

AFS BOARD OF DIRECTORS – SERVICES AND ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 23rd, 2023
5:55 pm
Microsoft Teams – Virtual



ATTENDANCE

- AFS Board of Directors:** Patricia R. Lofstrom(Chair) Sean Halliday Lucia O'Connor
 Rick Hamilton Dania Kuzbari
- AFS Staff:** Ali Juma, CEO Brenda Clarke, Manager of Community Services and Strategic Initiatives Stephanie Fetherston, Director of Services
 Obianuju Fadjo, Executive Assistant
- Youth Representatives:**
- Regrets:** William Johnson

MINUTES

1.0 Quorum Established.

2.0 Call to Order

Sean Halliday calls the meeting to order at 5:55 pm.

3.0 Review of Agenda

MOTION BIRT the Committee reviews and approves the November 23, 2023, agenda as presented.

Moved by: Rick Hamilton
Seconded by: Lucia O'Connor All in favour. CARRIED.

4.0 Review Previous Minutes

MOTION BIRT the committee approves the October 26, 2023, meeting minutes, as presented.

Moved by: Patricia Lofstrom Ricard
Seconded by: Lucia O'Connor All in favour. CARRIED.

5.0 New Business

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

The agency sent a request to the MCCSS for funding to cover the cost of two counselors that will help reduce the VAW waitlist. There may be an opportunity for the board to further the request in writing a letter to the regional director by highlighting the significance of the issue to the agency and the community so that AFS will receive the resources to ensure that this tragic incident will not re-occur.

An announcement was made to AFS staff regarding the removal of Master's degree requirement for Family and Adult Services Team. Hence, counselors without Master's degree can take on clients from the waitlist. The Master's degree was inherited as a requirement due to the amalgamation in 2001 between Algoma Child and Youth Services and Family Counselling Center of Sault Ste. Marie and Area. The Family Counseling Center had the adult services and thus, was contracted to provide Employee Assistance Program (EAP). One of the conditions for providing EAP services was that the person providing the services had to have a Master's degree.

Furthermore, the agency has made available an additional nine hours a week for staff to pick up more cases from the waitlist. In addition, AFS is redesigning intake services so that women on the waitlist can be provided with single therapy sessions such as is available to child and youth mental services in order to reduce wait-times.

Ali will put forward a resolution for the board at the next board meeting to consider moving a motion to declare IPV as an epidemic. There will be joint training for staff on IPV in the new year. Staff were directed to conduct risk assessment and safety plan in order to identify whether weapons are in the home.

Further discussions on IPV mitigation ensues and questions answered.

6.0 Standing Items

a. Awesome Team

i. Service Demand Report

Stephanie Fetherston provides the service demand report as presented.

The staff will undergo training on single therapy sessions (STS) so that they can maintain the purpose of STS, which is to provide a one-off service to clients while they wait for an intake service. In some cases, a client may only need one STS.

There has been an increase in crises service referrals – this can be attributed to the departure of a child and youth psychiatrist. In addition, cases which do not meet the criteria for crisis services have been included in the waitlist, however, some of these cases have been redirected to the right place.

Care and Treatment program has a gap in services is that there is no grade 7 and 8 program. There is a vacancy at East Algoma in the Intensive Treatment Service Counselor position. Considering whether to put the program on hold and inform the clients on the waitlist that the agency is no longer offering the service and offer them brief services in the meantime.

ii. Community Services Update

Brenda Clarke provides the community services report as presented.

The Youth Wellness Hub will likely have a soft opening in two weeks – two days, and possibly a grand community opening after Christmas.

a. Extraordinary Service

i. Privacy/Incident/Serious Occurrence/Complaints

a. Privacy

A complaint about some of the changes in our services by a family member involved with our supervised access – Sandie resolved the issue.

c. Busting Barriers

i. New Funding and Initiatives/Partnership Updates

Step-Up and Step-Down Funding application for the LIT. Also, awaiting a response from the Ministry regarding the IPV. The Youth Hub has applied for small grants - \$5,000. Also, an Addiction Treatment Counselor (.75 transitional counselor) – to work between the hospital and the Youth Hub.

AFS was picked for a new pilot program – Preventure. It is similar to Rebound.

ii. French Language Service/Culture Linguistics

AFS currently has bilingual Administrative Assistants at the LIT, Wawa, and Elliot Lake.

d. Inspiring Outreach

i. Lead Agency

No update

ii. Accreditation

No update

ii. Youth and Family Engagement

A family youth advisory council meeting was held last month. Five families attended and another meeting is scheduled for January. They plan to meet every other month. The NNM group were keynote speakers at the CMHO conference in November 2023.

7.0 Ongoing Business

a. Review Terms of Reference – meetings & operations

Deferred

8.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourns at 7:29 pm.

MOTION

BIRT the Committee adjourns the meeting at 7:29 pm.

Moved by: Patricia Lofstrom Ricard

Seconded by: Dania Kuzbari All in favour. CARRIED.