

QUARTERLY LYCOMING-CLINTON HEALTHCHOICES REINVESTMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

FEBRUARY 26, 2019

ATTENDANCE:

Jacque Miller, HealthChoices Director; Keith Wagner, Joinder Executive Director; Shea Madden, Executive Director and Katie Hugo, Staff - West Branch Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission; Peg Wesneski, Clinical Manager and Tracy Carney, Senior Recovery & Resiliency Specialist - Community Care Behavioral Health Organization; Ginny Noble, Joinder MH Housing Specialist; (JC) – Consumer Representative; and Cathy Bennett, Joinder Administrative Assistant (present for minutes.)

OVERVIEW OF REINVESTMENT COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES:

Jacque Miller distributed a summary sheet which provided an explanation for members and families of what reinvestment funds are and how they become available. The document also explained how members and families who are enrolled in the Lycoming or Clinton County HealthChoices Program can become involved in the decision making process of how reinvestment funds can be used. She also distributed a document which summarized the allowable and unallowable uses for reinvestment funds. She reminded the group that consumers who wish to attend these meetings may bring along a peer specialist if they would like this additional support.

UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CARE'S WORK TO SOLICIT MEMBERS TO JOIN THE HEALTHCHOICES REINVESTMENT COMMITTEE:

Tracy Carney noted that there had been interest in attending expressed by some individuals but they ended up having other commitments and were unable to attend. She felt if enough advance notice of the meeting dates were given to the individuals that they may be able to attend in the future. The group agreed that we should continue to reach out to providers and member groups in order to encourage consumer participation.

INFORMATION UPDATE PROVIDED BY HEALTHCHOICES:

Ms. Miller noted that there have been no recent official documents or communications from OMHSAS, other than emails. She noted that the **current active contracts** using reinvestment funds are with:

- West Branch Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission for supportive housing which assists consumer with securing safe, affordable, permanent housing (up to \$1000 per consumer)
- Lycoming-Clinton MH/ID Program for support housing services (see above)
- West Branch Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission for safe and healthy homes contingency fund which assists consumers when they need to eradicate a problem from their housing location for issues such as bed bugs or mold (up to \$1000 per consumer)

- Lycoming-Clinton MH/ID Program for safe and healthy homes contingency funds services (see above)
- Diakon Adoption and Foster Care for the provision of children's respite services
- West Branch Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission for ASAM provider training (contract ended 6/30/18)

Ms. Miller distributed the **Excess Funds Summary** document which is prepared by the State and they are indicating we have \$72,226 in funds currently available for reinvestment purposes that needs to be committed for use by 3/1/19. She noted that further discussion on this topic would occur later in the meeting. She added that based on the recently introduced legislation to integrate behavioral health; an integrated service reinvestment project or one that engages the criminal justice population post release are both areas of focus for the State right now and might be worthwhile considering as a future reinvestment project.

INFORMATION UPDATES PROVIDED BY COMMUNITY CARE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH:

Ms. Miller presented a summary of four meetings held by the **LCHS Advisory Focus Group** that took place between June and December, 2018. The concerns voiced included:

- Recommendation for more summer programming for children with disabilities, especially autism
- Recommendation for CSBBH services to facilitate a parent support group
- Recommendation for better communication between systems especially in regard to medication issues
- Concerns about lack of psychiatrists
- Concerns about transportation, particularly wanting to attend services in another County and the transportation system is not willing to cross County lines
- Concerns about finding and maintaining safe and affordable housing options for individuals with mental illness as shelters are often limited
- Concerns about parenting with a mental illness/parental rights
- Concerns about dealing with addiction issues
- Concerns about lack of services in the Renovo community

She also presented a Community Survey document covering County wide needs for both Lycoming and Clinton Counties that was prepared by STEP, United Way, and River Valley. In Lycoming County, the number one problem listed by individuals surveyed was drugs/ alcohol. The top 6 issues listed by agencies surveyed in Lycoming County were drug and alcohol issues, followed by access to mental health services. In Clinton County, the results overall were very similar, but the agencies surveyed also listed availability of affordable child care as the #5 issue facing Clinton County residents.

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK AND COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION(S) FOR CURRENT REINVESTMENT FUNDS:

As mentioned earlier, Ms. Miller noted that there is currently \$72,226 available in reinvestment funds that are to be committed for use by 3/1/19. She noted that a program she would like to present for consideration for the use of these funds was the continuation of the children's respite services program that is currently underway with Diakon Adoption and Foster Care. Individuals who are receiving mental health or drug and alcohol services and

are HealthChoices eligible may apply for up to 24 hours of respite services per month for a child in their family. They could use the respite services for any appropriate absence from the home in which they would need someone to stay with their child; e.g., to attend a therapy appointment, etc. She added that this program was started last year with reinvestment funding in the amount of \$71,063. Thus far, the program has been very well received and has provided 770 hours of respite services to 14 unduplicated members. The current contract term will expire 6/30/19 and it is expected that Diakon will have expensed the entire contract amount by this time. (JC) inquired if anyone from the community could apply for these services and Ms. Miller explained that the individual requesting services would need to be a member of the HealthChoices system in order for funding to be eligible. A discussion also occurred regarding the clearance requirements for individuals providing respite services and that this can be a time consuming project which requires fees, etc. Concern was also raised that individuals providing these services are usually family members and some individuals may not be eligible to provide respite services due to findings appearing in their background checks. Ms. Miller noted that some findings do not prohibit being a respite provider, it is only those findings that are specifically listed in the child welfare regulations. The group also suggested that information pertaining to the respite services program be shared with peer support staff and certified recovery specialists and gotten out more into the community.

Following the conclusion of the discussion, the group supported the use of the available reinvestment funds to continue the children's respite services program through Diakon Adoption and Foster Care.

Ms. Miller also encouraged the group to come up with ideas for consideration for use of future reinvestment funds. She noted that considerable time must be spent on developing concepts before they can move forward into the funding stage. Tracy Carney noted that there is a need for programming for transition age youth who are leaving residential treatment facilities to help them re-enter the community, including the ability to secure safe, affordable housing.

THERE WAS ALSO SOME OTHER TALK ABOUT NEEDED SERVICES (YOUTH SEX OFFENDERS, ETC.) BUT I'M NOT SURE WHAT THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting date for the Reinvestment Committee was set for Tuesday, May 28, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at the Sharwell Building.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacqueline Miller
HealthChoices Director

JM/cb