State of the Council

Mid FY2010 Report of Activities

Christine Wendel, Chair
1/21/2010

A brief report on the Council’s activities and its impact on improving communications, increasing efficiency and efficacy, formalizing structure and functions as an advisory body to the New Mexico Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative.
The Behavioral Health Planning Council (BHPC) is now half way through this fiscal year, and we wish to take this opportunity to reflect on where we are, what we have accomplished and what we still need to do. In keeping with the FY 2008 and 2009 Annual Reports, our work for FY 10 continues to focus on improving communications, increasing effectiveness and efficiency, and organizational restructuring.

**IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS:**

*Video Conferencing:*

We continue to use video conferencing at our BHPC meetings; we alternate the host site between Santa Fe and Albuquerque with three remote sites alternating among Las Cruces, Roswell, Carlsbad, Farmington, Taos and Las Vegas. In addition, we have recently begun using Internet conferencing, such as gotomeeting.com, at the Adult, Substance Abuse, Children/Adolescents and Medicaid Subcommittees. By doing this, we are able to decrease our meeting costs associated with mileage and per diem expenditures but, more importantly, we are able to increase the participation particularly of the consumers and family members from the Local Collaboratives. We continue to improve / enhance the process, albeit not without many frustrating moments, and are ever optimistic that we will continue to succeed in decreasing costs and increasing the local consumer and family member voice.

*Website:*

The Purchasing Collaborative website underwent a change to improve easy access to meetings, announcements, and information on initiatives, legislation, local collaboratives and the BHPC. The website is [http://www.bhc.state.nm.us/index.htm](http://www.bhc.state.nm.us/index.htm). The BHPC Statutory Subcommittees are listed, with tabs for meeting minutes, meeting handouts, and a description of their statutory missions.

*Community Outreach:*

BHPC / LC Summit: The Second Annual BHPC/LC Summit was held in December in conjunction with the Purchasing Collaborative Conference. It continues to provide a wonderful opportunity for Local Collaboratives to network and share information with one another by bringing together more than 200 people from across the state. The workshops were conducted by local collaborative members who highlighted their local initiatives. Among the initiatives were: Supportive Housing; Traditional Healing: Mental Health Jail Diversion Programs; Helping People Experiencing Homelessness and Disabilities.

Behavioral Health Day at the Legislature will be Thursday, January 28, 2010 This will be the 4th annual event and will be held in the Rotunda of the Capitol to honor persons who have served the behavioral health system in various roles, including law enforcement, local government, providers, family members and consumers. Eighteen individuals will be recognized in a public ceremony. As in the past three years, Senator Mary Kay Papen sponsored the Memorial to recognize January 28th as Behavioral Health Day - our continued thanks to her for her support.

**INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY:**

The BHPC has improved on providing information ahead of time in preparation for discussions and decision-making on action items. This has become more and more important as we have gotten away from face-to-face meetings, and we work more via video or Internet conferencing.
The BHPC continues to clarify and develop functions of the BHPC, the Local Collaboratives and the Statutory Subcommittees. Specifically, we need to improve clarity and give better direction on the functions of the Statutory Subcommittees and their relationships to the Council and the Local Collaboratives. We believe the work of the BHPC needs to happen primarily in the Statutory Subcommittees. So, to that end, we are focusing much of our attention on the organizational systems of those Subcommittees.

In general, we believe that the best way to increase our effectiveness as the advisory body to the Purchasing Collaborative is, in fact, to continually evaluate and improve the operational systems of the BHPC and its Subcommittees.

**RESTRUCTURE ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONS:**

We have updated our By-laws as well as our Policies & Procedures. We would like to point out several changes which have helped us to better do our work. They are, as follows:

The Statutory Subcommittees now have a voting member seat set aside for each of the Local Collaborative which increases the local consumer and family voice without increasing the size of the BHPC.

With the previous By-laws, we have had difficulty reaching a quorum at BHPC meetings. The new By-laws, as well as adjusting the Agenda to have action items later in the day, have eliminated that problem.

Now that the BHPC only meets four times a year, it became necessary to establish systems to allow the members to vote on issues that may arise, and need to be decided on, prior to the next meeting. To that end, we are now able to vote electronically; we have done this successfully several times.

Frequently, State Departments/Agencies and outside entities come before the BHPC requesting Endorsement / Letters of Support. In the past, we have not had any formal process to act upon these requests. In the revised Policies & Procedures manual, there is a section that now deals with this situation. To date, we have written the following Letters of Support: The grant application for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program, School Mental Health Capacity Building Partnership Pilot Training Initiative, the Success in Schools workgroup, the Infant Mental Health Workgroup, the Children’s System of Care and the Maternal Depression Workgroup.

To assist us in better understanding and being responsive to the costs associated with the BHPC and its Statutory Subcommittees, we have established a Finance Subcommittee whose responsibilities are, as follows:

- Develop an annual budget for the BHPC and our Statutory Subcommittees one month prior to the beginning of every fiscal year.
- Submit an Income Statement for the BHPC and our Statutory Subcommittees one month following the first six months, as well as the end of every fiscal year which will track against the proposed Budget.
- Make quarterly recommendations regarding when, and if, reimbursements to members for stipends, mileage and per diem shall be awarded, based on the availability of funds

**ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

We have made recommendations to the Purchasing Collaborative regarding the following: SM 71, Community Reinvestment, Strategic Priorities, Legislative Priorities for the Local Collaboratives, Medicaid Cost Containment Overarching Principles, Award Recipients for the 2009 Collaborative Conference, the extension of the CADAC to LADAC legislation to 2012, and Reviews for the CMHS and SAPT Block Grants.
FUTURE:
Lastly, and maybe most importantly, we would like to address several issues that continue to face the Local Collaboratives. Although this may not seem to be specifically related to the BHPC, it is abundantly clear that without the local voice primarily that of the consumer and the family member, we will not be able to adequately function in our capacity as the statewide advisory body to the Purchasing Collaborative. We believe that we need to focus on the following:

   Sustainability: We are all well aware that the funding from the Transformation State Incentive Grant (TSIG) will end in the fall of 2010. Although that will certainly impact the BHPC itself, the Local Collaboratives will feel the greatest effect. Of their annual budgets of $21,000, $18,000 is from TSIG funding.

   Technical Assistance: Some of the Local Collaboratives function well; some do not. We continue to work to strengthen all Local Collaboratives.

   Legislative Advocacy: We also believe that we need to do a much better job related to legislative advocacy.

   Marketing: We believe that there are many consumers and their family members who do not know about their Local Collaborative, the BHPC or the Purchasing Collaborative. We have got to do a better job getting the word out. How can we get their voice and get them involved if they don’t even know that we exist?

IN CONCLUSION
We continue to be positive about the work of the BHPC and the Statutory Subcommittees. More people than ever are participating, bringing a richer pool of expertise with their local consumer and family voice. Our organizational systems allow us to better succeed in our work. We embrace and incorporate clear, transparent processes. We provide more targeted, product-orientated work in the Statutory Subcommittees rather than just exchanges of information.

We wish to extend our sincere appreciation to the Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative and their respective staffs for their continued efforts and assistance in supporting the Planning Council meet its goals and mandates. In particular, we wish to thank Letty Rutledge, Suzanne Pearlman and the Local Collaborative Cross Agency Team of the New Mexico Department of Human Services, Department of Health, and Children Youth and Families Department.