

Western State Hospital
Staunton, Virginia
Local Human Rights Committee Meeting Minutes
Jeffrey's Building, Rom 95 at 12:30
February 28, 2011

Present: Donna Gum, Hal Meyers, Mark Schorsch, Rob Wade, Ski Washington, Mahlon Webb, Committee Members; Chuck Collins, WSH/Regional Advocate; Mark Seymour, WSH Advocate; Erin Haw, VOPA; Ellen Harrison Liaison to WSH Director

Absent: Zachary DeVore, VOPA

Ms. Gum, Committee Chair, called the meeting of the Local Human Rights Committee to order on February 28, 2011. With a motion from Mr. Meyers and a second by Mr. Washington, the minutes from the January meeting were approved as written. A quorum of members was present. The agenda was approved on a motion from Mr. Meyers and seconded by Mr. Webb.

The committee opened the meeting to anyone wishing to express concerns during the public comment period. Mr. Collins acknowledged Mr. Wade for his letter to Delegate Landes. Mr. Wade's letter was written in order to protest the closing of Training Centers across Virginia.

Mr. Collins discussed a case being handled by his office in which a patient asking for a second opinion was referred to Dr. Brasfield. Mr. Seymour discussed a complex case being handled by his office related to the NGRI process. The case was eventually referred to VOPA.

Dana Fitzgerald attended the meeting to discuss the tobacco waiver that was granted by the Commissioner to New Hope Detox in January 2011. Ms. Fitzgerald explained the process that took place for New Hope Detox to gain the waiver and also the procedures that clients must now follow for using tobacco. Procedures include: belongings being searched upon admission, tobacco being locked up, tobacco use only in secluded secured area behind New Hope Detox building, one tobacco product given per scheduled break and continued tobacco cessation education. Ms Fitzgerald explained to the committee that the waiver was granted based on a significant decrease in the utilization rate of New Hope Detox; specifically dropping from an average of 70% to only 30% for completion of the program. The primary reason given by clients was the ban on all tobacco products. Ms. Haw from VOPA reported that she has not received any complaints from Western State Hospital clients on this matter. In addition, patients of Western State Hospital continue to receive tobacco education and assistance with cessation (medication, gum, patches). Members of the Committee discussed how this variance to the State tobacco policy relates to patient rights. It was determined that there is no specific patient right being violated with relation to the smoking ban at this time. The Committee voted to table this issue for further discussion until the March meeting.

Upon a motion made by Hal Meyers, the committee went into executive session pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3711 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 ECT treatments on patient E.B.

With a motion from Hal Meyers, the committee reconvened into open session. Upon reconvening in open session, all members of the Local Human Rights Committee certified that to the best of each ones' knowledge, only public business matters identified in the motion to convene the closed session were discussed in closed session.

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With a motion from Mr. Meyers and a second from Mr. Wade the ECT documentation presented by Dr. Walling on E.B. was noted as complete.

Ms. Mary Baxter, RN and a patient from A6 presented A6 Ward Rules. Ms. Baxter reported that A6 has been in operation for about a year in its new staffing structure. Motivation rewards have been discontinued on the ward . (Note: this was not due to budget constraints of any kind). Cabinet time was also removed as clients may now access cabinet items freely. The Committee commended Ms. Baxter and patient on the excellent answers provided to the Committee's questions. An example of the written response for standard LHRC questions will be sent to other wards as an example to use for their own purposes. With a motion from Mr. Meyers and a second from Mr. Wade the A6 ward rules were approved.

The Patient Complaints List, Barriers to Discharge List, and the IFPC minutes were all reviewed with no questions. It was reported that the curtain rod issue (Opie) is being followed up on and a different system for shower curtains is being considered.

Mr. Collins discussed the SHRC Implementation Memo and explained that new bylaws should be adopted by June 30, 2011. Three draft bylaws were discussed as having potential problems. The Committee will table this discussion for the March meeting.

Under Community Connections, Ms. Gum announced that a pizza fundraiser for Mental Health of America will be held on March 31st at CiCi's Pizza at 5pm. The Mental Health of America golf tournament will be held in May and NAMI is having a special dinner with guest speaker on May 16th. Ms. Gum also announced the Consumer Art Show which will take place at the Staunton Public Library and that the LHRC will be recognized at the Volunteer Services Council Meeting on April 28th.

Agenda requests for future meetings include: March, Dr. Brasfield, April, Dr. Waldrop, May FOIA Training (Mr. Collins), June, Patti Michaels, July, Admissions (Cindy Caldwell), August, Discharge (Donna Baldwin), and September, Jeff Phillips (Recovery CME DVD). Ms. Kathy Belcher will also be interviewed and asked to join the LHRC at the March meeting.

The next meeting will be held March 28, 2011 at 12:30 p.m. With no further business to discuss and from a motion made by Mr. Wade and second by Mr. Webb, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED:

Donna Gum, Chair

Elizabeth T. Little, LHRC Secretary

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