



1704 Market Street, Wheeling, WV 26003

MINUTES FROM HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

3/13/15

Attending: Chuck Knight, Youth Services Systems, Inc. cknight@ysswv.com ; Mark Games, Northwood Health Systems mgames@northwoodhealth.com ; Terry McCormick, St. John's Home for Children terry@stjohnshome.net ; Carry DeAtley, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, WVNCC cdeatley@wvncc.edu ; Kathy Herrington, Program Director, Human Services kherrington@wvncc.edu .

Regrets: Warren Galbreath, Ohio University Eastern Galbreat@ohio.edu ; Terry Stemple, Healthways, Inc. TStemple@healthwaysinc.com

We began the meeting with introductions and a discussion of educational credentials required under WV Medicaid or at the agencies represented. Mr. McCormick indicated that as of July 1 of this past year, he is unable to hire any staff as youth care workers who do not have a bachelor's degree because they would be unable to deliver any services except for daily living skills. We discussed what is a "related field", and Mr. McCormick believed that this would probably include social work, psychology, criminal justice, and education. Information was provided to committee members about the 2+2 programs in this discipline.

Ms. Herrington asked whether a Board of Regents degree would be considered and he was not sure about this. Mr. McCormick needs to hire staff who can legitimately provide "supportive counseling", which is a primary service offered to the residents of this agency. Mr. Games indicated that he always has staff turnover at his agency, and although he prefers to hire people who have some college credits or an associate degree, he often has a need for multiple positions and would hire individuals with associate degrees and individuals with high school diplomas, provided they could successfully pass a background check and meet other requirements of the agency. Mr. Knight also indicated that, due to a high turnover rate at his agency, he would also prefer to hire individuals with associate degrees but would hire those with high school diplomas as well.

It was also suggested that we make some changes to the program description page, which mentions the word "mental health or crisis intervention technicians". These positions now require a bachelor's degree and so this should be removed so as not to misinform students about positions for which they qualify. It was also suggested to encourage students to pursue a four year degree, and let them know that they will need this eventually to become licensed or be employable in many human services positions.

They were interested in the # of graduates in the related 2+2 programs, on which some information was provided due to the fact that many of these students take courses that are also required in the Human Services program, but it was explained that these are not technically considered "human services" students and therefore could not be counted in this program review. It may be helpful in the future to also provide the # of graduates in these "related" programs. The consensus was that at this time the Associate degree does provide for more qualified applicants for some entry-level human services positions, but in the future we may need to focus more on the 2+2 bachelor's level programs to provide the minimum credential required for many positions. It appears that this is a WV based rule, as Ms. Herrington received information back from graduates who reported that they were able to obtain positions as "case managers" in the state of Ohio.

Questions and recommendations: Mr. Games asked about whether HS 150, Introduction to Substance Abuse, focused mostly on alcoholism, as the course description seemed to indicate that. He recommended that we update the course dx to include “opiod abuse”, which has become a huge problem in recent years, “evidence-based treatment” and that the master course guide include the new treatment approaches and new medications that are being used for withdrawal and to prevent overdose. He also suggested that the course description for HS 147 – Understanding Human Diversity, be updated to specifically mention the LGBTQ population as one that will be covered in the diversity class. Ms. Herrington believed this is already covered but thought it was a good idea to include it in the course dx. Committee members also asked about HS 100 and HS 210, which both mention “ethics”, and reinforced that there should be a strong emphasis in this area, particularly regarding professional impairment due to substance abuse.

It was also suggested that we add some more specific things to the internship manual about background checks that are now required through a centralized agency like DHHR. We also discussed whether some mention should be made about online bachelor’s degree programs in the internship manual or somewhere else to provide students with options for furthering their education after they complete their associate’s degree. Mr. Games also suggested that we add three more offenses to the list of convictions that might make someone ineligible for a position in human services. These include: any type of battery, healthcare fraud, and felony forgery.

Finally, the members of the committee shared information about an online job site that often yields more applications than standard means (indeed.com). In reviewing written comments provided by Mr. Games, he asked about who the “external reviewers” are, mentioned in the program review. The advisory committee fills the role of external reviewers, as well as faculty and staff who are outside the human services program, particularly those who serve on the assessment committee. The program review will be finalized after these reviews and recommendations about suggested changes will be presented to the Curriculum Committee early next fall. He also asked about the reasons for the enrollment decline in the last several years. We attribute that to the plethora of jobs in the oil & gas industry and trend changes to programs in mechatronics, petroleum technology, welding, computer technology, and health programs that only require a two year degree to be employed at a competitive salary.

Submitted by,

Kathy Herrington

Kathy Herrington, M.S., M.A., LSW

Professor; Program Director, Human Services

3/23/15