

**REGIONAL HUMAN SERVICES AND JUSTICE
COORDINATING COMMITTEE
August 10, 2020 12:00pm-12:30pm
Zoom Meeting – Per Meeting Request**

ATTENDEES: Satar Wahidi, Cindy, Trevor Tymchuk, Tom Archer, Veronica Pepper, Kelly Falconer, Sherry Lewis (recorder)

ABSENT: Tyson Benn, Jacqueline Strecansky, Jaime Corneil, Christy Marshall, Dana Vladescu, Kelly Cimek, Laura Walsh, Linda Hunter, Sheri Yake, Gwen Piller; Keri Zammit, Liane Taylor, Shawn Blaj

- **WELCOME**

- Satar welcomed everyone and went around the “table” so everyone could introduce themselves
- Tyson unable to join

- **ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS**

- Clear masks – Tom sent out, to the membership, the following links to sites that sell clear masks:
 - Amazon –
https://www.amazon.ca/gp/product/B08BF8TGV2/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o05_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1
 - Mingle Mask –
<https://theminglemask.com/>

- **REVIEW OF MINUTES**

- **Approval Minutes**
Deferred to next meeting

- **UPDATES:**

- **Update from Provincial HSJCC**
 - Having more frequent but shorter meetings – monthly now
 - Meetings have resulted in 5 letters to the various provincial ministries
 - Letters are available on the HSJCC website
 - Individuals are **unable** to phone workers from inside correctional facilities because workers are working from home
 - Sudden change to insurance coverage

- Insurance companies gave 2 weeks' notice that pandemic coverage was being removed from the policies of a lot of mental health & other human service agencies, who had been covered for pandemics
- A lot of agencies had to shut down several weeks ago because they suddenly had no coverage
- Guilted by the provincial government, some insurance companies somewhat lengthened their timelines
- There are alternatives to traditional insurance companies and their lack of pandemic coverage
 - For example, a co-op type agency has been set up by developmental and human service agencies in Ontario to provide a mutual kind of insurance coverage
- Mobile crisis teams – sometimes using their personal cars or renting cars – cost has gone up but budget hasn't
- Next meeting is the second Tuesday in September – please let Trevor know if you have anything you want him to have addressed
- Secretariat not returning to their own offices (at CMHA) until September or later – depending on personal comfort level

• LOCAL UPDATES

a) Haldimand/Norfolk/Brant

- Offices opened back up to staff the first week of June
 - Staff coming in for a couple of days a week and then continued to work from home on the other days
 - After about 2 weeks started to see urgent priority clients by appointment
 - Continuing this way for now
- Still closed to the public – outside doors are still locked
- Going out into the community to see those clients that didn't have a phone or really deteriorated during the time we weren't able to connect with them
- Not planning any further changes
 - Decline in referrals from the Court programs – likely because we're not in Court where we would be running into people and getting referrals from them

b) Bethesda

- Connected to Residential Programs
- Some of their offices are co-housed with residential program for people who are vulnerable to COVID
 - Haven't done face to face interactions since the middle of March
 - Dual Diagnosis justice case managers are getting a good volume of referrals

- Some clients they've known in the past were easy to reconnect with
- Some new clients are being identified
- Challenge – how we're going to work in the future, ensuring staff and clients stay safe
- All clinical staff working remotely
 - Exceptions have been made where they felt a face to face would be more helpful but there are 3 levels of approval and criteria to meet before a face to face can be scheduled

c) **Niagara**

- In phase 3 now – things have loosened up but still keeping everyone safe
 - Safebeds
 - People can leave & come back but to get back in, they have to pass the screening
 - Everyone is wearing masks and physically distancing
 - Doing screenings twice a day
 - At half capacity, rather than full
 - Has affected justice safe beds because we don't have enough beds to allow us to set aside beds for our police
 - Had 7 community beds and 4 justice beds but now only 6 beds – 3 on the male side and 3 on the female side to allow for physical distancing
 - Police can still make referrals but there's not always a bed open for them just like any other referrals
 - If there's a bed available, they can have it
 - Hoping that over time they will be able to fit in a few more people, while maintaining ability to be socially distant
- MCRRT was shut down for a while because they couldn't have two people in a car
 - To get them back out there, they rented a car to keep the officer and the mental health worker separate
 - The numbers are getting back to normal
 - Getting a lot of pressure to expand MCRRT because of the political environment right now
 - On a regular basis, TV & Radio have been asking MCRRT to do things - getting lots of exposure right now
- Coast is running as usual
 - Outreach – officers redeployed until September
 - Until then, doing outreach with 2 MHWs on an as needed basis
- Walk-in crisis reopened last week by appointment only
 - Only seeing people who must be seen in person for various reasons – can't do phone or OTN

- Housing services kept going throughout all of this
 - Had a transitional housing program – had to redeploy staff to prevent outbreaks – had to keep it staffed 24/7
- Case management providing service to the highest need individuals in their case load
 - If clients can stay safe, they do it over the phone
 - If not, they're seeing people in the community
 - Everyone is wearing masks and physical distancing and doing all the things they need to do to stay safe
 - Trying to minimize number of people in their building
 - Those who can work from home are
 - Those who can are seeing people in the community

d) ABI

- Were shut down at the beginning of the pandemic
- Early days – no internal or external admission and transfers
- Agencies can now decide if they want to admit or transfer someone
- Staff are returning to offices now but number of staff in the office is limited
- Outreach – continued providing virtual outreach to everyone
 - Now starting to see prioritized clients for “porch visits” outside
- While only able to provide outreach virtually, lost track of a lot of marginalized clients
 - Having difficulty finding their clients to find out how things are going
 - Crisis Line – numbers have tripled
 - A lot of individuals couldn't be helped through virtual outreach due to cognitive issues
 - Outreach was able to virtually contact some of the caregivers who were suffering from burnout and needed support
- Inpatient ABI rehab programs are back to admitting since the hospitals have started admitting again
- Referrals were always accepted but intake had stopped
 - They're now doing virtual intake
- Going back into the hospitals, as well as making a few community visits outside
- Got calls from individuals being released from custody with known ABI issues – getting caught up on those as well

e) Hamilton

- Have been able to move along quickly because we have a low number of new cases of COVID
- MCRRT never came off the road
- Coast was off the road for a while but is now fully functioning

- At first everything was quiet – but has been picking up in the last 6 to 7 weeks
- Our safe-beds are also not as available but hotels are helping to pick up the slack
- Things are pretty much back to normal
- Trying to set up face to face meetings when needed

6. Further Discussion

- Court issues – struggling with trying to connect with people because of not being allowed in the courthouse
 - Not able to go into the courts or the detention centres, so not running into the people who usually make the connections & referrals
 - Not able to connect with people being released from custody
 - Continuing to get the bail list but can't identify mental health concerns
 - information was easier to get when going into the courts and bumping into people who could tell you more
 - Get calls from the police station – sometimes can connect with them at the police station if they're being kept overnight
 - When they first go into the detention centre, they have to be isolated for the first 14 days, so if they don't connect with them at the police station before they go to the detention centre, they can't connect with them until they're no longer isolated
 - Maybe Trevor could take this to the provincial meeting
 - When court reopens, planning to do a lot of it virtually, which means we'll continue to have these issues unless we can find a solution
 - Andrew – Do we want to react to plans made or do we want to try to work with the decision makers and ask how we can help or do we let them know what we think is a good plan?
 - Trevor – if the committee wants to put together a paragraph, he can informally get it to the provincial committee before the September meetings
 - All agree that it's a good idea for everyone involved in the courts to meet to discuss what should be in that paragraph
 - Is it a provincial group or more of our local regions that need to address this – probably both
 - Largest courtrooms could only include 25-30 people – no room for service providers at the early stages
 - Ministry makes the determination and we follow suit
 - A lot of political issues around justice and mental health
 - Province is addressing the issues being brought to them

- **NEXT MEETING**

- **November 16, 2020 – 12-2pm**

Either located at:

Hamilton Police Service, 400 Rymal Rd E, Hamilton

Lincoln Alexander Room

AND/OR

Zoom