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State of Wisconsin

Wisconsin Council on Mental Health

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Meeting of the Legislative and Policy Committee

September 12, 2019

12:30 pm to 3:00 pm

1 West Wilson Street, Conference Room 630, Madison, Wisconsin and Via Conference Call

Members of the Legislative and Policy Committee (LPC) in Attendance: Crystal Hester, Brian Michel, Alice Sykora, Mary Neubauer, Hugh Davis, Barbara Beckert, Kit Kerschensteiner, Chris Wirth, Justin Odulana, Jeanie Verschay (via Teleconference), Kathie Knoble-Iverson (via Teleconference), Kimberlee Coronado (via Teleconference)

Department of Health Services (DHS) Staff in Attendance: Ryan Stachoviak

Guests in Attendance: Amanda Anderson (Wisconsin Association for Marriage and Family Therapy)

MINUTES

1. Call Legislative and Policy Committee (LPC) Meeting to Order

Review and approval of the minutes of August 8, 2019

J. Odulana moved to approve the minutes of August 8, 2019.

K. Kerschensteiner seconded the motion.

Motion carried, minutes approved.

Announcements

B. Beckert announced that the Milwaukee Mental Health Taskforce is hosting a forum on employment. B. Beckert provided the group with information on voting. H. Davis announced the Children Come First Conference will be held on November 11-12. J. Odulana briefed the group on advocacy events being held at the capitol. C. Hester announced that the NAMI Wisconsin hired a new Executive Director, Mary Kay Battaglia. NAMI Wisconsin will be looking to hire a replacement for her previous position. It is currently Mental Health Awareness Week, NAMI Wisconsin is sharing information with its affiliates. NAMI Wisconsin also holding its Healing Arts Show.

Wisconsin Council on Mental Health (WCMH) Updates

There have been several new appointments to the WCMH. At the September meeting the WCMH voted to appoint Kimberlee Coronado as the Vice Chair, and Lea Collins-Worachek as the Second Vice Chair. The WCMH continues efforts to identify a new permanent chair.

Public Comment

No public comment was made.

2. Discussion and Review of Committee Membership and Leadership

C. Hester provided a briefing. There are several new members of the WCMH, so there may be opportunities to recruit new members to fill some of the WCMH seats on the LPC. The LPC, and other committees of the WCMH, are in need of chairs.

3. Legislative and Policy Updates, Discussion, and Action

M. Neubauer provided a briefing on a recent Suicide Prevention Taskforce meeting. At the national level Mental Health America has been discussing legislation that would promote peer specialists across the country. The goal of the legislation is to establish standards for training, testing, and certification. In addition, the legislation would help build reimbursement standards, including through private insurance.

Members of the LPC voiced concern over the proposed legislation. H. Davis expressed concern over the legislation and its utilization of a medical model. J. Odulana recommended that the information in the document that was provided be cited so that it strengthens the arguments. B. Beckert expressed concerns regarding how the proposal could impact the original intent and focus of the peer specialist. C. Wirth noted that the legislation could set the stage to devalue mental health professions by pulling peer specialists into a medical model. It could have the unintended consequences of lowering reimbursement rates.

A. Sykora discussed the challenges faced by members of the deaf community when trying to become peer specialists. Two deaf individuals have gone through the Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) training. They felt the training was overwhelming due to the language barriers, overwhelming materials, and the requirements for 3000 hours of supervised training. Paying for interpretation for those hours is a barrier. Materials can be challenging. If you require 3000 hours for certification, where would there be supports to be a mentor, or where will the funding come from to pay for the interpretation.

K. Knoble-Iverson and K. Coronado suggested the legislation could be a discussion topic for the Certified Peer Specialist Advisory committee.

Committee Responses to Mass Shootings

C. Hester asked the LPC whether there was anything the group wanted to do in response to the mass shootings. Is there something more proactive that the LPC should be doing? B. Michel discussed a recent suicide prevention taskforce meeting in which testimony was heard regarding the extreme risk protection order legislation. On September 25th the committee is planning to release their recommendations. It is important that advocates reach out to legislators to make these priorities known and find champions to help promote the legislation. K. Knoble-Iverson discussed concerns that people with mental illness are being scapegoats rather than addressing larger issues of gun control. A. Sykora noted the importance of considering how legislation like this intersects with issues of domestic violence.

Ideas for a response that mere mentioned included the following. Discuss dangerousness rather than mental illness as a way at looking at these proposals, promoting due process rights, and the importance of discussing the definition of dangerousness.

State Legislation and Review of LPC Bill Tracking

B. Michel provided briefing on bills that the LPC may have interest in tracking. B. Michel encouraged members of the LPC to contact him if they are interested in tracking any bills. M. Neubauer volunteered to track AB 394/SB 361 regarding eligibility expansion under the medical assistance program. Members of the LPC discussed AB 175/SB 163 regarding bodily harm to a nurse. Members of the LPC noted concern that the legislation is very expansive. There is an upcoming hearing in the committee on judiciary and safety. K. Coronado briefed the group on her recent testimony in support of AB 50 regarding employing a dyslexia specialist at the Department of Public Instruction. C. Wirth will track AB 110, regarding developing a guidebook related to dyslexia and related conditions

4. Division of Care and Treatment Services (DCTS) Updates

No updates were made.

5. Agenda Items for the October 2019 Committee Meeting

The following agenda items were suggested: continue bill tracking, continuing discussions regarding the Crisis Workgroup with the DCTS, opportunities for looking at the bigger picture. Could the group have a discussion on how to look at the larger behavioral health system? How can the LPC gain a bigger perspective from around the state?

6. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.