

Community health depends on community voices

North Port CHAT Meeting Summary June 12, 2013, 4:30 pm

Present: Vanessa Carusone, Maureen Coble, Kari Ellingstad, Linda Stone, Janis Russell, Dave Powell, Bruce Burton, Deborah Robinson, Hector Mendez, Ken Alexander, Sam George, Commissioner Rhonda DiFranco, Susan Owens, Susan Lord, Monica Becket, Rob Tabor, Diane Ramseyer

Welcome and Introductions – Everyone was welcomed and introductions were provided.

Special Presentation – Coastal Behavioral Health Services – Rob Tabor from Coastal provided the group with information on the services that Coastal provides to the community in the area of behavioral health. This includes services for both adolescents and adults, and services that range from prevention to acute care services.

- Journey Program is an adolescent program that provides case management and counseling services for teens with a substance abuse issue. These services are available 24/7, and are not provided within an office setting, rather within a community setting, including within the home and school. The age is up to 17 ½ years of age. 941.552.2687 is the number.
- Compass Program is an intensive residential program for adolescents – up to 25 – and is co-ed. Average stay is 4-6 months. 941.639.5535

Janis Russell indicated that there are private meeting rooms that could be requested for meeting.

There are several programs for Seniors including the prevention work of Jack Swanton that is very popular in our library system. Marylou Caldwell also does some screenings and brief, short term work based upon the former BRITE Program format.

Issues still remain in the waiting time to obtain services for those with Medicaid and uninsured, including accessing them locally. Sometimes it requires a traveling out of the city area. Additionally, having access to a psychiatrist for medication management is another issue. The North Port Family Health Center has a psychiatrist who is very limited in the client load and can only do brief therapy. Rob indicated that Coastal has utilized tele-psychiatry.

Ken Alexander and Rob explained some of the upcoming changes and possible enhancements that may come from the contract process. While there are some cuts projected, the process also has helped to emphasize a continuum of care process that could help identify and address the gaps and safety net services. Ken also encouraged the group to be sure that North Port is represented on some of the county-wide groups that discuss these issues.

Discussion on the added issues of healthcare reform and the turn-down of federal dollars ensued. This includes sending letters to legislators to tell the story of those affected by lack of services or access to those services. Also, telling the story to the local boards or committees that make decisions for the area. Kari also indicated that some community groups offer special opportunities to decision makers to walk-through experience that lays out a scenario of having to deal with a specific issue. This might be a good opportunity for the CHAT to work on.

Vanessa reminded group of all the accomplishments of the CHAT and that it can take on an issue and get a result. Over the next few months, the group will be looking at several issue areas and gathering

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information on their impact in North Port. This will also include looking at how other communities have addressed the issues (Kari will help gather this information) for possible replication or adaptation.

Meeting Changes – Volunteers needed

- Reminders – Janis Russell offered to send out the reminders
- Meeting Notes – Vanessa will take notes

Community and Committee Updates

- Backpack Angels/North Port Coalition for Homeless and Needy Children - No update
- NP D-Fy – 139 seniors received graduation cords and nearly 1900 North Port teens have joined since start. And, the expansion work continues in Venice and North Port.

Tomorrow – June 13th – there will be a forum for adults and teens on Retail Advertising and an open event for teens to join D-Fy.

- NP-ASAP – the coalition will be helping provide training on compliance checks and social hosting to law enforcement this summer. They will also be starting a campaign to build awareness of issue of the illegality of providing alcohol to minors.

Maureen Coble indicated that the county-wide coalition is also looking at Synthetic Marijuana and will be working on a plan – anyone is welcome to attend – let Maureen know.

At the beginning of the school year, the TeeNS (Teen Norms Survey) will be conducted in all middle and high schools in North Port. This will provide very valuable data specific to North Port that the coalition can use in its strategies and work plan. The coalition is very grateful to the principals for agreeing to participate.

• Community Announcements

- July 9th at 6 pm is a special meeting on how to become a foster parent, at Peace Christian Church.
- Saturday is the Fishing tournament – all free at 8 am at McKibbon Park – up to age 12.
- Sue Lord thanked All-Faiths Food Bank for starting a food bank at Atwater School. This reaches those on the other side of Toledo Blade and has been very successful and much used.
- Sam shared the success of the postal food drive.
- North Port Health Center has a new director, David Wertman, and Linda will invite him to the CHAT.

Meeting Dates to Remember

**July 10th – 4:30 pm – CHAT Meeting – North Port Police Dpt.
Homelessness and Children in North Port**

**August 14th, 4:30 pm – CHAT Meeting – North Port Police Dpt.
Juvenile Justice Issues in North Port**

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