaints; currently, we have a total of eight complaints managed through the formal review process.

**Review Date:** No further review

8. **Membership Report:** The committee is at full membership.

**Review Date:** No further review

9. Ms. Keene stated that, on behalf of the committee, the facility staff takes patient care seriously. It's easy to ascertain this when issues are resolved within 24 hours and do not become formal, which speaks highly of Mr. Wood and his staff.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2008, at 3:00 PM, in the Conference Room of Building 24, Catawba Hospital.

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Reba Keene, Chairperson