

Alaska FASD Partnership Steering Committee
MINUTES - February 16, 2011

Present: Vickie Tinker, Mike Jeffery, Stephanie Johnson, Jeri Museth, DeeDee Raymond, Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus, Cindy Anderson, Amy Hansen, Teri Tibbett

Approval of Agenda - Approved

Approval of Minutes 1/12/11 - Approved

Legislative Update

- Budget Priorities (Teri)
 - Invited steering committee members to review the “FY12 Budget Priorities related to FASD” and choose three top priorities to advocate for this session;
 - Suggested the Early Childhood Screening Package budget request put forth by the Alaska Mental Health Board/Advisory Board on Alcoholism because it’s one of the recommendations from the Partnership’s December summit
 - Suggested the IDP+ budget request put forth by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority’s Disability Justice Focus Area because it supports clinicians working in Corrections; DeeDee, who does releases for Corrections, said there are too many clients per worker and they need the other worker this funding would pay for, stressing the importance of supervising inmates with cognitive impairments.

- Legislative Presentations related to FASD on March 16 (Teri)
 - House and Senate Education committees: FASD and the Education system presented by Cindy Anderson, Monica Leinberger, Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus and her daughter Ivory, and Mindy Cason, 26 year old UAA student who experiences FASD;
 - Legislative Health Caucus (same participants)

Diagnosis/Parent Navigation Workgroup

TeleHealth

Teri - Has been researching TeleBehavioral Health Networks statewide and discovered available networks through ANTHC, API, SEARHC, ASHNHA that could be utilized for screening, diagnosis, follow-up, support, etc. First step is to develop a strategy for how they could be used in these areas.

Vickie – Suggested Dr. Phil Matheis as a possible person for participating in/helping develop a strategy for using TeleHealth networks for screening/diagnosis/follow-up/support. He used to live in Alaska, is knowledgeable about cultural practices, and possibly interested in returning to Alaska. He may be open to alternatives to the 4-digit code if that is required to expand diagnosis in rural areas. He is currently working at Children’s Hospital in Cincinnati. Suggestion: Solicit his input, continue researching necessary steps for accessing networks.

Jeanne - Concerned that TeleHealth may not work in all cases. Comprehensive evaluation may be difficult and not as effective. Doesn’t want to see diagnosis capability compromised. Wants to be sure they can still do a good job even without the entire diagnostic process.

Vickie – Suggested diagnosis would still begin with a face-to-face, but would use the network for follow-up. Is this “something” better than nothing.

Jeri – Southeast Alaska’s TeleHealth network is getting more and more sophisticated and there are a lot of people benefiting from it.

DeeDee – No way they (at Corrections) could accommodate the needs of the whole state without the TeleHealth network; they use it for managing medications, care, and consultations.

Stephanie – TeleHealth is appropriate for part of the diagnostic process, but not the whole process

Screening Tools

Still researching tools. Those attending FASD Conference in Vancouver B.C. will look out for effective tools being used in other countries/states.

EPSDT

See position paper offered by Alaska Mental Health Board/Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse sent with agenda.

Family Peer Support Workgroup

Jeanne reviewed the workgroup’s meetings on January 19-20 (see minutes for details).

Diagnosis

Jeanne - Ongoing support is very important. Families need someone they can touch base with on a consistent basis. It’s possible to get kids diagnosed with a developmental disability (DD), but need to word things in such a way to make it work. Other possible qualification: functional impairment, cognitive impairment, obtained from neuro-psych evaluation – need to recognize kids with high IQ but who lack the functionality to use it.

AK Peer Support Consortium

Invitation for members of the Partnership to join; Peer Support is gaining momentum in the legislature; Robyn (executive director of AKPSC) is working with University, AMHTA, Trust Training Cooperative, DHSS, DOC to develop Peer Specialist training and workforce development; Teri is working to establish avenues for training across agencies.

Expand FASD Camps

Trish from Volunteers of America is working on a proposal to expand camps to three other locations statewide, using the “FASD in Action Training.” Stephanie suggested Camp Nuuk (outside of Nome) might be an option too, operated by Norton Sound Behavioral Health, contact Jay David or Renee Brown.

Prevention/Treatment Workgroup

Don’t Drink When You’re Pregnant Signage

Teri reported that Diane Casto was working on getting sign ideas from other states and the CHARR supported this and was willing to help make it happen; Mike asked about Alaska Airlines former practice of having signage, do they still?

Mushers

Ardyce is coordinating with John Simon (Bethel) who spoke at musher banquet and handed out brochures; Teri talked with Libby Riddles who offered a list of ideas, including contacting Joann Potts at Iditarod Race, message on sledogcentral.com, facebook post on Joe Reddington’s page, making an FASD facebook page, “friending” well-respected Alaskans, like Pamyua, Jeannie Greene (Heartbeat Alaska), Blatchford family in Nome, Rep. Reggie Joule, sending a packet to Jeannie Greene of “Heartbeat Alaska.”

Stephanie will talk with Melissa Owens, a young woman musher from Nome, well-known and respected in the region, third Iditarod race, may be interested in doing promotion on FASD.

Education Workgroup

Cindy - Has call in to Commissioner Hanley to discuss FASD; will participate in the panel before the House and Senate Education Committees and Legislative Health Caucus on March 16 in Juneau.

Legal System Workgroup

Mitigating Factor

Mike Jeffery: 1) Reported on the proposed felony sentencing mitigating factor to allow a judge to have the possibility of reducing the “presumptive term” when sentencing serious felonies and repeat felony offenders. It would provide some flexibility and save taxpayers funds by reducing time in jail and increasing time in alternative programs like a halfway house. After talking with Teresa Carns and Larry Cohn at the Alaska Judicial Council about the status of this mitigating factor recommendation that had been approved by the Alaska Criminal Justice Assessment Commission, Mike talked with Steve Williams of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority about Steve’s experience on Governor Parnell’s transition team when he proposed this mitigating factor. It was opposed by Department of Law representatives and did not make the cut for transmittal to the Governor. On the other hand the transition team supported Department of Corrections' proposals to enhance screening of all inmates when they enter the jail system and also to provide more treatment in the jail and transition services when people leave the jail. These initiatives would help the population affected by FASD. 2) Mike also reported that he is the chair of the FASD/Substance Abuse Work Group of the Alaska Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee. AJJAC is having a meeting in Juneau in late March and will be discussing a recommendation that the Division of Juvenile Justice allow more federal funds to be made available directly to local communities. This change may take a couple of years to implement, though. There would be more funds available locally to provide support for juvenile justice youth. 3) Mike also discussed the effort to have the Alaska Bar Association support the resolution the Canadian Bar Association past in fall, 2010 urging the government to adapt the justice system for people with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). The Alaska resolution is complicated; because we would need to have a whole new resolution (the Canadian one is too specific to the Canadian justice system to be meaningful here). Deadline for resolutions for the annual meeting of the Alaska Bar Association is March 23. If resolutions are submitted in February, they will be published in the monthly newspaper that is sent out to lawyers and judges. Mike is attending the FASD conference in Vancouver, BC in early March and will be on a panel with Canadian and American judges talking about adapting the courtroom procedures to people with a FASD. It may be best to wait on the resolution project until after that meeting.

Rural Mental Health Services

Stephanie – During the week of January 10-13, OJJDP (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention) Consultant Dr. Lee Underwood traveled to Fairbanks, Nome and St. Michael for a site visit to gather information on DJJ’s rural mental health services. In Fairbanks and Nome, Dr. Underwood met with the mental health clinician(s), facility and probation supervisors, and other staff to discuss how the mental health needs of these youth are met within the facility and about the transitioning of these youth from both detention and treatment back to their home communities. In the Village of St. Michael, Dr. Underwood met with the grandparents of a youth with an FASD who began his involvement with the Juvenile Justice System at the age of 10 years old and the aunt of a DJJ Youth with an FASD who is currently institutionalized in Bethel Youth Facility after being in a number of treatment centers beginning at the age of 10 years. Dr. Underwood learned firsthand the trials and heartache experienced by relatives and caregivers of youth with an FASD due to the lack of services and understanding for the

youth in the rural areas. Dr. Underwood plans to recommend the need for enhanced training for staff on the subject of FASD, and the need for increased screening and diagnostics for youth in his final report to the Division of Juvenile Justice; also presented to Regional Wellness Forum on Partnership activities and how people can help, and join the movement.

Public Defenders' referrals

Vickie – Dr. MacIntosh did a clinic at Wildwood this week and noted Public Defender's office is paying for FASD assessments (using full diagnostic team, neuropsychologist, speech pathologist, clinician, etc.) The referrals and payments are coming from PD's office.

Corrections push to reduce recidivism

Teri - Talked about Corrections movement to reduce recidivism and how Commissioner Joe Schmidt of Corrections spends most of his time during his presentation to the legislature talking about the programs they're instituting to reduce recidivism, including substance abuse treatment, mental health services, transition services, P.A.C.E., and more; here seems to be a paradigm shift in Corrections toward rehabilitation, very different from previous commissioners; they site cost savings and reducing the need to build more prisons.

Additional screening tools and training in Corrections

DeeDee - In December 2010, the Department of Corrections (DOC) added the following question to the Criminal Booking Screen: Brief Mental Health Screen, "Do you have fetal alcohol spectrum disorder?" The mental health section of the screening tool asks 8 questions related to various mental illnesses, 1 question regarding traumatic brain injury and the new one about FASD. The screen is a self-reporting tool and is reviewed by a DOC Mental Health Clinician if the inmate answers "yes" to certain questions, including the one about FASD. For anyone who answers "yes" to the FASD question, the Mental Health Clinician's in the correctional centers around the state have been instructed to use the Forensic Assessment of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: FASD Experts Screening Questionnaire checklist. The FASD Experts Screening Questionnaire was developed by a group in Seattle, WA. DOC Behavioral Health Director Laura Brooks and Mental Health Release Director Colleen Patrick-Riley are very open and supportive of providing FASD training to the institutional and release mental health clinicians when an appropriate training or assessment tool is found or developed for offenders who have FASD.

Professional Development

Teri – Has scheduled a meeting in March with the Trust Training Cooperative, Alaska Mental Health Trust, UAA, Arctic FASD Regional Training Center, AK Peer Support Consortium, DHSS Workforce Development and others to discuss training across agencies, including Corrections, Courts, Education, Public Safety, DHSS, Substance Abuse Treatment Providers, and more. Also will discuss workforce development in the area of Peer Specialists. *Added after meeting:* Teri attended the Criminal Justice Working Group in Juneau and met with Quinlan Steiner of the Alaska Public Defender Agency. He suggested contacting Suzanne DiPietro, who is in charge of judicial training, about presenting at the Joint Criminal Justice conference in fall 2012 on the topic of FASD. He thought it would be a very welcome presentation. Also, he was interested to know more about what Kenai is doing regarding their referrals for FASD diagnosis. She has a call in to the Kenai's PD office to find out more.

Adult Services

No report