

State Mental Health Planning Council Employment Subcommittee

4/12/21

IN ATTENDANCE: Don Hughes (Co-Chair); Steve LaMaster (Co-Chair); Val Comerford; Kim Anderson; Kimyatta Campbell; Jon Delman; Jo Davis; Amelia Dillon; Reva Stein; Margaret Jordan; Michael Stepansky; Deb Kaluzny

1. Introductions / History of the Subcommittee: Don and Reva provided a short synopsis of the Subcommittee's purpose and history:

DMH is required to have a Mental Health Planning Council by virtue of receiving federal funds through the Mental Health Block Grant. The Council has created several subcommittees to deal with specific needs and has given subcommittees wide latitude as to their scope and functions. The purpose of the Council is to 1) consent to DMH's proposed uses of block grant funds and, 2) to advise DMH as to the grants use. Subcommittees have wide discretion to advise DMH on a variety of issues. Previously the Employment Subcommittee (ES) has successfully recommended the creation of DMH's Director of Employment position, and has also created recommendations related to the provision of employment services in ACCS, including a "bridge year" in between the end of CBFS and the start of services provided by MRC.

The question was raised as to whether the Subcommittee ever submits an annual report to DMH. Currently it does not, though this may be an area of interest for the future.

2. Goals: Prospective goals of the committee include:

- Address discrimination / equity within and across DMH Employment Services
- Improve services related to education and access to education
- Focus on "Career Track" jobs
- Identify and disseminate best practices

All committee members were in agreement that the next meeting should include a wider diversity of stakeholders to contribute to a revised Mission Statement for the subcommittee and then derive goals.

Representation should span all DMH populations and services that provide education/employment support, including: ACCS/MRC; Clubhouses; PACT; Young Adult programs. Committee membership should include persons actively receiving DMH services.

Suggestion to replace "Mental Illness" in the Mission Statement with "Mental health Conditions" or "Mental Health Challenges".

Members of the YDC (Youth Development Committee) often do not know where employment supports come from; having members of the YDC also on the ES would be a positive step to

reduce this confusion. Having Young Adult members may require setting meeting times around their availability (e.g. later).

3. Meeting Schedule: Don will send out a doodle poll to schedule our next meeting in late May. The group can decide to continue meeting monthly or less frequently.

Similar to the Housing Subcommittee, there is interest in opening ES meetings to large groups. ES subcommittee members do not need to be vetted by the existing committee or co-chairs.

All members would like to further diversify ES membership so all persons using employment services, regardless of race, ethnicity, service type, gender identity or sexual orientation, etc. are represented.