River Forest Mental Health Committee

Minutes January 3rd, 2023 at 6:30pm - In Person Meeting at the River Forest Community Center

Present: Helene Connolly, Kristin Sneeringer, Melinda Peterson, Elizabeth Davies, Jessica Starck, MD and Kathryn Schmahl

Absent: Elisabeth Dunne, Jonathan Howard, MD, and Jean Meister

Staff: Sarah Schwarting, LCSW, Mental Health Administrator

1. Melinda called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and conducted roll.
2. Public Comments, Amanda Lopez from Thrive Counseling Center:
   * Thrive offers therapy for adults, children and families and offers a 24/7 crisis hotline.
   * Suicide prevention is a focus of Thrive’s work.
     1. Frequency: Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the US – 144 per day.
     2. Methods of suicide: poison (highest for women), firearm (highest for men), suffocation. Women attempt suicide 3x more often than men.
     3. Risk factors: depression, anxiety, substance abuse, isolation, family rejection, lack of social support, bullying, survivors of suicide loss
   * Thrive offers a suicide prevention training program, QPR: Question. Persuade. Refer.
     1. Likened to CPR, teaching lay people to perform QPR can help during a crisis
     2. QPR can be taught to youth and adults. Thrive wants to normalize this conversation which is intended to offer hope through positive action and is a universal intervention for anyone experiencing emotional distress.
     3. Four links to the chain of survival:
        1. Early recognition of suicide warning signs/distress signals
        2. Early application of QPR
        3. Early intervention, professional screening and assessment
        4. Early access to competent care providers
   * QPR Training teaches:
     1. How to recognize warning signs:
        1. Verbal, nonverbal
        2. Situational, behavioral
     2. How to ask the question (Q: Question)
     3. How to persuade someone to seek professional help (P: Persuade)
     4. Learning about local resources (R: Refer)
   * QPR saves lives. Knowledge + Practice = Action.
   * QPR is a universal intervention used nationally and internationally.
   * QPR is having a cardiology and mental health screening event on Sunday Jan 8th from 1-5pm at Thrive Counseling Center.
3. Kristin moved to approve the minutes from November 1st, 2022, Kathryn seconded and the motion was carried.
4. Township Report: No update.
5. Mental Health Administrator Report – Sarah Schwarting:
   * Parent University was not very well attended, the subjects were too dry and presentations need to have more tips parents can use at home. An in-person Parent University will be held in April.
   * All the funding applications are in.
   * Quarter 3 data will come in this month.
   * According to the CDC kids should be screened for anxiety starting at age 8 and major depression at age 11.
   * Carla and Sarah attended the annual Township Supervisors of Illinois conference and Sarah attended a presentation on new housing options for an aging America and one on food banks.
   * Welcome to Jessica Starck our new committee member.
   * Melinda Peterson is our new chairperson after Richard Lim, MHC member for 17 years decided to retire.
   * We are looking for a new committee member – may have one possibility, but Jean Meister will likely be stepping down after this year and so we will need two new members.
   * Site visit assignments will be ready tomorrow as well as examples of past reports and sample guide questions.
   * Together we will start to work on resource guides for the community.
   * The HUB is trying to better track its users.
   * The Behavioral Health and I/DD consortiums will meet this month.
   * Positive Youth Development will host a marijuana use prevention town hall meeting Feb 9th.
   * The suicide loss survivors group resumed meetings at the community center last November and will continue to meet the 3rd Monday of every month.
   * A mental health committee in Hawaii, run by a former RFT MHC committee member requested our application for use as they begin to form their process.
   * D90 and D97 will likely contract with Dr. Doug Bolton for assistance in forming inclusive classrooms. Dr Bolton works at Formative psychological services in Northbrook and has worked with 22 school districts in the state.
   * Older adults will have a new mental health option in PEARLS – Program for Empowering Active Rewarding Lives. This program is a community mental health outreach program where seniors would meet in-home with a provider approximately 6-8 times over the course of 19 weeks.
   * The IPLAN implementation meeting took place on December 8th and will continue to meet for follow up meetings over the course of calendar year 2023
   * The Plan It Green Leaders meeting was well attended and gave out institutional highlights for 2022 from the Cross Community Climate Collaborative or C4
   * Addiction Recovery Team: no update
6. NAMI: Melinda Peterson
   * On January 19th from 5:30-7:30pm, the Oak Park Community Mental Health Board is having an event at the library. Community providers and vendors will be present. Signup is required.
   * The Wellness Recovery Action Plan meets weekly in Oak Park
   * Proposed use of MHC funds to support NAMI through the River Forest Running Club
7. Other Updates from MHC Members: none
8. Old Business: none
9. New Business:
   * Melinda expressed a preference for performing in-person site visits for this year’s grant reviews.
   * Sarah asked for any preferences in working with particular agencies during the grant review process.
   * Kristin asked if the MHC could be trained in QPR.
10. The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 7th at 6:30pm at the River Forest Community Center.
11. Elizabeth motioned to adjourn and Jessica seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:18pm.