

Western State Hospital
Staunton, Virginia
Local Human Rights Committee Meeting Minutes
Staff Development Offices, Room A1085 at 12:30
March 28, 2016

- Present:** Heidi Campbell, Committee Chair, Secretary, John Beghtol, Teri Sumey and Cheryl Talley, committee members; Erin Haw, dLCV Advocate; Shannon Conner and Tammy Long, OHR Advocates; Becky Shaw, Liaison to WSH Director; Glenda Sheffer, WSH Administrative Support
- Absent:** Kathy Belcher, Vice Chair; Karen Cochran, Ski Washington, committee members
- Guests:** Dr. Jason Stout, 1 Pine; Dr. Mike Shutty, 1 Oak; Ms. AM, a patient from 1 Pine

The Local Human Rights Committee was called to order on March 28, 2016, by Ms. Campbell, Committee Chair. A quorum of members was present. The minutes from the December 7, 2016 meeting were reviewed and approved with a motion by Ms. Sumey, second by Ms. Talley, and a vote of the committee. Ms. Sumi made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Ms. Talley seconded the motion, and the committee approved the agenda by vote.

Ms. Sheffer introduced Ms. Shannon Conner, the new advocate representing the Office of Human Rights (OHR). Ms. Conner worked at Western State Hospital for 15 years before accepting the position of Human Rights Advocate for WSH and Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents. She began her tenure at WSH as an LPN and most recently was an analyst for the Quality and Risk Management Departments. Ms. Tammy Long, also with OHR, accompanied Ms. Conner to the meeting. The committee members welcomed Ms. Conner and expressed their pleasure at having a readily accessible advocate for the patients.

During the Public Comment time Ms. AM, a patient on unit 1 Pine, addressed the committee with concerns about the treatment of patients with a diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). She believes there are established guidelines for staff outlining how to interact with patients who have BPD. Ms. M feels that patients with BPD are shunned by staff with comments such as, "She'll get you fired or in trouble." She indicated that she was aware of an email sent to unit staff regarding boundaries, especially for BPD patients. These patients do not receive the same level of support and care as other patients. Recently, a staff member was terminated as a result of behaviors and actions toward Ms. M. She feels that neither she nor the staff member behaved inappropriately toward each other. She knew the reason for the termination because she overheard several staff members discussing why their former co-worker was terminated.

Ms. M is asking for the LHRC to intervene to improve the way BPD patients are treated. She believes the use of guidelines against BPDs needs to be discontinued. Ms. Campbell asked Ms. Sheffer to invite the 1 Pine Treatment Team to the April meeting to discuss Ms. M's concerns.

The committee discussed Community Connections. May is Mental Health Month. An art show is being presented by Western State, NAMI and MHAA. It will be held at the art center in downtown Staunton beginning on May 6th. They are accepting submissions from current or former mental health consumers until April 1st.

Also during May, the MHAA is working with the Suicide Prevention Lifeline to put up billboards in Augusta County. NAMI is sponsoring a Walk for Mental Health beginning April 2nd. A supporter and his dog will walk 107 miles to raise money for scholarships for clients. The annual suicide walk will be held in October.

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Dr. Jason Stout shared information regarding a newly formed committee at WSH; the Uniformity Committee. This committee is reviewing hospital practices and rules that vary between units. Any specific items will be managed via individual treatment plans, with the exception of Dogwood, who has specific needs and requirements due to medically frail patients, as well as differences due to short term (upstairs) or long term (downstairs) patients. Uniformity in Unit Rules will help patients who transfer from one unit to another, will provide “float” nurses and PNAs with one set of rules to remember as opposed to nine, and will hopefully save time in that each unit will not need to update their rules once a year. Dr. Stout asked the committee whether the unit rules could be presented to them once a year for all units to further save time for the Treatment Teams. The committee members discussed this proposal and determined that presentations from individual units would not be necessary and that the uniform/combined rules be presented for the entire hospital once a year.

Dr. Mike Shetty presented the Unit Rules for 1 Oak PCU. There have been no changes made since the committee approved the rules last year. The committee approved the Unit Rules as written with a motion from Ms. Talley, a second by Ms. Sumi and a vote of the committee.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Campbell, the committee entered closed session pursuant to Virginia Code §2.2-3711, a.15 and §2.2-37.05.5 for the purpose of discussion of medical record / treatment plans.

Dr. Mike Shetty presented the treatment plan for Ms. MB. Changes were made to the plan that negate the need for the LHRC to review and approve it.

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 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.

For the Advocate’s Report it was noted that Virginia Regulatory Town Hall meetings will be conducted to gather information regarding the proposed changes in the Human Rights Regulations.

The February Patient Complaints Report and the Extraordinary Barriers List were reviewed. The committee would like to know when a decision is made regarding personal hygiene products and how this was resolved. Complaints numbered 731 and 733 do not have clear responses or resolutions noted. This was due to the complaints being resolved at the Treatment Team level. The committee questioned why these complaints are in the CHRIS if they were not elevated to the Director’s level. Ms. Sheffer will seek information on these two cases.

The next meeting will be held April 25, 2016, at 9:00 a.m. in Room B1031 of the Webb Learning Center. Committee members will gather in the lobby to be escorted to the meeting room.

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

APPROVED:

Heidi Campbell
Chair

Glenda D. Sheffer
WSH Administrative Support