



Human Services Committee
367 Main Street, Hyannis, MA
November 21, 2023
5:30pm

MEETING MINUTES

I. BUSINESS

A. Roll Call: Administrator Cynthia Lovell took roll call: All members participating remotely due to the extension from the Governor's office protocol due to Covid restrictions.

Members present: Cheryl Powell (Chair); Kimberly Crocker-Crowther; Sheree Kay; Rep. Steven Xiarhos; Jennifer Hinckley Needham

I. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

- Roll Call
- Discuss report to be given to Town Council
- Discussion of proposal, information gathering and cataloging, roles
- Guest Speaker: Brightview
- Public Comment
- Other items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair

Chair of Committee Cheryl Powell opened the meeting up at 5:30pm. Chair of Committee did a Roll Call of members present. (See above) the meeting began with a confirmation of quorum and instructions for remote participation

The Human Services Committee meeting focused on a proposal addressing mental health, housing, crime, homelessness, and addiction. The discussion involved Brightview, a new group with a reputation for providing excellent services, and their role in offering outpatient addiction treatment for adults, with a focus on opioid use disorder treatment. The meeting also addressed the issue of substance abuse patients in the Emergenc Room, the need for better discharge planning, and the importance of collaboration between organizations to provide comprehensive services. The meeting concluded with the importance of proper education for doctors and the need for a coaching program for BrightView.

The main topic of discussion was a proposal being developed by the committee, which focuses on issues such as mental health, housing, crime, homelessness, and addiction. Cheryl highlighted the presence of Brightview, a new group with a reputation for providing excellent services. Brightview's State Medical Director, Heidi Ginter, and community outreach manager, Lee Wright, were introduced and prepared to discuss their services and answer any questions.

Collaboration for Comprehensive Substance Use Disorder Services

Lee stressed the importance of collaboration between organizations to provide comprehensive services for patients with substance use disorder. William, the State Director for outreach, discussed their partnerships with hospitals and community agencies, and plans to open new centers in Fall River, Worcester, and Springfield. Heidi, a family doctor and addiction medicine specialist, shared her company's services, which offer outpatient addiction treatment for adults, with a focus on opioid use disorder treatment. Cheryl and Heidi discussed the need for improved collaboration with hospitals, and Jennifer raised concerns about substance abuse patients in the ER, suggesting the need for better

discharge planning. William and Jennifer agreed to facilitate introductions between Heidi and the relevant contacts at Cape Cod Hospital. The meeting also involved a discussion about a concern related to mental health, and a question made by Jennifer was highlighted, but specific details were not provided.

Addressing Drug Addiction Treatment Gaps

The meeting focused on addressing the issue of drug addiction, particularly the lack of adequate treatment for those who have overdosed and are then released from hospitals without proper help. Jennifer was tasked with exploring ways to establish stronger connections with hospitals, especially on Cape Cod. Heidi suggested increasing education about addiction to reduce its stigma, and proposed the implementation of a 24/7 peer recovery coach in emergency rooms and community education about Naloxone. She also suggested using Suboxone or Methadone to alleviate withdrawal symptoms and prevent fatal overdoses. The availability of these resources at Cape Cod Hospital was uncertain. The discussion concluded with the importance of proper education for doctors and the need for a coaching program for Bright View.

Addiction's Impact on Healthcare and Community

The meeting revolved around the concerning issue of addiction and its impacts on healthcare workers and the community. The state representative expressed frustration over the lack of effective solutions and urged his colleagues to collaborate on proposing innovative solutions such as safe injection sites. The discussion also highlighted the challenges faced by outpatient site provider, kccrowther, in identifying and addressing substance abuse issues among patients. The need for improved communication and screening for substance use disorders was emphasized, with Heidi suggesting that asking about overdoses could become as routine as asking about smoking or allergies. Cheryl shared about the Human Services Committee's efforts in developing a database to streamline information sharing and improve collaboration among various providers. The importance of education and aftercare programs, and addressing the stigma associated with substance abuse was also highlighted.

Bright View Services and Community Impact

The meeting was primarily focused on discussing the role of Bright View in providing services for patients and the community. Cheryl, the chair, thanked everyone for their contributions and asked for feedback. Cynthia, a committee member, was also acknowledged for her assistance. Jennifer, another attendee, inquired about resources and asked if they could be shared online. Cheryl confirmed that they were working on a database to be updated every two years. Lee from Bright View agreed to provide Jennifer with more information. Towards the end of the meeting, a motion to adjourn was made by Kimberly and accepted by all present. The meeting was then concluded.

Next steps

- Jennifer will connect Heidi with the appropriate contacts at Cape Cod Hospital.
- Propose a mentorship program for ER doctors to increase their comfort with prescribing Suboxone to patients.
- Jennifer will reach out to Lee for more information about Brightview's services.

Adjourned: 6:20pm

NEXT MEETING: TBD