

Western State Hospital
Staunton, Virginia
Local Human Rights Committee Meeting Minutes
Jeffrey's Building, Rom 95 at 12:30
October 25, 2010

- Present:** Donna Gum, Hal Meyers, Rob Wade, Ski Washington, Mahlon Webb, Committee Members; Chuck Collins, WSH/Regional Advocate; Erin Haw, VOPA, Ellen Harrison Liaison to WSH Director
- Absent:** Stephanie Sault, Committee Member; Zachary DeVore, VOPA; Mark Seymour, WSH/Regional Advocate
- Guests:** M.S. (A6 patient)
Mark Stevens, VOPA

Ms. Gum, Committee Chair, called the meeting of the Local Human Rights Committee to order on October 25, 2010. With motion from Mr. Meyers and a second by Mr. Wade and Mr. Webb, the minutes from the September meeting were approved as written. A quorum of members was present. The agenda was approved on a motion from Mr. Webb and seconded by Mr. Wade.

The committee opened the meeting to anyone wishing to express concerns during the public comment period. A6 patient M.S. discussed the WSH Citizens Council group and its mission to advocate for the concerns of patients at WSH. M.S., who is co-facilitator of the Citizens Council, reported that another mission of the group is to invite various staff members at WSH to attend meetings where their concerns are also heard. During one such meeting Mr. Jim Stevens met with the group regarding bathroom issues, M.S. reported that the group was very pleased with the outcome of this meeting. M.S. thanked Mr. Collins for his presentation to Citizens Council on the 7 Principals of Self Advocacy.

Mr. Collins gave a verbal Advocate's Report commenting on the 7 cases being worked on over the past month, these cases are in addition to the complaints received by Ms. Jody Fravel. Mr. Collins asked that the record reflect the outstanding job that Ms. Fravel does on compiling the monthly patient complaints into a concise report. Mr. Collins went on to reporting having met with Dr. Mary Clare Smith, Medical Director at WSH, to learn more about ward transfers. This meeting was very informative for Mr. Collins as he learned that there is a transfer committee at WSH that reviews and attempts to accommodate a patient or treatment team's request for a patient to be transferred to another ward.

The committee asked that Ms. Harrison report on the recent Joint Commission (TJC) visit to WSH. Ms. Harrison explained that TJC has the ability to accredit hospitals and other agencies and in doing so they look for best practices in patient care. WSH is TCJ accredited and is surveyed every three years. As part of these surveys every part of the WSH system of care is examined. WSH had an announced Periodic Performance Review survey last week. While the surveyor asked minor corrections / changes be implemented, the results of this survey were very positive. The surveyor was very impressed with treatment planning at WSH in that each plan is very individualized and personal. Human Rights are not a specific item on TJC list; however, patient complaint reports and trends are documented during Quality Patient Safety Council meetings and minutes from those meetings are thoroughly examined by TJC. Facilities must be TJC accredited in order to bill Medicare/Medicaid; additionally TCJ standards are important in order to uphold an expected level excellence in patient care. If deficiencies are found by TJC an unannounced survey will take place to ensure corrections to deficiencies are made.

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Mr. Mark Stevens, Advocate, joined Ms. Haw to represent VOPA. Ms. Haw announced that October 1st, 2010 was the beginning of the new federal fiscal year for VOPA. A handout with new goals and objectives for the New Year was distributed to the committee. Ms. Haw explained that VOPA handles the cases of anyone in Virginia with a disability that is having issues with their rights; this includes special education and support services.

Ms. Harrison addressed several previous issues that were presented by the committee. The first issue was how patients at WSH gain access to Primary Care services. Ms. Harrison reported that upon admission patients are given a physical evaluation which is reviewed by the Primary Care department the next day. Dr. Gwen Lee is the Primary Care director at WSH; in addition several other Primary Care doctors are on staff at WSH. Should an individual need Primary Care once assigned to a ward there are several predictable ways to address their needs. Should immediate assistance be required, a phone call is made to the Primary Care office and the patient is assessed immediately. Less urgent requests are written on a list and addressed within that day by a Primary Care doctor. Mr. Meyers asked that Ms. Harrison report to the committee whether there a trend of increased need for Primary Care as forensic population/admissions have increased. The second issue was how afternoon snacks are handled on ward A2. Ms. Harrison met with Director of Nutrition Services, Mr. Bob Booth and found that B2 receives an afternoon snack due to the population being only male and coming from the jails. These individuals are usually undernourished and require a higher daily calorie intake. Mr. Collins asked that Ms. Harrison report to the committee on what happens to extra food (\$5.50 is spent per patient per day) if the census is low? Lastly, Ms. Harrison responded to the question about locks in patient areas and rooms. Ms. Harrison emailed the Head of Treatment Team for each ward and found that the policy on locks is very individualized.

Monthly reports for Patient Complaints, Barriers to Discharge, and IFPC Minutes were all reviewed. It was noted that there are two variations of the same complaint on the complaints list. Mr. Meyers asked that Mr. Collins check into complaint numbers 164, 165 and 182 in order to determine how they are related. Ms. Gum asked that Ms. Harrison request the CSB of origin be included on the Barriers to Discharge list.

Under Community Connections, Ms. Gum announced that the Mental Health of America Annual Dinner and Auction is coming up on November 20, 2010. Invitations have been sent out and anyone wishing to attend must RSVP and pay \$25.00. This dinner and silent auction serve as a fundraiser for Mental Health of America and will include an awards ceremony and guest speaker, a Recreation Therapist from Crossroads Hospital. The "Reducing Stigma" video will also be shown. Mental Health of America is also working with students from the JMU Communication program to present a Mental Health symposium including a viewing of "The Soloist" at the Visualite Theater, Dr. Michael Hoffman will also speak after the event.

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The next meeting will be held November 29, 2010 at 12:30 p.m. Mr. Jim Stevens (rescheduled) and Dr. Barber will be guests during this meeting.

With no further business to discuss and from a motion made by Mr. Meyers and second by Mr. Wade, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED:

Donna Gum, Chair

Elizabeth T. Little, LHRC Secretary