

Western State Hospital
Staunton, Virginia
Local Human Rights Committee Meeting Minutes
Jeffrey's Building, Room 95 at 12:30
August 25, 2014

Present: Rob Wade, Committee Chair, Heidi Campbell, Vice Chair, Kathy Belcher, Karen Cochran, Mary Stern, Mahlon Webb, committee members; Chuck Collins, WSH/Regional Advocate; Mark Seymour, WSH Advocate; Erin Haw, dLCV Advocate; Becky Shaw, Liaison to WSH Director

Absent: Mark Schorsch, committee member

Guests: Ms. Shari Wasserman and Mr. MJ, a patient from 1 Pine, representing the Citizens' Council

Mr. Wade, Committee Chair, called the Local Human Rights Committee to order on August 25, 2014. The minutes from the July 28th meeting were approved as written with a motion by Mr. Webb, a second by Ms. Cochran and a vote of the committee. Mr. Wade noted that a quorum of members was present. The agenda was approved with changes with a motion from Ms. Belcher, a second by Mr. Webb and a vote of the committee.

Ms. Wasserman and Mr. MJ indicated they had several items they wished to discuss on behalf of the Citizens' Council. The initial concern is that patients feel the new hospital doesn't have as much space as the old facility. The question of Levels and access outside of the building was also of concern to patients. Mr. MJ stated that the specific concern was that patients who have the level to go to Walmart and clubhouse should be able to go on the front grounds of the hospital to walk or relax.

The patients are also very concerned about the shower problems. Two patients have fallen and injured themselves. They inquired about the possibility of placing slip-tape on the shower floors. There are patients who are afraid to use the showers because of the fear of injuring themselves. Hospital leadership is working with the contractor to find a solution. Becky will obtain information about the repairs to showers and report to the Citizen's Council. Ms. Belcher recommended advising patients on a regular basis regarding the status of these repairs.

Two final areas of concern for the Citizens' Council are regarding the availability of recycling bins for plastic and aluminum. They are able to purchase bottled and canned drinks in the Commons and would like the ability to recycle the containers. The dollar bill slot on the vending machines is frequently broken. They would like hospital leadership to consider a bill changer in the Commons to provide better service and accessibility to vending products.

Ms. Shaw will take these issues and ideas to Dr. Mary Clare Smith, Acting WSH Director, for consideration and directing to the appropriate individual or committee for potential action.

Mr. Wade queried the committee to determine whether anyone had any Community Connections to share. There were no comments.

The 1 Hickory Unit rules were presented by Dr. LeeAnn Bass and Mary Baxter, RN who indicated that they met twice with patients on 1 Hickory to obtain feedback on the unit rules, which was incorporated into the submitted rules. One specific change is to the cabinet / free time

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on the unit. Following questions regarding the decision to change the cabinet / free time, Dr. Bass indicated she will rewrite this statement to clarify the decision to make the change.

Mr. Wade asked Dr. Bass to elaborate on the self-assessment form. She responded that this is a form utilized to allow the patient to answer questions and provide comments relating to how they are doing and what they see in the next 90 days. Patients may complete the form on their own or with the assistance of their Recovery Coach. The Recovery Coach also makes comments on the form.

Mr. Wade requested a copy of the form be provided to the LHRC for their edification. Dr. Bass will forward the form to Glenda electronically.

Ms. Belcher made a motion to approve the 1 Hickory Unit Rules with the recommended changes. Ms. Cochran seconded the motion and the committee approved by vote.

The Treatment Team from 2 Elm presented their unit rules to the LHRC. Ms. Stern asked the team about patients' communications with their legal representatives. The representative may contact a patient via the courtesy phone on the unit. The Treatment Team; however, advises the legal representative of changes in the patient's status, such as returning to jail or when there are special needs for upcoming hearings. With a motion from Mr. Webb a second from Ms. Cochran and a vote of the committee, the 2 Elm unit rules were approved.

Ms. Cochran and Ms. Stern, the newest members to LHRC, have requested a tour of the hospital. Ms. Shaw will arrange for a tour of the new WSH for Ms. Cochran and Ms. Stern.

In the Advocates' Report, Mr. Collins commented that Commissioner Ferguson has been busy since she took office: A new website has been developed for the agency and staff have received excellent communications from her. One such communication was regarding possible budget cuts; however, it is unclear at this time how DBHDS will be affected by the cuts.

A draft of the revised Human Rights Regulations is posted on the agency's website. It appears there will be some changes to the complaint process and the hearing process.

Mr. Collins shared his appreciation for the staff who take time to listen to patients. They do an excellent job of hearing the patients' concerns and complaints.

Mr. Seymour commented on how much easier it seems for advocates and patients to find members of treatment teams since the move to the new facility.

Ms. Erin Haw, Advocate with the disAbility Law Center of Virginia (dLCV), shared the type of work dLCV will be doing for people with disabilities. She indicated she will present the organization's annual goals at the September or October meeting.

Regarding the Complaint Report, it was noted that the report was very well compiled, and that there were no concerns with the complaints.

Patients appearing on the Extraordinary Barriers List include several NGRI patients. It was noted that there are a number of cases from Rappahannock Region. DAP funding is now being managed from Richmond, and CSBs have indicated this makes it more difficult to get funds.

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The Internal Forensic Privilege Committee (IFPC) minutes and the Clinical Risk Management Committee (CRMC) minutes were reviewed. No comments were made.

The next meeting will be held September 22nd, 2014, at 12:30 p.m. in Room A1085 of the Staff Development Offices.

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

APPROVED:

Rob Wade
Chair

Glenda D. Sheffer
WSH Administrative Assistant to LHRC