

HEALTH SERVICES COMMITTEE OF THE ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
MINUTES
March 25, 2008

Present:

R. Parete
P. Terpening
T. Briggs
J. Stoeckeler

UCMHD: E. Brown

Excused: K. Ronk, J. Roberti, L. Petit

Public: Lee Cane

Chairman Parete called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM.

1. The Committee approved a resolution to amend the 2008 budget to transfer funds to pay for temporary services in the UCMHD clinics. The resolution was moved by T. Briggs, seconded by J. Stoeckeler and passed unanimously.
2. The Committee approved a resolution to amend the 2008 budget to increase UCMHD revenues to pay for a contract to provide an unbiased assessment of the UCMHD compliance plan and clinical practices. The resolution was moved by J. Stoeckeler, seconded by T. Briggs and passed unanimously.
3. E. Brown advised the Committee that a resolution would be forthcoming at the next meeting of the Committee to re-create the Associate Medical Director position in the UCMHD. The position was eliminated in the 2006 budget reduction because UCMHD was unable to recruit a candidate. At the time the position was eliminated the Department indicated that the position would be requested once a candidate was found. A candidate has now been identified.
4. E. Brown reported that M. Beckman has reached agreement with the Contract Manager to pass funding to Benedictine Hospital for the Adolescent Partial Hospitalization if OMH agrees to provide the funding. M. Beckman is still in negotiations with OMH for the deficit funding for 2007.
5. Following up on the discussion begun last month concerning staff recruitment and retention E. Brown advised the Committee that the Mental Health Department is may request the creation of a Resident in Psychology position to aide in filling one of the many vacancies in the Children's unit. One of the current Psychology Interns may be willing to stay on as a resident. If the intern agrees we will seek to reclassify an exiting vacant line to the Resident in Psychology title.
6. E. Brown reported that a meeting of the Golden Hill Building Renovation Steering Committee was held to move the UCMHD Golden Hill renovations forward. UCMHD is meeting with Buildings and Grounds, the architect and IS to update the plans and estimates for a meeting with the Steering Committee in May.
7. E. Brown reported that the UCMHD is investigating billing and medical record software vendors to upgrade the existing system used by UCMHD for billing. The current system will no longer be supported by Unicare after January 1, 2010. UCMHD will be working with the Purchasing and IS departments in identifying and selecting a new vendor.

The Mental Health portion of the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 P. M.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward J. Brown, Ph. D.
Deputy Director, Ulster County Mental Health Department

GHHCC:

Sheree Cross, Director

The meeting was held in the Legislative Chamber at the County Office Building.
Chairman Robert Parete called the GHHCC portion of the meeting to order at 7:15PM.

1. 2008 Budget Review & the Governor's Proposal: The state budget proposal has two proposed cuts, the new rebasing program and the trend factor. The proposal decreases the trend factor by 35% for 2008. The state senate, but not the assembly, has counter proposed that the trend factor be re-instated by 50% and since GHHCC has conservatively budgeted this would benefit the facility with greater revenue. The rebasing portion of the budget proposal was restored by the state senate, but not the assembly. The rebasing budget cut may or may not affect the facility depending on the federal government's (CMS) interpretation of the Upper Payment Limit. If CMS accepts the state plan amendment for the new way to interpret the Upper Payment Limits then the facility will benefit from transitional rebasing. (In March 2009, it is expected that the full rebasing change will be in effect.) It is best for the County if CMS approves the state plan amendment. Further, the state senate has extended out the Medicaid only case mix to 2010. This is important for reimbursement. Starting in 2009 the facility will be reimbursed by the MDS (Minimum Data Set) and if the rate is determined based only on the Medicaid resident it will be a lesser rate due to the less acuity of that resident's clinical conditions. Letters were attached to legislator's NYAHSAs budget explanation. Legislators were asked to sign if they agreed with the information in the letters and that they would be faxed by GHHCC to NYS senate and assemblymen.
2. Computer Software and hardware: Director Cross asked the committee to support her in the 2009 budget for an electronic health records computer system that would aid the staff and physicians to complete their work with a decrease in errors and in a more timely fashion. There will be cost reductions after the system is implemented. Further, for 2008 GHHCC is looking to implement the E-Prescribing portion of this SigmaCare system. The facility's pharmacy would subsidize the software cost for this portion and the facility has in the 2008 budget the necessary money for the hardware to get this system up and running. The rough estimate of costs for 2009 is \$200,000, much of it not recurring.
3. Smoking: A short discussion was held about the possibility of the County prohibiting smoking on any county property. With this prohibition would come help with smoking cessation etc. GHHCC does have designated outside smoking areas and many staff who smoke. GHHCC also has a few residents who smoke and that aspect will need consideration when this occurs.
4. Legislative Representation on GHHCC QAA Committee: The committee discussed and approved the appointment of Charles Busick, former legislator, to attend the GHHCC Quality Assessment and Assurance Committee meetings when scheduled, usually quarterly. The committee will expect Mr. Busick to report back to this committee on a regular basis as to the outcome of these meetings.

The GHHCC portion of the meeting was adjourned at 7:35PM.