

**Town of Barnstable
Human Services Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, December 12, 2017**

Names in BOLD indicate action items.

Present:

Steven Xiarhos (substitute chair), Robin Gunderson, Deb Krau, Heidi Nelson (recorder), and Heather Stassel

Absent:

Scott Fitzgerald, Meghan Mort, Stacie Peugh, and Jen Cullum, Town Council Liaison

Guests:

Ginny Mercure, Director, Peer Recovery, Gandara

Order:

The meeting came to order at 6:02 p.m.

Minutes

The minutes of the November 14, 2017 meeting were unanimously approved as written (Gunderson motion, Stassel second).

Public Comment

None.

Discussion

We welcomed Ginny Mercure of Gandara who leads their peer support services for addiction recovery. Gandara was established in 1977 to offer culturally competent behavioral health services in Massachusetts. They offer Recovery Support Centers in four locations (Holyoke, Brockton, Hyannis and Plymouth) as well as Recovery Coaching. They also offer specialized recovery coaching for parents, pregnant women, and teens. Recovery coaching is being piloted in the Cape Cod Hospital emergency room.

Peer-based recovery support is a process, involving non-professional, non-clinical assistance from people with lived experience to achieve long-term recovery. Recovery support centers are created by and for people in recovery and offer wellness and recovery-related activities and the development of networks, community identity and peer affiliation.

In Hyannis, the Recovery Support Center is called PIER, and they sponsor sober socials, sober events such as fishing trips and holiday celebrations, Recovery Fest, and Recovery Month events.

Recovery Coaches provide emotional and social support and act as connectors to housing, employment, and other social service needs. Recovery Coaches form recovery relationships with

their Recoverees and are provided guidance and direction in offering purposeful sharing of their stories in an ethical manner.

Challenges faced by the PIER center include confusion about Recovery Support Centers and Recovery Coaching, stigma and confusion about recovery in general, and workforce training. Challenges faced in providing services include lack of transportation, housing and shelter, particularly for families, and lack of entry-level employment opportunities.

Members of the committee asked Ginny how the Town and the Committee could assist in the work of the PIER Center. Ginny said that they are currently seeking funding for the Parents Peer Program. PIER can also use support in expanding the employment training system to include Recovery Coaching. Again, Ginny repeated that the greatest challenges are transportation, housing and jobs, which is a common theme when discussing gaps on the Cape.

Next Steps

Our next meeting will be on January 9 at 5:00 p.m. We discussed having a speaker on Mental Health First Aid (needs to be identified), a speaker on teens and parents who need support in addressing substance use (Stephanie Briody who is developing an Alternative Peer Group program, and also having a meeting to gather and review the information we have received over the past few months.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Heidi Nelson
Duffy Health Center and Secretary to Committee

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, January 9, 2018 at 5:00 p.m.