

BROOME OPIOID ABUSE COUNCIL

June 5, 2015

Present: Jill Aflord-Hammit, Fred Akshar, John Bernardo, Sean Britton, Diane Brown, Brett Chellis, Katie Cusano, Claudia Edwards, Arthur Johnson, Lee Livermore (via phone), Jerry Mollen, Dennis O'Keefe, Debra Preston, Dr. Christopher Ryan, Raymond Serowik, Lorraine Wilmot

Absent: Tina Barber, Allen Buyck, David Harder, Alan Hertel, Karel Kurst-Swanger, Gabe Osterhout, Dr. Peter Ronan

In the absence of Karel Kurst-Swanger, Katie Cusano called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and introductions were made.

Two parents attended the meeting to discuss addiction struggles their families have faced. Jerry Mollen said that no one from the Parole Office was present to offer advice; however, one of the main goals of Parole is to assist parolees get into treatment programs around the region. Jeff Pryor from the Mental Health Office can also help access services. Katie suggested that parents get connected to a family support group. Fred advised her that this group was a multi-disciplinary group to enact changes in the community to make things easier for people struggling with addiction issues and asked her what she would like to see this group accomplish. When someone is in crisis they need treatment now. They can't wait or they will use again. The Addiction Center only has 18 beds and is full all the time. People generally stay 2-3 weeks; the goal is to have them connected to some kind of treatment when they leave. Withdrawal medication is hard to get. It is important to receiving counseling along with the Suboxone.

There is a larger need for Suboxone than there are providers available to prescribe it. Dr. Ryan said that physicians may want to work with these patients but there are training requirements and additional regulations involved. Some physicians may not see patients that are addicts because they are seen as disruptive, which may be unwarranted but a fear nonetheless. There are also business decisions involved. There are training and regulation burdens to receive an addendum to their DEA certification to be able to provide Suboxone to patients. It would be advantageous if every physician managed the patients who need Suboxone on their own practice. Suboxone "mills" were seeing 100 patients for \$250 cash per monthly visit.

Debbie said that we are working with law enforcement to address issues and now we have to find a way to work with the medical community to address issues. Dr. Ryan said the best way to reach physicians is through the Medical Society and medical staff meetings at the two major hospital systems. Hospital administration needs to be on board with their support for this service. Debbie is meeting with Cathy Connerton from Lourdes next week and will discuss this issue with her. Art said we would need at least six providers in the community trained and certified to provide Suboxone. It would be good if the state would allow physician extenders, such as Nurse Practitioners, to prescribe as well. OASAS is working with managed care companies to put regulations into place that you do not have to fail at an outpatient

clinic to get inpatient services. There would be standard rates and a locator would be used to determine outpatient, inpatient or crisis care. It was suggested that a small group from BOAC could meet with the administration of both hospital systems. The government is slow to respond and people need help now.

More support and services are needed in this community. Ray said addictions and Narcan use are discussed with new police officers and it is encouraging to see that attitudes are changing. Ray said that there might be some cynicism among EMS personnel who see the same individuals over and over but it does not affect how they do their jobs.

Katie advised that there is a meeting scheduled in two weeks to discuss how difficult it is to access services at the Addiction Crisis Center. They are attempting to rewrite the continuum of care to make it easier to access crisis services. There is a need for medical professionals to work with the Addiction Crisis Center. The Center's Director, Michelle Napolitano, met with the UHS Vice President last week to ask them to provide some medical support to the Crisis Center. Art Johnson met with Sister Marilyn Perkins to discuss having an OASAS outpatient clinic in this community in the past.

The Addiction Center of Broome County (ACBC) is pursuing a grant for an outpatient detox program. Ascension Health runs outpatient detox centers in Baltimore and Atlanta and one is needed here. People would receive medication support, hydration and counseling through the outpatient program. August 31 is Overdose Awareness Day and September is Addictions Awareness Month. ACBC is hosting an event. Tabernacle Church in Binghamton will hold a candlelight vigil during September. Katie said that they do a lot of private group presentations about treatment, harm reduction and recovery. They are working on these issues in the community.

Diane suggested that people need to advocate for services for addicted individuals the way that people advocated for services in the 1980's for the AIDS epidemic. Advocacy has begun by providing community education at high schools in the community but we need to advocate for funding in Albany. Every jurisdiction in the state is competing for grant funds to fight this epidemic. The state put a lot of money behind the AIDS Institute and we need something similar to fight this epidemic. Jerry noted that heroin is different than the AIDS epidemic because heroin use is dramatically increasing criminal activity.

A sample letter to be sent to pharmacies was distributed and approved for mailing to encourage pharmacies to have medication return boxes on site to make it more convenient for their customers.

The SAMSHA Grant was submitted, which is a federal grant for the Drug Court. This will target people who come into the Drug Court for heroin coupled with a trauma history. 91% of people who went through Drug Court with heroin addiction and a trauma history did not do well in the Drug Court. The first year of the grant will train people involved in the criminal justice and treatment world. Notification of award will be in September.

The Educate Medical Professionals Committee would like to find funding (\$30,000-\$40,000 per year) to pay a retired pharmaceutical sales representative to do medical detailing at physician offices to discuss their pain medication prescribing practices. This is a very effective means to get the message across and change behaviors. The committee is recommending this approach as an educational tool. There is presently a bill before the Senate and Assembly to require physicians to have training on pain management and addiction every two years to maintain their medical license.

The Law Enforcement Committee met and there is discussion about what the follow-up should be after administration of Narcan. They want to develop a card with information about the Good Samaritan Law on one side and phone numbers to call for treatment after Naloxone is administered on the other side. It was suggested that the number for Families Anonymous be included on the card. The numbers are (607) 341-2747 or (607) 237-8768.

They discussed putting out a PSA on the Good Samaritan Law and putting message on social media sites. The Sheriff's Office is in the process of applying for a new COPS grant to hire three police officers, to provide funds for overtime for the Drug Task Force, and to provide training on the heroin issue. Legislation was put forth for businesses selling secondhand merchandise to use the same software program to make it easier to track down stolen items by having photographs of the person and property posted electronically and requiring businesses to hold the items for five days. The legislation has been stalled but has been revised and will be put forth again for consideration. This would cost \$35,000-\$40,000 per year to equip the businesses with the software; business owners would not be required to pay for it. The Executive Office is partnering with the City of Binghamton to bring Steve Wozniak, a gang expert, here to give presentations to the public and law enforcement during July.

The Community Education Committee is scheduling an anti-heroin awareness in the park event at Highland Park in July. Joe Gonzales would like to have a booth at the Spiedie Fest; however the cost is prohibitive. Debbie said to have Joe contact her and she will take care of that. Beer can be sold at the Spiedie Fest this year which is difficult for people in recovery. Dreams Over Drugs helped to host a community heroin education event at Susquehanna Valley High School. There was a good panel but it was poorly attended. They are discussing hosting events at the Chenango Valley and Johnson City school districts and an event for Afton, Greene, and Sidney. Opiate overdose training will be held at the Conklin Community Center on June 15th to train people how to administer Narcan. Register by calling (607) 296-0609 or go to naloxonetraining@icloud.com. Lourdes Hospital will hold another session in the Fall. There is a Pre-Trial, Probation and Parole Supervision Week in July; Narcan training could be provided on July 13th.

The next meeting is rescheduled from July 3rd to July 10th, same time, same place.