

Arizona Mental Health and Criminal Justice Coalition (AzMHCJC)
Meeting Minutes
4/3/15

Agenda Items	Discussion	Action Items & Person Responsible
<p>Welcome and introductions by Mary Lou Brncik of David's Hope</p>	<p>There were 20 attendees at today's meeting with another 10 joining by phone. Mary Lou thanked everyone for participating and commented there is good state-wide representation. She added there will be no guest speaker today since the focus is on improving communication and collaboration between mental health criminal justice (mh/cj) partners from around the state who are participating in today's meeting. She also noted it was good to see representatives from the courts since they are an important part of the solution. Everyone around the table and on the phone introduced themselves and added where they were from.</p>	
<p>Coalition Updates</p>	<p>Mary Lou discussed how the coalition is growing and issued an invitation to our partners to join publicly through a letter of support, which was distributed for review. Endorsing organizations will be listed on the davidshopeaz.org website. Donations are also encouraged to support the work of the coalition.</p>	<p>Everyone is encouraged to take it back to their organizations</p>

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<p>Updates on Mental Health/Criminal Justice Collaboration Around the State- Our partners from around the state speak.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Steve Lessard-, Programs Manager, Adult Probation Services-- AZ Supreme Court/AOC. Mr Lessard is now “retired” from Maricopa County Adult Probation and working with the Supreme Court. He attends the AZ Substance Abuse Partnership Council (which is open to the public and can be found on the ADHS website) There is a new Director and the focus is on prevention, especially of prescription drug abuse. There is a toolkit available to help get pain meds out of the community and is also available on the website. Mr. Lessard also gave an update on the status of the evaluation of mental health courts, which has been in progress for about 2 ½ years. There is a set of 6 standards (which he outlined for the group) that basically try to answer the questions, “What is the purpose of the mental health courts?” and “Do they really help the mentally ill?” These standards have just been approved and have gone to the Legislature; he will be helping to roll them out at the Superior Court level and they will start July 1st. He reiterated that he wants the focus to be on community resources instead of criminal justice resources to help people- “Let’s focus on treatment and getting them out of the criminal justice system.”2) Beya Thayer- Criminal Justice Manager, Northern AZ Regional Behavioral Health Authority-Beya covers five counties and will add Gila County in October. First, she reported on the success Coconino County has had with their behavioral health subcommittee, which now represents about 20 participating agencies including hospitals, probation, the jail, etc. In 2014 their goal was to increase awareness around trauma informed care and they are now working on a reentry initiative. Navajo County is focusing on finishing up their contract with AHCCCS. There is a lot of Mental Health First Aid Training going on at the Sheriff’s Office, Coconino Police Dept, and also in Prescott Valley with a Spring “Train the Trainer” event coming up. Flagstaff has also increased their crisis intervention training and is leading the way in the use of body cameras; they have submitted some grants and Beya will have more information later on that.3) Audrey Dorfman and Elizabeth Keller- Mental Health Coalition Verde Valley. Audrey gave the report. Audrey representing the MHCVV has had two meetings related to mh/cj and Sheriff Masher from Yavapai County led the way. There was lots of participation and he wants to find more support for reentry (i.e. housing, health insurance, meds, etc.). The Yavapai County Jail started a mental health dorm of sorts about eight weeks ago at the jail and everyone feels the Sheriff is doing a	
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	<p>terrific job. This is happening in the Verde Valley/Prescott area, making it very challenging since there are two counties involved and it requires lots of teamwork and collaboration. Beya offered to represent NARBHA in this collaboration-what a great idea! Mary Lou gave kudos for such a great effort; Verde Valley is truly making great strides.</p> <p>4) Kate Lawson, Criminal Justice Manager-Community Partners Inc.-Tucson Kate talked about lots of projects going on. They've had a strong CIT program operating since 2008; she co-facilitates the training. She added that CIT training is not for everyone; it works best for those who are oriented to help this population. They also do Mental Health/First Aid training and in June will be working with the U of A Police Dept. She also said they are working with mental health support teams (in operation for about a year) in Pima County to identify people in need of behavioral health services so as to avoid arrests. Efforts in prison reentry are also in progress, and she said they're going into the prisons to do motivational interviewing in order to make for a more successful transition. She also stated they have a weekly docket in every court and a Forensic Task Force meeting with a large regular attendance for lunch; ask Mary Lou if you would like details to be able to attend. Kate concluded by saying Cenpatico will start transitioning in this region. Mary Lou added that a blueprint will soon be developed so it will be possible to share problem solving ideas for statewide issues. The idea is to increase collaboration and share support.</p> <p>5) Derrick Seawood, Director-Wellness Connections and Cochise County Re Entry Coalition. Derrick is in Sierra Vista and he also works with Greenlee County and Nogales. He was hired as a re-entry specialist and began by doing outreach to find partners. Employment opportunities for ex-offenders became a focus and he was encouraged by the "great reception" from the community. One of the challenges he found was there was a discrepancy in diagnoses; there were two different instruments used. The DOC's was different and there was a resulting interruption in services because of this. He also brought up that obtaining funding for the coalition is difficult but partnerships with grant writing specialists helps. He described how his agency works; it's run by peers who try to meet with the inmates ninety days before they are released from the DOC and then help them with basic necessities to get started. Their coalition holds regular meetings in the Mona Lisa Library on the fourth Thursday of the month. Both Mary Lou and Steve Lessard would like to visit for</p>	
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	<p>more information. Mary Lou asked everyone that if they know of anybody who is specializing in the work of re-entry to please let us know so we can identify what is happening around the state. Derrick also mentioned the "Ban the Box" practice, how unfair it is, and how they are planning to work with the legislature to try and end this discriminatory practice. Mary Lou agreed that it's an unfair practice, but that we may not have to get the Legislature involved to make changes; we may be able to work together on it. Let's keep it on the agenda; Audrey added that she'll take it to the Valley Interfaith's April 17 meeting on prison reform.</p> <p>6) Kerry Hyatt is the new Re-Entry Coordinator with the Dept. of Corrections. She gave a report on the grant that funds her position. As part of this, three new officers will receive specialized training in mental health so there will now be four who deal with the SMI pre-release inmates in prison (3-5 % of the population) Also, there were two conferences that provided a regional forum on re-entry issues. MMIC will be doing a Mental Health/First Aid training to address barriers with offenders who have mental health diagnoses for all staff in new positions. Kerry went on to say that she is working to develop new resources and has applied for two grants. One would be for hiring mental health navigators who would, among other things, help inmates get signed up for AHCCCS when they report to their parole officer within twenty-four hours of their release. The other grant, called the Second Chance grant, would help to create a coalition that would generate collaboration and communication statewide about re-entry; they will find out in September if they are awarded these grants. As another part of this, they would be working on bringing people together for a one day summit to look at barriers and resources around re-entry (for all inmates, not just those with mental health diagnoses). Mary Lou added that it's such good news that Community Corrections now has Kerry in this position.</p> <p>7) Natalie Summit- Crisis Intervention Specialist with the Scottsdale Police Department- Natalie has been working with East Valley Crisis Intervention Training (which includes Scottsdale, Mesa, Chandler and Gilbert). The first class starts April 6 and they will be training 100 officers/year, which is very impressive. Steve asked her if there will be training/support available to those officers who have compassion fatigue as a result of the demands of their job and Natalie replied that while Scottsdale has it, she's unsure if other areas do.</p>	
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	<p>8) Update on Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee- Mary Lou gave a background and overview and encouraged everyone to go to the link and review it—http://davidshopeaz.org/LECC WS Reentry Initiative Report 2010. Since it is such a comprehensive and well done document we will continue to use it as a guide for our statewide efforts in reentry.</p>	
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Open Dialogue: The group offered the following questions/comments-

Mary Lou reminded everyone, she has emailed out the article about competency restoration process expenditures in Florida in which Judge Steven Leifman of Miami-Dade is quoted and encourages everyone to read it. She posed the question, "Why do we work so hard to restore competency to someone so they can then be competent to stand trial and end up in prison?" Next month, Judge Elizabeth Finn will be the guest speaker, and she will address this in part. There's a great need to get both parts of Superior Court to communicate with each other, as well as prosecuting attorneys and mental health advocates to work together to get people the services they really need.

Vicki asked the question, "Will there be a Roundtable scheduled for Tucson?" Mary Lou replied, there's nothing planned at this time due to constraints with David's Hope.

From the Bridging the Gap program at Terros: They are two years into a three year grant and are doing prison inreach, help with housing, health insurance, ID's, etc. Brett with Hope Lives added they'll start doing this too within a few weeks.

Laurie on the phone asked the question, "Is there an increase in the number of people getting arrested for things like homelessness, etc?" Mary Lou answered that it's unknown because we don't have the data on that.

Steve brought up the problem that occurs when there are good treatment programs going on in the jails for those with mental health or addiction problems. Steve stated that this makes judges more likely to order jail time, with inmates staying in jail longer in order to receive treatment, so it ends up being a good/bad thing.

Mary Lou made the point (and others agreed) that there's a need for more inpatient psychiatric beds. As a state, we have the highest number of prison beds and the lowest number of inpatient psychiatric beds. Why is it so hard to get into treatment? Mental Health America in 2015 released a report " Parity or Disparity: The State of Mental Health in America, which documents that Arizona is at the bottom of the list in access to care.

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	<p>You can read the full report through link below..</p> <p>http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/sites/default/files/Parity%20or%20Disparity%20Report%20FINAL.pdf</p>	
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Adjournment : Mary Lou adjourned the group at 1105 am. The next meeting will be held Friday May 1st from 0900-1100 at the Arizona Department of Health Services, 150 N. 18th Ave Rm 215 A Phoenix Az 85007

150403, Minutes written by Gail Melone.