

**WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA RYAN WHITE CARE COUNCIL**

**PLANNING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

**GOTOWEBINAR**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2021**

**9:30 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.**

**MINUTES**

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| **CALL TO ORDER** | The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair, Sheryl Hoolsema, at 9:34 a.m. |
| **ATTENDANCE** | Members Present: Nolan Finn, Sheryl Hoolsema, Marylin Merida, Kirsty Gutierrez, Elizabeth Rugg  Members Absent: None.  Guests Present: Emily Hughart, David Cavalleri  Recipient Staff Present: Aubrey Arnold, Maria Teresa Jaureguizar  Lead Agency Staff Present: Yashika Everhart, Darius Lightsey  Health Council Staff Present: Lisa Nugent, Katie Scussel, Naomi Ardjomand-Kermani |
| **CHANGES TO AGENDA** | None. |
| **ADOPTION OF MINUTES** | All minutes have been tabled until March 11, 2021 when in-person meetings resume. |
| **IN-PERSON QUORUM DISCUSSION** | Committee Chair, Kirsty Gutierrez, kicked off the conversation with a reminder that in-person quorum must be met for business to be voted on. Gutierrez went on to note that Suncoast Hospice has confirmed that the Garden House will be available for our regularly scheduled meetings, starting in March 2021.  To remain in compliance with the Care Council’s deliverables timeline, the Epidemiology Report and Care Continuum must be reviewed and voted on by the Planning and Evaluation Committee before forwarding them on to Care Council’s April 2021in-person meeting. Recipient, Aubrey Arnold, also offered the Hillsborough County conference line, for those who plan to call-in, but the meeting space will be equipped with its own conference line. Planning Council Staff, Naomi Ardjomand-Kermani, echoed Gutierrez’s words and added that typically the Needs Assessment is reviewed in March as well but will be rolled into April so as not to overwhelm members with business.  Care Council Chair and P&E voting member, Nolan Finn, noted that social distancing protocols should be followed and added that he will be attending in-person. P&E Co-Chair, Sheryl Hoolsema, confirmed attendance and added that the Garden House space is large enough to allow for plenty of space between individuals. Recipient, Aubrey Arnold, confirmed that he will be present as well. Planning Council Support staff, Naomi Ardjomand-Kermani, informed members that masks, sanitizer, and desk shields will be provided, but asked that members wear their own masks if possible. Arnold announced that, after consulting the County attorney, virtual polls and surveys regarding attendance are permissible under the Sunshine Law and recommended polling members prior to the meeting. Ardjomand-Kermani wrapped up the conversation with a reminder that all committees will meet virtually if they have no actionable business on their agendas. Only meetings with timely business to conduct with meet in-person, with the understanding that an in-person Care Council meeting will have to follow as well. |
| **COMMUNITY INPUT/ANNOUNCEMENTS** | Lead Agency staff, Darius Lightsey, announced that Part B is wrapping up their grant year in March and is working hard to spend down their budget as much as possible with the challenges posed by COVID-19. Lightsey went on to announce that the Pinellas Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) planning is in process of setting up agreements with awardees. A new start date has been pushed to March 1, 2021. Smaller organizations that need money up-front, to get started, are requesting advance payments as a lack of funding will prohibit them from initiating their programming.  Recipient, Aubrey Arnold, announced that Part A is in its final month of the grant year and the 2021-2022 funding year (FY) will begin on March 1, 2021. He went on to note that expenditures are being maximized so no penalties are incurred. Although they project to be 97% spent down, in comparison to last year’s 99%, they will be well above the required 95% as mandated by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Arnold reminded members that the approximate $200,000 will be requested as carryover to be utilized in the upcoming grant year. Some categories, such as pharmacy and emergency financial assistance (EFA) have not utilized enough funding to continue to keep their funding as is and hopes that the committee will discuss this issue in the coming year as better use can be made of these funds. For example, more money can be invested in Oral Health as it is consistently an unmet need among clients.  Arnold continued with the announcement that Hillsborough’s Ending the HIV Epidemic (EtHE) grant year is coming to a close with only 60% of the award expended. He added that the first year was a start-up year and infrastructure needed to be put in place and services procured. Due to these and challenges posed by COVID-19 HRSA has been understanding and all leftover funds will be carried over into the new award year. Services, such as early intervention services (EIS) and health education and risk reduction (HERR), will be expanded in year 2 as some additional funding is anticipated. Arnold went on to emphasize that neither EtHE is under the Care Council’s purview. Their intention and goal is to keep everyone informed on the going’s on, but they are not under the same authority or conditions as the Part A and Part B awards.  The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) grant funding is right on target with no more than a couple of thousand dollars left on the table. About $625,000 was awarded in April 2020 and they expect to have no residual funds. Arnold continued that they are in the second year of the capacity-building grant and are ready to launch their first component for round one. This includes a data import module that imports electronic health records into e2Hillsborough without the need for multiple data entries by providers.  Lead Agency staff, Darius Lightsey, announced that Part B expects to receive the same level of funding as previous years, but was told to forgo requests for applications (RFA) this year in favor of extending current sub-contractor contracts. An RFA will be discussed later this year with direction from the State. He shifted into an announcement about Black History Month programming that Abundant Life Ministries, in Pinellas County will be hosting on February 20, 2021. He will send information to staff to be distributed among members.  Committee member, Marylin Merida, asked members if they knew more about vaccine sites for COVID-19. Gutierrez responded that all Metro Inclusive Health staff have been vaccinated through Bayfront. Appointments are available online, but she advised individuals sign into their appointment portal before 9:00 a.m. to attempt to secure a spot. Other members added that Publix, Walmart, Winn Dixie, CVS, Walgreens, and the Center for Health Equity are all vaccination sites. Lightsey noted that Pinellas County’s Department of Health has its own vaccine portal separate from the State’s. Member, Elizabeth Rugg, furthered that many of Suncoast Health Council’s staff have been able to secure vaccinations by partnering with the Community Health Centers of Pinellas County. Staff, Ardjomand-Kermani, suggested that all members revisit the list of qualifications to be considered “high-risk” to see if they can get vaccinated at this time. |
| **ADJOURNMENT** | There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:34 a.m. |