

Mental Health/Substance Abuse Strike Team Meeting Minutes **July 6, 2009**

In Attendance: Kevin Chinault, Kerry Dennis, Susan Goffard, Barbara Kopp, Miriam Lacher, Cheryl LeFlame, Elaine Levesque, Tammi Poswiatowski

Approval of Minutes: Two corrections are needed to the June 8th meeting minutes. Statewide Hurricane Exercise, Item #2: the contact name is Mr. *Allen* and strike team member is *Elaine*. Minutes will be corrected by Anne and approval to be voted upon at the August meeting.

PPHR: Tammi discussed that the Health Department is currently going through its re-recognition application process for Project Public Health Ready (PPHR). PPHR is an effective tool for increasing preparedness within the community and provides a comprehensive assessment of the all hazards preparedness. Tammi asked the strike team about providing mental health services for first responders. Kerry explained that fire, law enforcement, and EMTs have their own in-house services and would not be provided by this strike team. She further asked about debriefings, and Kerry stated that a debriefing was a very formal process usually done with first responders. This strike team would be defusing versus debriefing but not for first responders. Based on the team's Resource List and the information provided at this meeting, Tammi felt she had enough information for the PPHR.

Follow up "Gap Paper":

How long will it take a mental health professional from either Project Hope and/or the Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) to arrive? Project Hope is a disaster response crisis support service provided through the Central Florida Behavioral Health Network for this area. Once the governor has signed the disaster declaration, this strike team puts in a request to the Sarasota County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for Project Hope. The request goes up and down the state chain of command and Central Florida Behavioral Health Network is then contacted. Elaine spoke with Mr. Allen, Quality Director, who stated it took them two days after the disaster recovery center was open for Hurricane Fay to begin services. Kerry noted that it takes a few days to set up a recovery center, so it is likely to be a week to 10 days to have Project Hope actively engaged. In the meantime, the strike team will be contacting the MRC and then local agencies for mental health professionals. In a perfect world, the MRC volunteer can be on-site within 24 to 48 hours. Miriam asked Tammi if the EOC knew about Project Hope and if there were protocols or a series of checklists the EOC completes. If there are, she recommended that requesting assistance from Project Hope be on the EOC's checklist due to the time it takes to get the services activated. Tammi will speak with Anne Miller to see (1) if the EOC is familiar with Project Hope (2) the EOC has a checklist or chronology of activation and (3) if a representative from the EOC can attend a COAD meeting to hear a presentation about Project Hope by Mr. Allen.

Will the County have transportation for emergencies to hospitals or other facilities? Barb spoke with Rik Jimison, who handles the contract with Ambitran. Provided Ambitran is up and running, they would be able to provide Marchman Act and Baker Act transportation, however the contract does allow up to two hours for pickup. Kerry reminded everyone that general population shelters do have law enforcement on site, so law enforcement could possibly transport. Miriam asked what is being done at the special needs shelters. Tammi stated that Chris Griffith would be the one to answer those questions, so Barb will speak with Chris and report back at the next meeting.

Ethical Dilemma's & Pandemics: Miriam discussed the strike team's next educational presentation. Due to time constraints it will probably take place in either November or December. Elaine has contacted Professor Gerald Strand of Argosy University who stated he would be happy to be a member of the panel. Miriam has also arranged for Patti Reynolds and Davis Tornabene of SMH to be presenters. Tammi requested that either the Epidemiologist or the Medical Director from the Health Dept. be included. Tammi will provide Miriam with their e-mail addresses.

Standardized Tool: Kerry discussed the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS), an internationally recognized screening tool. There is a 21 and 42 scale available. The individual answers the questions, their score is calculated, and then a determination is made by the LMHC.

Meeting date: The next meeting is scheduled for August 3rd at 3:30 pm. Anne will book the meeting room, and e-mail the information to the team.

Other Business: Barb reminded the group of a previous discussion about sending out contact letters to mental health professionals about volunteering with the MRC. Susan explained that Tallahassee has included the website to register for the MRC on everyone's professional renewal card. The website asks them to choose the county they are interested in serving, and sends Susan an e-mail when someone has registered in Sarasota County. She stated she is getting two to three e-mails a week. It was decided there was not a need for contact letters on our part due to this new, electronic system.