

**HPR I REACH Advisory Council**  
**Minutes**  
**April 24, 2014**  
**9:30 – 11:30 am**  
**Valley CSB**  
**85 Sangers Lane; Staunton, VA 24401**

Meeting was called to order by Gail Paysour. There were 17 attendees including: Bob Villa (DBHDS); Martha Maltais (RTCSB); Nancy Hopkins-Garriss (Pleasant View/VNPP); John Malone (HRCSB); Krista Lynch (VCSB); Lonnie O’Baugh (VCSB); Sheri Sobkowiak (RRCS); Robert Hurt (Arc); John Santoski (ARC of the Piedmont); Robert Tucker (Valley CSB); Gail Paysour (HPR I); James Vann (START/ESUCP); John Snyder (REACH/ ESUCP); Erin Haw (disAbility Law Center of VA); Gayl Brunk (VAIL); Dewayne Yopp (RACSB)

Following welcome and introductions, James Vann presented March utilization data pointing out that utilization data for the therapeutic house was low due to a two-week closure for the driveway expansion project. Provision of in-home crisis stabilization service was up to compensate for the house being closed. Mr. Vann introduced John Snyder, new Director of the Crisis Therapeutic Home for the region. John is an LPC with extensive experience in crisis stabilization services. Mr. Vann discussed recent efforts to improve the admission process for providers and guests. A Welcome Letter has been developed that will be distributed to guests and providers prior to admission to lay out the house rules, what to expect and what to bring and not bring upon admission. The hope is to pare down the time it takes to have a guest admitted to one hour. Members provided feedback re: admission experiences. Ms. Paysour will forward a copy of the new Welcome letter along with a recent article shared by Dr. Beasley titled “10 Ways to Support Individuals with Challenging Behaviors” by David Pitonyak to council members.

Bob Villa of DBHDS discussed the draft of REACH Policies and Procedures now being developed. It is hoped this will be finalized in May. All five regional programs are collaborating to develop these policies and create a statewide standard for REACH service delivery. This process was needed as a result of the change from START to REACH. Regions will be expected to adhere to REACH policies but are free to implement the program to meet regional needs. Members affirmed the HPR I decision to continue with the START model. There were questions re: the ability of regional program to share and transfer referrals with one another. Current HIPPA regulations complicate this process. It was suggested that the 5 regional program lead agencies and ESUCP explore developing business associate agreements as a means to allow sharing of information. Bob Villa agreed to explore this option. Currently, in order to share client information between regions, a signed release must be obtained from the individual or legal guardian prior to sharing information.

Another issue for discussion in the new REACH guidelines is the question of client length of stay in REACH services and when to discharge. It has become evident that the high demand for services and subsequent high case loads are not sustainable unless there is clear criteria established for discharge.

Lonnie O’Baugh expressed concern over the large gap in the continuum of crisis care for individuals with ID/DD when a bed is needed immediately. Of primary concern is the pending closure of the training centers and lag in development of community resources. DBHDS is aware of and exploring options for this need on a statewide basis.

John Santoski noted the need for further information re: the definition of crisis and clarity regarding whether to call REACH, ES or law enforcement. Bob Villa referenced the January version of the “My Life, My Community” guidance document distributed to all council members. Bob Tucker noted that ES is always the default in a crisis unless imminent harm or danger is a factor. In this case 911 should

always be called and a CIT trained officer requested to respond. It was suggested that someone from the CIT program be invited to attend the council meetings.

The Independent Reviewer for the DOJ will be back in May. Primary inquiries from DOJ currently revolve around the change from START to REACH, REACH collaborations with ES and local law enforcement including CIT. There was discussion regarding the need for REACH to enhance collaboration and communication with all regional CIT programs. James Vann reported that his team is currently working closely with the CIT trainers in Fredericksburg. Members emphasized the need to build relationships throughout the region and provided Mr. Vann with contact information for CIT trainers in other parts of the region.

Martha Maltais asked question regarding whether our REACH team has enough staff and resource to meet the demand for services, and, if not, whether there would be a means of requesting additional resourced from DBHDS. Bob Villa noted that Medicaid billing is one way to bring in additional resources. At this time, since there is no state budget for the coming FY, it remains to be seen what the level of funding will be but programs should plan to continue with the same amount as the current FY.

Ms. Paysour reviewed the February minutes which were accepted. The April Project Managers report was presented along with an update re: development of Crisis Services for children with ID/DD. The regional proposal was accepted and \$263,000 was awarded to Region Ten. Barb Shue will be contracting with Region Ten to assist the region in a needs survey and recommendations for developing these services. This will be completed by the end of June. The region will hire a full time person for the regional office to coordinate these services. Additionally, one additional REACH coordinator will be hired and trained to exclusively respond to children in crisis.

Council members have volunteered to serve on the workgroups identified at the October meeting. Ms. Paysour will contact these individuals and assist the workgroups to identify a time to begin meeting.

A plan for regional provider training was presented and discussed. This plan will be submitted to DBHDS for approval.

Council agreed to continue meeting quarterly at Region Ten in the coming FY.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

**Next START Advisory Council Meeting will be at Region Ten CSB on July 24, 2014, at 10 am.**