

# Rochester Area Task Force on AIDS, Inc.

Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency

1150 University Avenue

Rochester, NY 14607

Phone 585-461-3520 Fax 585-461-0997 TTY 585-461-4075

E-mail [ratfa@flhsa.org](mailto:ratfa@flhsa.org)

[www.knowingisbetter.org](http://www.knowingisbetter.org)

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## SERVICES MEETING

### MINUTES

JANUARY 4, 2007

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bill Fox, L.J. Fischer, Den’Nise Meeks, Annie Piazza, Eloise Rivera, Bill Stevens, Patty Terziani, Lynn Varricchio, Danielle Wade, Ann Williams.

**Opening:** Bill opened the meeting and members introduced themselves. Patty then moved approval of the minutes of the November meeting. Annie seconded the motion, the minutes were approved.

#### **Announcements:**

*FLACRA* has filled its two management positions.

*Westside* has started a teen clinic that serves youth on Wednesday afternoon. Dr. Cross is the physician and further information is in the RATFA Bulletin. Westside is planning a half marathon in September. All are welcome to participate. Start training now. The purpose is to demonstrate that the Health Center is a beacon in the community raising awareness of the need to prevent and treat people with chronic diseases. Westside is also working with other neighborhood health centers on a collaborative grant to enhance access to care using same day scheduling, etc.

*ARI* is beginning a new program *Positive Motion*. The program is being done in conjunction with Catholic Charities and the purpose is to help families of people with HIV/AIDS build memories and improve their family health and family functioning. The first activity will be at Hot Shots. At each session participants will receive an item for a family health kit. The 2<sup>nd</sup> event will be ice skating Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> at Genesee Valley Ice Rink. That will be followed by a legal program for parents with kids. The program will be monthly through Dec. 2007. Catholic Charities will then apply for the grant in 2008. Activities will be held in Rochester, Bath and Geneva.

*ABC/AFC* indicated that they have a similar program. Both groups believe that it is the best way to provide services that are good for the mental health of adult and youth clients because you get to see people functioning as a family, or in a fun situation and people open up more.

There was general agreement that as TEAM closes down the other agencies will need to develop more programming for families.

**Rochester Rehab** will be participating in MOCHA's Wellness and Career Fair on April 21<sup>st</sup> from 10-4 at the Armory. Over 15 agencies will be participating.

**Catholic Charities** reported that they are planning a health screening and career fair at ARI on April 25<sup>th</sup>. It was suggested that they might want to reconsider the date in light of the MOCHA event.

**Rural Health Fairs** in response to a question about health fairs in rural counties, Bill Fox indicated that the Geneva, Seneca Falls Apple Fest is a very big rural event that agencies might wish to participate in. Keuka College also has an event.

**VLSP** told the group that they will be having an open house at their new offices at 1 West Main Street. The new Michael Telesca Justice Center will be welcoming the community on Tues. Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> from 11-1:30. The space is a major improvement not only esthetically, but also because it provides one stop shopping for legal services.

**Empire Justice** reported that they have hired two new Social Security advocates who are fresh out of law school and ready to do appeal work on disability cases. L.J indicated that she would like to work with the agencies to provide a one hour training for case managers on how they can help SSI clients prepare cases. As she sees it, the program would be a dialogue about what's needed to make the case, problems case managers are having with client cases and what type of help they need. Den'Nise indicated that from her work with the Advocacy Center, she often found the staff at Social Security treated clients rudely. L.J indicated that the emphasis of the training will be how to help clients prepare strong applications. The objective is to win benefits without having to go to a hearing. Historically it seems that benefits have not been approved prior to the 3<sup>rd</sup> appeal.

#### **Medicaid Churning Update:**

Patty was the only person from the Services Committee that attended the last MA Churning work group meeting. Bill indicated that he had met with Roberto Burgos and Trilby de Jung and the three of them believe it would be beneficial to have a joint meeting of the committees to facilitate progress on this issue. The Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> meeting will be used for this purpose.

ARI and Catholic Charities typically spend 3-4 months not getting paid by Medicaid because clients have lost benefits. During these periods the agencies have to front end the case management expenses.

One type of case that Catholic Charities has seen lately are problems with spend downs. They have had three cases recently that Bill has seen where DSS is claiming clients lost the letters that were sent to them. He finds it questionable that all three lost the same letter.

Clients are not being told that they can buy into Medicare if they are working, but have large co-pays for meds etc. Medicaid is to pay the Medicare premium. Medicaid is no longer able to pay drug costs. Case managers need to know how to help the clients make out the applications and where to send them.

Another group of clients that have problems with Medicaid are those with unstable housing.

**Part D Training** The agencies indicated that they are not having problems with Part D benefits at this time. ARI does periodic trainings for its staff and other agencies are welcome to attend.

**Case Management Standards** The standards for COBRA intensive case management are generally clear to the agencies at the table. The issues arise regarding case management services that are provided by organizations that do not provide COBRA or Ryan White funded case management.

From the discussion and comments from agencies to the coordinator, it appears that the community would benefit from discussing:

- Expectations related to transportation vis a vis case managers participating in the client visit;
- What is understood by a case manager participating in a client medical appointment;
- What is appropriate material for inter-agency case conferencing, who should participate and what is expected;
- What are the benefits of case managers from ARI and CCCS being co-located at some health provider agencies, what are the implications for clients of other health provider agencies.

A dialogue on these issues with all relevant agencies should be scheduled for a future meeting.

**Closing:** The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 1 at 8:30 AM at AIDS Rochester. It will be a combined meeting of Advocacy and Services and it will focus on Medicaid Churning.