

**WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA RYAN WHITE CARE COUNCIL**

**HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**METRO INCLUSIVE HEALTH - TAMPA**

**THURSDAY, MAY 18, 2023**

**1:30 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

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| **CALL TO ORDER** | The meeting was called to order by Bobbi Lambert, Chair at 1:34 PM. |
| **ATTENDANCE** | Members Present: Nicole Kish, Bobbi Lambert, Musammat Rahman, Peggy Wallace  Members Absent: Whitney Corouthers, Kim Molnar, Gina Puglisi  Guests Present: None  Recipient Staff Present: Dorinda Seth  Lead Agency Staff Present: None  Health Council Staff Present: Abigail Machtel, Lisa Nugent, Katie Scussel |
| **CHANGES TO AGENDA** | None |
| **CARE COUNCIL REPORT** | Planning Council Support (PCS) Staff, Kate Scussel gave the Care Council report. The Care Council met virtually on May 3, 2023 on GoTo Meeting. Donna Sabatino from The AIDS Institute gave a legislative update on a number of bills that were passed by the Florida legislature that may affect the client population.  For the Part A Recipient report, Dorinda Seth announced that Part A had received its full award totaling $10,779,094, which was a slight increase of around 1% from the previous year. For the first time in program history, Part A did not spend above 95% of its funding in the 2022-2023 fiscal year. There will be no penalty, as the program had already received a waiver due to COVID, so Part A will still receive carryover funds of around $400,000.  For the Part B Lead Agency Report, Josh Cardwell announced that Nicole Houston is now the HIV/AIDS Program Coordinator (HAPC) for Area 5 (Pasco and Pinellas).  For the Housing Opportunities for People with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) report, Anne Cronyn announced that the City of Tampa is in the middle of the universal Request for Applications (RFA) process. The city is procuring for all state and federal programs, including HOPWA. New three-year HOPWA agreements will begin October 1, 2023. Applications are due on May 9th and will be scored on May 16th.  PCS Staff gave an update on the 2022 HIV Care Needs Survey, which had closed the previous week. The survey received a total of 540 responses.  Kim Molnar went over a report sharing outcomes of two Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) funded services, Early Intervention Services (EIS) and Housing. Quality Management Consultant, David Cavalleri, gave an update on performance measures that had been shared the previous month. Members also discussed issues with Medicaid transport.  Nolan Finn announced that Mara Michniewicz, HIV Prevention Manager and Interim HIV Section Administrator, has resigned from her position after seventeen years with the HIV/AIDS Section. Jimmy Llaque, who was formerly the ADAP Manager, has been promoted to Patient Care Manager and will serve as the Interim Section Administrator. Craig Wilson, Chief of the Bureau of Communicable Diseases, will also be assisting with the Section Administrator responsibilities. The new Section Administrator position will now be divided into two positions, one more outward facing position will be hired as a consultant and another position will be hired with the state and will handle internal operations.  The next Care Council meeting will be on June 7, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. at The Children’s Board of Hillsborough County. |
| **COMMITTEE WORK PLAN UPDATE** | Members reviewed the Integrated Plan monitoring tool to assess if they wanted to add any of the Integrated Plan goals to the committee work plan. Members discussed potentially conducting a survey of providers to assess how long it takes for them to get people into care. This information may be tracked in e2-Hillsborough. Bobbi Lambert said she would look into it.  Bobbi also added that it would be interesting to see how the syringe exchange programs are doing down the road, how many clients they see and how many they refer into care. Staff, Katie Scussel, shared that there was a presentation on IDEA Exchange Tampa at the January Care Council meeting where they shared some of their data from the past year. Katie noted that maybe a similar presentation could be arranged with the Pinellas exchange, which just opened earlier this year.  Bobbi shared that she had attended a webinar the previous day on barriers to staying in care. Unstable housing and food insecurity were noted as the top two barriers. |
| **REVIEW PHARMACEUTICAL SPEND DOWN** | Members reviewed the AIDS Pharmaceutical Assistance (APA) and Emergency Financial Assistance (EFA) expenditures from the previous year. They also reviewed reports on drugs by frequency of prescription and total cost for the two budgets. Recipient staff, Dorinda Seth, explained that APA basically covers things that are not on the ADAP formulary. EFA is used for short term assistance, usually before people are enrolled in ADAP or another program.  The antiretroviral drug Biktarvy was noted to have the highest cost under EFA at $84,191 for 34 prescriptions. Bobbi noted that the costs shouldn’t be so high as it’s easy to get samples from the pharmaceutical company. Lisa Nugent asked if there is a prescription assistance program for Biktarvy. Peggy Wallace said that samples are so plentiful it is easy to bridge people with them, so they don’t usually need assistance. Lisa asked why the pharmacy provider isn’t going through a prescription assistance program. Members also wanted to know which providers the prescriptions were coming from, whether they were Ryan White providers or not, and whether prescription numbers were trending up or down. Dorinda said she would follow up with Leslie Betts for clarification.  Bobbi asked what the wait time was like currently for ADAP in Pinellas. Peggy shared that she heard some case managers were having success scheduling clients online through the state ADAP. Missy Rahman shared that she has been telling clients to try going in as a walk-in, as it can take a long time to get an appointment. Peggy also shared that the ADAP office is stationing people at agencies to help better reach people.  Dorinda stated that she recently found out that ADAP and Part B are paying for erectile dysfunction drugs. Part A has never paid for these drugs and were not sure if they were allowable. Dorinda said they have reached out to the project officer to get clarification. If these drugs are allowable, the committee may need to update the Part A formulary.  Peggy asked about the status of birth control on the formulary. There was a series of meetings years ago about this topic and debate about whether Ryan White should cover birth control as a payer of last resort since Title X covers it. Lisa remarked that Tampa Family, the main chains of federally qualified health centers in Hillsborough, is not doing Title X anymore, so birth control is not accessible within the county. Patients should not have to get multiple appointments just to get birth control, when that is something that can usually be accessed through your primary provider. |
| **DICUSS IMPACTS FROM RYAN WHITE ELIGIBILITY CHANGES AND MEDICAID ROLL OFFS** | Members discussed the Medicaid roll offs. Bobbi and Peggy said they had not seen impacts yet. The roll offs are happening in waves and it is estimated that 250,000 people in Florida will be thrown off their Medicaid plans. Children and medically vulnerable people are supposed to be in the last wave. Peggy commented that it should not be up to case managers to help people get enrolled in new insurance, as case managers are not necessarily insurance experts. Nikki Kish commented that in Polk they refer people to the navigators in the area.  Members also discussed the changes in Ryan White eligibility. Starting in November 2022, clients only need to update their eligibility once a year, rather than every six months. At the one-year mark, clients can sign a self-attestation form to update eligibility if there have been no significant changes in income. Dorinda commented that there has been an issue getting the state to sign off on the self-attestation form. |
| **COMMUNITY INPUT/ ANNOUNCEMENTS** | Peggy commented that in the work plan there was an item about increasing access to specialty care. Peggy said that her office has been trying without success to get Baycare to accept Ryan White for specialty care. Bobbi also said that she has had a hard time in Pasco getting any specialty care providers to work with them. Katie asked how specialty care works within Ryan White. Dorinda answered that providers get a lump sum in their contracts to spend on specialty care. The bill for these services goes to these providers and then they pay it out of their Ryan White funds. Dorinda noted that these services have to be HIV-related (i.e., they can’t pay for a broken arm).  Missy asked whether mental health care is covered. Dorinda said that yes, Part A covers mental health and listed the funded providers. Peggy shared that her office contracts with a really great provider, Neuropsychiatric Institute in Tampa, and that they take Medicaid. Members discussed whether this provider could become a Ryan White provider in the future but in order to provide Ryan White services agencies must be non-profits.  Bobbi announced that the Pasco Department of Health just signed a contract to move into a new building. Premier will have a dental clinic on site, so hopefully that will help more people access dental care. |
| **ADJOURNMENT** | There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:47 p.m. |