

## EASTHAM HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### FINAL MINUTES

#### MEETING #6

12 January 2022

ATTENDEES: Kate Berg (Chair); Felice Coral; Stella Edmondson, Bev Hobbs, Hilda Merolli, Dilys Smith

A Zoom connection was established. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

Draft minutes from the meeting of 15 December 2021 were reviewed and accepted.

Kate commented that OCHS will be represented by 3 people this evening.

Felice had circulated an article from the Independent via email regarding Eastham town budget concerns and the probable need for an override this year. EHSAC budget for the current funding period is available as planned, but future budgets may be affected by the upcoming discussion and vote.

**OCHS: Gerry Desautels (Development & Communication), Kathleen Weiner (Development & Communication), Brie Smith (Navigator Program)**

#### General

- Provided Covid test kits to Eastham, and to other community health departments (10) free of charge. OCHS plans to continue this program depending upon kit availability.
- Updating phone system to increase access
- Staffing issues at OCHS have presented challenges, but services have been maintained.
- The current electronic health record system is to be updated and synchronized with the EPICS/My Chart system employed by Cape Cod Health Care.
- Integration of behavioral health records with other medical records may be possible, with special concern for confidentiality.

#### Nauset Regional High School Navigator Program (Brie Smith)

Students and their parents will be able to access resources with assistance from a full-time Navigator assigned to NRHS. Services may include the following:

- Telehealth appointments and behavioral health appointments
- Dedicated office space offers privacy and continuity for the navigator and clients

- The navigator can help define needs at NRHS for other programs, along with other community services.
- The navigator can serve as a resource for fire and police personnel to refer students/families in need of services.
- Navigator program interacts with public safety/Bay Cove (mental health services) personnel for initial assessments, crisis management, and follow-up of behavioral health and substance abuse issues, and of needs of the elderly population. Home visits are critical in addition to office visits, phone calls, and telehealth visits. Funding allows flexibility to offer these services.
- Leo Blandford discussed expanded community interaction, and described the collaboration with the Outer Cape Community Solutions Group to identify service gaps, and collaborations with Councils on Aging, schools, LCOC, to address broad issues locally, and regionally. Workforce development is ongoing with students doing rotations (nursing, social work, et al), promoting practical experiences with integration into the medical system. Social work interns have 7-month clinical experiences in behavioral health and recovery programs. Medical students, recovery coaches, and other community health workers also participate in these experiences.
- Recovery services are based in the Wellfleet facility. Gosnold had provided services locally, but local offices have been closed, with Centerville the closest Gosnold facility. OCHS has obtained licensure for all 3 locations for substance/recovery services. The Intensive Outpatient Treatment Program (based in Wellfleet). A new location in the Callis Building (Route 6, Wellfleet Center) is planned.
- Telehealth services from OCHS also provide phones/technology connections/assistance to support remote services to those in need.
- A new grant has begun that supports 2 new navigators offering services to the immigrant population.
- Gerry stated that OCHS is an example of a true community health center as compared to a standard doctor's office.
- Kate commented that such centers help people where they are, and maximize benefits with follow-up services.
- Although OCHS is a Federally-qualified health center, it must re-apply annually for funding, and there are restrictions on certain types of local funding (e.g., fees collected by towns from cannabis businesses cannot be applied to health center funding).
- OCHS carries debt on buildings/construction, and is eligible for federal funds for COVID reimbursement. However, this has been offset by other expenses and

less revenue, resulting in staff lay-offs. Continued health coverage for laid-off staff has been possible due to generous donors.

- Kate: The Town supports ongoing Navigator funding through its regular budget. Supplemental funding will probably remain level for this budget period.

#### Hadley Luddy - HPC

- 2021: There was a 40% increase in the number of people served,-reflecting the local economy, with no year-round rentals available.
- This trend is now affecting moderate-income people, who are being connected to services, but some are not eligible.
- Housing development planning is in its early stages, but new housing will not be available for several years.
- Use of the T-Time property in Eastham is still undefined, as is the development of the Governor Prence Motel property in Orleans.
- Advocacy: HPC supports and initiates connections between housing efforts and businesses; education, and collaborates with CDP to facilitate understanding of housing needs.
- HPC has hired more case managers (now totaling 6),and there is now sufficient funding to avoid furloughing staff in summer.
- Interns from 4Cs, in a student placement from its Human Services program, have been a welcome addition to the HPC staff, and benefit from mentoring, career development, etc. They have had a positive impact on HPC staff.
- Back-to School programs also allow for full assessment of family needs and potential to offer other supportive services (eg, fuel assistance).
- Eastham has recognized the value of services provided to its residents by HPC.

**General Discussion:** This year, we can plan for level funding of agencies. Kate will prepare a spreadsheet to use as a basis for discussion of funding issues.

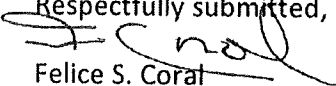
#### Upcoming Meetings

**1/19/22:** Independence House, Capabilities

**1/26/22:** Funding distribution discussion

The meeting was adjourned 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Felice S. Coral