

Torrance Area Planning Meeting Minutes  
February 28, 2008  
9am – 12:30pm

**Present at meeting:** Joyce Ainsworth, Sherry Anderson, Laurie Barnett-Levine, Pat Brady, Barb Bruner, Joe Bujdos, Lori Cramer, Mary Jo Dickson, Lynette Emerick, Mary Fleming, Mary Helm, Marcia Hepner, John Herrmann, Carol Horowitz, Matt Koren, Pete Kosanovich, Jim Kuemmerle, Bobbi Lawrence, Edna McCutcheon, Chris Michaels, David Miele, Kim Patterson, Brandi Phillips, Joni Putt, Tracy Selak, Marlinda Smith, Jessica Strong, Nancy Svonavec, Char Troutman, Lucille Underwood, Valerie Vicari, Kathy Wohlgemuth, Kathy Yarzebinski

1. **Review/Acceptance of the January 24, 2008 Minutes:** The minutes from the January 24, 2008 meeting were accepted without changes. They will be posted to the website.
  
2. **Project Transition:** Kim Patterson presented an overview of Project Transition, a unique “therapeutic village” that currently operates in southeastern Pennsylvania. The program houses consumers in suburban apartment complexes and provides them with a wide range of services, including individual and group therapy sessions, 24/7 crisis support, psych rehab, medication management, and others. Two or three consumers live in each apartment, which helps them build social networks and not remain isolated during their recovery. The program accepts consumers with traditional diagnoses (for example, schizophrenia, bipolar, OCD, etc), borderline personality disorder, and co-occurring disorders. Each consumer’s treatment plan is personalized, and is most intense at the beginning of the program. Over time, many consumers graduate from Project Transition, although the program remains available as a safety net should a consumer need it.

Members of Project Transition’s executive and clinical team visited TSH in February. Planning Committee members involved in the visit enthusiastically expressed the overwhelming sense of hope that Project Transition helps consumers feel. AHCI will make a visit to Project Transition on March 11, and invite the program to make a larger presentation to the entire Planning Committee at its April 17 meeting. At that meeting, Valerie Vicari will present how MCOs and counties have financed Project Transition programs in the past. This may be an opportunity for the TSAP counties to collaborate together, in bringing Project Transition’s programs to work in the southwestern Pennsylvania region.

3. **CMHPCH Standards:** Matt Koren presented an overview of Allegheny County’s Comprehensive Mental Health Personal Care Home (CMHPCH) standards. The standards were designed to prevent confusion between CMHPCH and enhanced personal care homes (EPCH) in the county. In general, EPCH have more than 16 residents living at the facility, are dual-licensed, and provide mental health services at an additional cost to the consumer. CMHPCH usually have fewer than 16 residents

receiving treatment there, are not dually-licensed, and the mental health services are embedded in the program cost. While this embedding of services makes the CMHPCH more expensive to run, more money is freed up for the consumer's personal use. These homes use a heavy reliance on case management and CTT to provide services, are generally able to serve a more specialized population (for example, consumers with mobility issues), and usually have a no reject/no eject policy for errant behaviors.

The cost of developing a CMHPCH from scratch is steep – Mary Jo Dickson estimated that creating two eight-bed homes cost around \$1 million. This may be another area where several counties could collaborate to reduce the cost burden: the building's cost could be amortized over a 30-year period, and the counties could apply for a waiver to receive the building's costs upfront.

4. **Update of Budget Meetings with the State:** On February 27, Valerie Vicari conducted conference calls with the counties to assess the status of each county's consumers: who would likely be discharged by June 30, where each would reside, and what HealthChoices-funded services they were likely to require. Also present on the calls were representatives from AHCI, TSH, and the central region OMHSAS office. Val also checked that advocates were present at each consumer's CSP meetings. A letter of agreement for each CHIPP will be sent in June, in which the counties will detail how the state funds will be used. No additional budget will need to be submitted. Questions concerning the timing of the additional 10 consumers to be discharged came up in several calls, and AHCI is working to clarify this issue with the state.

Several counties will require follow-up calls because they did not have enough information at this time to accurately determine which consumers would be discharged by June 30. This includes Armstrong/Indiana, Butler, Cambria and Fayette counties.

## 5. **CSP Updates**

- a. **County-specific information:** As of today's meeting, 3 consumers have already been discharged: one from Allegheny County (to a personal care boarding home, or PCBH), one from Blair County (to an LTSR) and one from Westmoreland County (to a PCBH). The CSP meetings for Cambria County are underway.
- b. **Substitutes:** Several counties (Armstrong/Indiana, Butler, and Cambria) either added or substituted consumers to their original set, in order to make sure they are able to meet their discharge number. We are on track to have 20 discharges by June 30.
- c. **Family involvement:** Of the 44 consumers who had CSP meetings before February 1, 2 did not have any family with whom to be involved, 6 did not want their family involved, 9 had family members that did not want to be involved, and 27 had family members participate in some way in the process, whether through

completing the family assessment, attending a CSP meeting in person or via phone, or requesting regular updates of the process from TSH.

- d. Rolling over CSPs:** AHCI will set up a conference call to discuss how CSPs will be handled for those consumers that have been at TSH over two years but are not part of this project. Pat Brady, Lucille Underwood, Joni Putt and John Herrmann expressed interest in taking part in the call.
- e. Advocates:** Armstrong/Indiana, Bedford/Somerset, Blair and Cambria counties still do not have an advocate that is able to attend CSP meetings on a regular basis. To address this issue, there are two external advocates working at TSH through MHA of Westmoreland County, Lori Cramer and Felicia King. Either one will be able to attend these meetings.