

CFAC Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2010

Present: Steve, Heather, Cheryl, Diane, Leslie, Marcus, Benita, Edward, Shira, Bradley, Pam, and Linda

Staff Liaison: Michael Norton

Division Liaison: Suzanne Thompson

Guest: Bryan

Minutes: The minutes of the February meeting were amended to reflect that Linda was present, and approved as amended.

REPORTS:

Update from CFAC Chair: Steve and Heather met with Judy Truitt in February. She let them know that OPC and PBH had developed a potential 2 year timeline for completion of any merger or joint enterprise between the two LMEs. This would mean that whatever agreement is reached would be finalized in June 2012. However, plans would involve PBH taking over authorization of Medicaid services for OPC consumers in 2011. Michael noted that this should not have a direct impact on consumers, since it would basically mean that PBH would take over a function that is currently performed by Value Options. He also reminded CFAC members that no final decisions have been made. At this point, OPC is simply in discussion with PBH on joining with them in their Medicaid Waiver.

Update from OPC CFAC Liaison: Michael gave a brief update on CABHA status of OPC providers. At this point, Freedom House is still the only provider who has submitted their letter of attestation. We expect others providers to get theirs in, but this has not happened yet. Suzanne shared that the Division planned to post on its website a list of providers who had passed the desk review for CABHA, along with those who had failed the review. She said the plan was to begin posting this list in about a week.

Michael also reported that Benita had heard there might be additional cuts to the budget, and asked him for an update from OPC. At present, Michael confirmed that Medicaid is running way over budget projections in N.C. this year, and that LMEs are hearing about a potential \$1.5B reduction in Medicaid for next fiscal year. While this would likely result in significant cuts to services, he said that OPC does not know anything definitive (such as how much of a reduction this would mean for OPC consumers).

Update from Division Liaison: Suzanne reported that the Progress Indicators Report had been published for the 2nd Quarter. She noted that OPC either met or exceeded state expectations in 19 of 21 domains, which was a significant improvement. In addition, Suzanne let members know that a revised service definition for Targeted Case Management had been posted for public comment, which will be accepted until April 9th. Michael let members know that the revised definition was included in the Pass Around Folder.

NEW BUSINESS:

Accessibility Survey

Michael said that OPC was conducting another accessibility survey as part of the requirements for maintaining CARF accreditation. He asked for CFAC's input. Members reviewed the accessibility questionnaire in their meeting packets. For the most part, CFAC did not identify any

barriers in most categories. But there were comments in three areas. Members pointed out that it was often very difficult to maintain comfortable temperatures in OPC's office suite. While for most people this was primarily an issue of comfort and not an actual barrier, it was noted that some consumers take medications that make it more difficult (and sometimes unhealthy) to tolerate heat. In addition, members noted that while it was good that the office building is on a bus line, public transportation is not always convenient since the buses run on reduced schedules part of the year. In addition, some people who depend on public transportation must make several transfers to be able to take the bus to the Europa Center. Finally, CFAC members posed a question about communication. Specifically, they wondered whether OPC could assist someone who walked into the office if that individual was dependent on some sort of assistive technology to communicate their needs. Michael said that OPC had access to interpreters via telephone, but was not certain how to address the question posed by CFAC with regard to assistive technology. He informed members he would submit the question along with their general feedback on the accessibility survey. The results of the survey (along with any response to this question) would be presented to CFAC once the data has been analyzed.

Progress Indicators

Michael reviewed with CFAC the data from the 2nd Quarter Progress Indicators Report that Suzanne had mentioned earlier, including data from several graphs developed by his supervisor to show OPC's progress over time in various areas. In particular, Michael pointed out the steady improvement with regard to follow-up with consumers who have been discharged from ADATCs and state psychiatric hospitals. OPC has shown steady progress in these areas since the 1st Quarter of 2008-09. This coincides with the time period when OPC was placed under a Plan of Correction by the Division for failing to meet standards established for continuity of care. Michael said that the data shows the steps put in place by OPC have been effective.

County Space for Hillsborough Provider

Heather had e-mailed Michael to ask about information she had received that Freedom House was losing the use of county office space in Hillsborough, and that the DBT services offered at that site may be terminated as a result. Michael said that he had spoken with Freedom House staff and learned that it was true that they would be losing the use of the county space. However, he was told that Freedom House was looking for space to rent in Hillsborough and that they had no plans to end DBT services. Heather noted that the therapist for this program did not know Freedom House was looking for office space. Michael suggested that the therapist should speak with her supervisors about this if she is not aware of their plans, so that she can have accurate information.

OLD BUSINESS:

PBH Update

Michael let members know that OPC had received a Letter of Intent from PBH, and that both OPC's attorney and the OPC Board asked for some modification to the letter. He said that OPC did not have serious concerns about the letter overall, but that the concerns related to legal terminology included in the letter.

In addition, Michael noted that OPC had gotten responses to questions that had been posed by CFAC. One of the questions had to do with what PBH saw as the disadvantages to not sharing a border with OPC. According to Michael, PBH regarded any such disadvantages as minimal, since most of the work of the management entity for the Waiver can be done via phone and/or computer. There would, of course, be some travel involved but this can be minimized through the use of technology. CFAC had also asked about PBH's Network Council. Specifically, CFAC asked about the types of issues and concerns addressed by this Network Council. Over the past several months, their Network Council has discussed provider updates, changes to billing procedures and service reimbursement rates, and an electronic medical records system. Michael reported that this council is made up of providers, CFAC members, and PBH staff; and Suzanne clarified that only one CFAC member sits on the Network Council. Finally, CFAC had asked

whether PBH maintains waiting lists for services. Michael said that, like all LMEs, they have a fairly lengthy waiting list for CAP services. Otherwise, waiting lists are not that typical for PBH.

Social Activity

Members engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding the line item in their budget for social activities. Concerns were raised that OPC's decision not to approve a social activity was not communicated appropriately, since OPC management did not engage CFAC in a discussion about this issue. Instead, Michael sent an e-mail letting members know that the expenditure of money from the CFAC budget for a social activity would not be approved. Michael extended an apology and accepted responsibility for the way CFAC was informed of the decision. He explained that he had failed to discuss the issue ahead of time with Judy Truitt. Consequently, when she learned of CFAC's plans, there was not sufficient time to schedule a meeting to discuss the issue. Members also had questions regarding the level of autonomy CFAC actually has to make decisions about allocation of the money in their budget. Michael explained that CFAC has a similar level of autonomy to that of OPC managers. That is to say, OPC managers can make decisions about how to spend the money allocated to their departments. But these decisions must ultimately be approved by the Area Director, who has the responsibility and final authority for approval of expenditures. The same holds true for CFAC. Cheryl asked Suzanne whether state law requires that LMEs give local CFACs budgets that they can control. Suzanne said that there were no laws to that effect, and that many CFACs did not have a budget of their own. Michael said that OPC did recognize socialization can strengthen working relationships, which could help CFAC to be a more effective group. But OPC's concerns were based on the fact that CFAC's budget is made up entirely of public funds, and that we are bound to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars. The counties are facing significant deficits within their own budgets, and have been unable to fund many of the requests they receive from providers and other groups who have presented worthwhile proposals. So even though OPC recognizes that socialization can play an important role, it's difficult, if not impossible, to justify spending public dollars when free options are available for socializing. This is always the case, but its importance is heightened during an economic crisis such as the one facing North Carolina right now. After much discussion, some members indicated that they would like to have an opportunity to engage in further dialogue on this issue at some point in the future.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

AQIC

Pam said that AQIC had reviewed the accessibility survey that CFAC completed earlier in the meeting. Michael added that this committee had also completed an annual review of OPC's Quality Assurance plan during their February meeting.

Client Rights Committee

Benita reported that this committee met on March 2nd and reviewed and approved one plan for a consumer that included the use of behavioral restrictions. In addition, the committee reviewed incident data as well as the provider monitoring report that CFAC had reviewed during their February meeting.

PSW Committee

Edward reported that the PSW Committee met before the CFAC meeting, and had agreed to maintain a format and schedule similar to last year's workshop. One difference will be that presenters will not be limited to focusing on work or the arts. In addition, Edward presented a budget for the workshop to cover expenditures between July and the end of September. The total budget is \$4,532, which includes an increase of a little over \$500. The increase covers food and supplies, as well as the facility rental. During a discussion of the budget proposal, the question was posed whether there was any reason to be concerned that Judy Truitt would not approve the expenditure. Michael said that Judy was very supportive of this annual workshop. Leslie moved to approve the budget, and the motion was seconded by Diane. The budget request was approved by unanimous vote.

Peer Support Center Committee

Leslie noted that the planning committee had not met, as they were waiting to hear back from Sharon Youse (who has been invited to discuss the process used in Durham to start their peer support center). But she reported that the group did meet for a peer support activity the day before. They had eight people attend and participated in a writing activity. This was the largest group to date. The next peer support activity is scheduled for April 21st, and will include a discussion of famous persons who lived or lived with mental illness.

OPC Area Board

Heather was at a workshop and unable to attend the March meeting of the Area Board. Michael shared that the Board reviewed the Letter of Intent from PBH, and got information on the management structure at PBH. They also reviewed financial requests for Orange Co. money that had been presented to the Orange Co. Commissioners. The Commissioners had asked for input from the OPC Board on the merit of proposals for a number of providers in Orange County.

ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR:

Leslie, Diane and Heather asked for approval to attend the conference sponsored by the PBH CFAC, which will take place at the end of April. There is no cost for the conference, but CFAC would need to approve the cost of hotel, transportation, and *per diem* expenses. CFAC agreed to support the request.

Proposed Agenda for April Meeting:

- Revised IPRS Benefit Plan