

**North Country Health
Consortium Board of Directors
Meeting
July 10th, 2020
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.**

Present:

- **Board:** Mike Lee, Mike Counter, Suzanne Gaetjens-Oleson, Curtis Metzger, Greg Culley, Ed Duffy, Ken Gordon, Scott Colby, Tara Mackillop
- **Staff:** Becky McEnany, Cathy Roy, April Mottram, Francine Morgan

Meeting called to order 8:34 a.m.

Welcomed Greg Culley, the Interim CEO of Indian Stream Health Center, to the Board

Consent Agenda

- **June 12th, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes**

Scott Colby made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 12th meeting.

Ken Gordon seconded the motion.

The motion passed, all in favor.

- **May Financials:** Year to date loss through May is just over \$418,000, all due to Friendship House. This loss does not reflect the Payroll Protection Program - we do not know how much is forgivable yet so we are currently acting as if none is forgivable. To date, NCHC has received \$798,800 from the Payroll Protection Program and a supplement of approximately \$68,000 from the Medicaid MCOs. Cathy will break out financials next month to show all of NCHC's Clinical SUD services, not only Friendship House.

Mike Counter made a motion to approve the May financials as approved by the Finance Committee. Scott Colby seconded.

The motion passed, all in favor.

Follow-up Action Items

- **Exec. Committee/Sr. Leadership Meeting:** The first meeting between the Executive Committee from NCHC's Board of Directors and NCHC's Senior Leadership Team went well and the group decided to meet monthly moving forward as a way to foster collaborative opportunities and get to know each other better.
- **Strategic Planning Session:** We need to convene a strategic planning session for early fall. Becky will send out a Doodle poll to find a time that works best.
- **Friendship House Sustainability Committee:** Becky and Mike have created a list of action items related to the sustainability of Friendship House and are working to convene a group of people to discuss these items. The group will be a mix of NCHC staff and Board members. Please let Mike or Becky know if you would like to participate. Becky will send out a Doodle Poll to find a time to convene a meeting.
 - Current work is underway to review the clinical programs, financials, and data from the last 2 years to determine a plan for financial sustainability.
 - Met with AHEAD and will be meeting soon with CFDA to discuss the restricted beds at

- Friendship House.
- Continuing to look at payer mix and commercial contracting to help to close the revenue gap.
 - Meeting with legislators and working to schedule a meeting with BDAS to look at reimbursement rate challenges.
 - Need to keep the daily census at 24 to be profitable but this has only happened once in the last 2 years, back in October 2019.
 - We are reaching out to other treatment facilities to see what we can learn as it relates to sustainability.
 - The Friendship House Sustainability Committee will serve as a sounding board and look at strategies to help with sustainability: 1) What else should we be trying that we have not thought about? 2) Are we doing everything that we can do to make current model work?
 - Mike Lee would like at least one other Board member to participate in the sustainability committee to help with problem solving and networking. Suzanne, Tara, and Scott all volunteered to participate.
 - Based on waitlists at other facilities and the statistics of SUD issues in Coos County there should be potential clients and revenue for Friendship House if the restrictions on income eligibility for bed access can be addressed.

Other Financial Updates

- **Grant and Funding Updates:**
 - The grant matrix for HRSA's Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) funding opportunity was included in the Board packet. The grant goal is to reduce the incidence and impact of NAS in rural communities, and the project would start in September 2020. Gathering data for the grant has been challenging, but efforts will continue to get a submission prepared which focuses on expansion of the PETRA program. The grant is due July 20th.
 - Have not heard back about the Partnership for Success grant
 - Applied to Eversource for about \$20,000 to help with furnishings and equipment needed for Friendship House
- **Commercial Insurance:** We are in a holding pattern with United Health until we meet with the company that does the billing for Friendship House so we can learn more about the inpatient and outpatient billing codes that are allowed to be used. After this meeting we will go back to Optum to continue contract discussions. Insurance contracting conversations with CIGNA will be happening soon
 - Medicaid covers 83% of the cost to provide care at Friendship House.
 - Working with AHEAD to explore possibility of opening up more unrestricted income beds to improve the payer mix for sustainability. NCHC went for CARF accreditation so we could get payment from commercial payers.
 - NCHC hopes to engage Commissioner Shibinette in these conversations.
 - Friendship House is currently licensed for 30 beds. NH Housing Finance Authority (building funder) has restricted the income guidelines for bed accessibility for 29 of the beds to be used for low-moderate income clients.
 - Other barriers to maintaining census include providing proof of NH residency, getting medical records, and getting signed prescriptions ahead of admission. We need to find ways to remove these barriers and get clients access to treatment services. If clients are coming from another facility they do not experience this issue because often these barriers have already been addressed.
 - We need to work on referral relationships and strengthening ties with other facilities.

- **Advocacy:**
 - Becky and Mike met with Congresswoman Annie Kuster to discuss the funding challenges of Friendship House.
 - The meeting with Maggie Hassan needs to be rescheduled.
 - There are efforts underway to meet with the BDAS team and Dave Mara, who works closely with Governor Sununu.

Updates

- **Staffing Status:** All staff are back to work, and Friendship House has reopened with 4 clients. The plan is to slowly ramp up services and add 2 clients every few days to see how the new processes and protocols are working.
- **Program Updates:** Program updates are now included in the Board packet. Please let Becky know if there are any questions. Scott thanked Becky, Diana and Annette for attending the UCVH Board meeting to discuss the PETRA program – the educational session was well received. Friendship House staff will work on intakes to get 14 clients in the facility, all in single rooms. The goal is to slowly increase the capacity as it is safe to do so, with the hopes to be at full capacity by end of September.
- **Program Highlights** (Francine Morgan)
 - **Drug Treatment Court:** NCHC's Grafton County Drug Treatment Court contract has been renewed for another year. The program went through a successful peer review process which included the Hillsborough Drug Treatment Court team, a judge from Hillsborough County and the State contact from the Bureau of Justice who reviewed and assessed the Grafton County Drug Treatment Court program.
 - The Grafton County Drug Treatment Court team are very committed to the work they do which includes helping a difficult and challenging population to address their substance misuse outside of judicial constraints. They were the first Drug Treatment Court team in NH to stand up telehealth when the COVID-19 pandemic started.
 - There are currently 9 clients in the program and 10 waiting to participate. There is the capacity under the contract to accept 20-22 people. It is a challenge to get people into the program and to get them to stay engaged. If things get difficult and clients opt to leave the program there is a warrant for their arrest to go back to jail, and they have to start over. Clients need to be considered both high risk and high needs and charged with a felony to be eligible for the program.
 - Northern Human Services holds the contract for Coos and Carroll Drug Treatment Court
- **Public Health Advisory Council** (April Mottram): NCHC's Board of Directors also serve as the Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC) for the North Country Public Health Network. The PHAC helps to identify regional public health priorities based on assessments of community health. It is time to develop a new 3-year Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for the region because the current one is for the period of 2018-2020. Currently, the six priority areas in the CHIP are: Obesity, Oral Health, Public Health Emergency Preparedness, Substance Misuse, Heart Disease & Stroke, and Mental Health. Staff will be working over the upcoming months to research

community health needs assessments and reaching out to partners in the region as work is done to develop the new CHIP.

- **Communications and Marketing (Francine Morgan):** Francine shared a PowerPoint depicting the depth and breadth of NCHC's marketing, communications, and human resource department.
 - Francine shared new program stamps and asked everyone to look at the NCHC website because it has been updated and is a great repository of information.
 - NCHC staff have a wide variety and depth of skills, and the organization is looking to recruit, retain, encourage, and motivate employees to help meet NCHC's mission. NCHC has been working to separate human resource and finance functions – the organization has grown so much and needs a dedicated human resource department to focus on employee needs and regulatory compliance. The Human Resource Department will be working to streamline processes and reduce staffing turnover at Friendship House.
 - NCHC's organizational chart in 2012 reflects 13 staff members; the current organizational chart depicts 63 staff, and not long ago we had 80 employees. Many processes from 2013 are no longer efficient and there is a need for more structure due to the rapid growth of the organization.
 - 25% of NCHC staff have started a new position in last 90 days and 80% of senior staff have a new role. These organizational changes are due to staff reductions and attrition. Although the team is strong it takes time for adjustments to occur and solid foundations to form.
 - NCHC leadership is looking at each job description to assess roles and responsibilities and determine if there are opportunities for cross-training.
 - 30 of the 63 staff positions work at Friendship House. NCHC's turnover rate is highest at Friendship House. Staff has been working to restructure the staffing model at the facility, especially as it relates to Recovery Support Staff (RSS). These positions are challenging to fill - the work is hard, we need 24x7 coverage, and providing competitive market rate wages is a challenge due to reimbursement rates.
 - NCHC is working hard to create a supportive work environment for Friendship House staff, but COVID-19 has added to staffing challenges: What happens when we need to send staff home – what does that mean for an overnight shift? We still need adequate staff in that space.
 - NCHC did receive Long-Term Care Stabilization funds and this money can be used through the end of July to help support RSS staff. The organization also brought in a representative from the Employee Assistance Program to do a 1&1/2 hour facilitated conversation about coming back to work during a pandemic. The conversation focused on stress and anxiety related to COVID-19 risks, having to wear personal protective equipment, and the new processes and protocols in place.
 - Francine and Becky have been reviewing salaries across the

organization and plan to create salary bands for the various staff positions - the goal is a pay structure which aligns jobs with similar responsibilities to be in the same pay range.

- NCHC is also rolling out a new supervisor training series so all supervisors use the same language, understand policies, and have the opportunity for professional skill development as a group.

Other:

Scott Colby made a motion to adjourn the meeting

Curtis Metzger seconded the motion

All in favor, meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

July 27th 12-1pm: Executive Committee and Sr. NCHC Leadership Team Meeting

Next NCHC BOD Meeting: August 14th, 2020- 8:30-9:30

Action Register			
Follow-up Action Needed	Due Date	Responsible Person (primary and secondary)	Completed
Form ad hoc committee to look at sustainability of Friendship House	By June 12, 2020	Becky McEnany/ Mike Lee	X
Re-Evaluate NCHC Interim CEO status	By August 1, 2020	Becky McEnany/Mike Lee	
Schedule meeting to revisit NCHC Strategic Plan	By September 11, 2020	Becky McEnany /Mike Lee	X Scheduled for 9/4 and 9/10
Continue third party payer negotiations	On-going	Scott Colby/Cathy Roy	
Review NCHC Leadership Updates (program updates) and let Becky know if you have any questions	On-going	Becky McEnany	
Let Becky or Mike know if you would like a different format or content for Board meetings	On-going	Becky McEnany/Mike Lee	
Seek waiver from NH Financing Authority for additional beds at Friendship House can be used for clients with commercial insurance	September 1, 2020	Becky McEnany/Cathy Roy	

Board of Directors Attendance 2019/2020														
Directors	Conflict Interest	Nov	Dec	Jan	Spec. Meet	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Colby, Scott							X	X	X	X				
Counter, Michael	X	X	Ab	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Duffy, Ed, MD	X	X	Ab	X	X	X	Ab	Ab	Ab	X				
Gaetjens-Oleson, Suzanne	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Ab	X	X				
Gordon, Ken	X	Ab	X	X	X	X	X	Ab	X	X				
Lee, Michael	X	X	X	Ab	X	X	X	X	X	X				
MacKillop, Tara	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Metzger, Curtis Rev.	X	X	X	X	Ab	X	X	X	Ab	X				
Nielson, Lars MD.	X	Ab	Ab	X	Ab	X	Ab	Ab	Ab					
Robillard, Jeanne	X	X	X	Ab	Ab	Ab	X	X	X					
Woods, Karen	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Culley, Greg											X			

- Scott Colby resumed his position on the NCHC Board of Directors in March 2020 so Laurie Daley has been removed from the attendance chart
- Kristina Fjeld-Sparks and Ed Shanshala resigned their positions in January 2020 so their positions have been removed from the attendance chart
- Kevin Kelley is no longer with Indian Stream Health Center so Greg Culley is representing the organization and has been added to the attendance chart effective July 2020