

Western State Hospital  
Staunton, Virginia  
**Local Human Rights Committee Meeting Minutes**  
*Jeffrey's Building, Room 95 at 12:30*  
**February 22, 2010**

**Present:** Donna Gum, Hal Meyers, Ski Washington, Mahlon Webb, Robert Wade, Stephanie Sault, Committee Members; Chuck Collins, Regional Advocate; Erin Haw, VOPA, Gail Burford, Director's Liaison

**Absent:** Mark Seymour, CCCA Advocate

**Guests:** D.A., V.M., T.P., M.J.; members from WSH Citizen's Council  
Dr. Laura Santiago, C7/8  
Dr. Nick Hundley  
Mike Coss, Risk Management Investigator for WSH

Donna Gum, Chair, called the meeting of the Local Human Rights Committee to order on February 22, 2010. A quorum of members was present. With a motion from Hal Meyers and a second from Mahlon Webb, the minutes from the January meeting were approved as written. The agenda was approved with an addition of a "Public Comment" time allotment.

During the public comment time, members from the WSH Citizen's Council expressed three concerns that they would like the committee to help them with:

- **For Forensic Patients:** no more than \$40 may be carried on grounds and/or given to a patient over a 48 hour pass.
- **Transportation Issue:** Due to the budget cuts and lack of staff, there has been a cutback in transportation services for patients to go out into the community for AA/NA meetings as discussed in their treatment plans.
- **Boundaries:** Patients with ground privileges are confined to the sidewalks only and not the full acreage to the fences.

The members from the Citizen's Council requested the following relief for these issues:

- **For Forensic Patients:** The \$40 allowance is not enough, especially for the 48-hour passes. They suggest an additional amount.
- **Transportation Issue:** As one available staff member may accommodate only 6 patients at a time, not everyone who would like to attend the AA/NA meetings may attend every day. Since these meetings may be required by the Forensic Panel and by the treatment teams to better prepare them for discharge, they feel that more staff is needed to escort these patients. They also noted that community meetings are located on grounds at New Hope Detox. Could WSH patients attend these meetings or would it be possible to bring additional meetings to our campus?
- **Boundaries:** To have the boundary guidelines explained to patients at the time their ground cards are given, and also to have this particular section documented in writing for handouts.

**Upon a motion made by Hal Meyers and seconded by Mahlon Webb, the committee went into executive session pursuant to Virginia code § 2.2-37.11 A.15 and section 2.2-3705.5 for the discussion of medical and mental records excluded from the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, to solely review the required documentation for additional ECT treatments presented by Dr. Laura Santiago.**

**Upon reconvening in open session, all members of the Local Human Rights Committee certified that to the best of each one's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempt from statutory open meeting requirements, and only public business matters identified in the motion to convene the closed session were discussed in closed session.**

With a motion from Hal Meyers and a second by Robert Wade, ECT documentation presented by Dr. Santiago for additional treatments for A.N. was reviewed and approved as complete, pending the signature of the family's consent to the additional treatments.

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Dr. Nick Hundley answered the committee's questions with regard to the three issues brought forth by the Citizen's Council. The following recommendations were made by the committee to Dr. Hundley and he was requested to report upon the Forensic committee response by the next meeting:

- What is the status for provision of additional staff to help out with the transportation for evening AA/NA meetings in the community?
- Ask/recommend that the Forensic Committee consider increasing the allowable amount of money carried by forensic patients for one day, from \$40 to \$50.
- Ask/recommend that the Forensic Committee to consider increasing the allowable amount of money for forensic patients on 48-hour pass from \$40 to \$80
- The LHRC committee recommends that the boundary rules be posted or documented in such a manner that is accessible to the patient when receiving their ground card privileges.

Mike Coss described his role as the hospital investigator for patient abuse and neglect cases. He gave a brief overview of the steps taken for each case.

Chuck Collins presented the advocate's report for Human Rights Activities in the month of January.

Erin Haw, VOPA representative, noted that they are continuing to monitor possible legislation related to disability rights.

The Patient Complaints, Barriers to Discharge List, and the IFPC Minutes were all reviewed with no questions to follow.

Donna Gum made announcements for mental health activities happening in the community.

A memo on the hospital's budget cut was reviewed by the committee.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2010.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

**APPROVED:**

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**Donna Gum, Chair**

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**Shante' M. Ball, LHRC Secretary**