

Summary of new Initiatives at SAMHS

The Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHS) has hired a staff member to, among other duties, analyze and manage the Waitlist system. The Waitlist has improved dramatically from January 2015 to January 2016 as represented by a 40% overall reduction in persons waiting for services; however, the data still shows that a significant number of consumers are remaining on the wait list well beyond the assignment times for community integration services specified in the Settlement Agreement. SAMHS will continue to analyze and improve the Waitlist system over the coming months with the goal of achieving substantial compliance. This process includes an analysis of the existing system, as well the relationships and business processes between: APS HealthCare, the Provider Community, SAMHS, and the consumers themselves.

The Behavioral Health Home (BHH) initiative has blossomed and there are currently sixteen (16) agencies with thirty six (36) sites serving 2,198 adults (see map at the end of this summary). The Office of MaineCare Services has received applications from seven (7) new agencies and expansion requests from four (4) existing agencies that will create thirty-four (34) new sites in the coming months. All totaled, there will be seventy (70) BHH sites as these additional sites come online.

Three staff units from SAMHS have been moved to other offices within DHHS. In each instance, these units will be able to leverage additional resources and expertise of offices to which they are being moved. The Data Team will be moving to the Office of Continuous Quality Improvement where the expertise of the staff will assist those moving to produce better and more accurate reports. The Prevention Team will be moving to the Maine Center for Disease Control to work with others on current and new prevention initiatives. This move will bring both the public attention and resources to bear, from a command and control footing of Maine's CDC, to the heroin and opiate epidemic currently gripping the state. Several members of the Gatekeeping group will be joining the Office of MaineCare Services to combine with existing staff from multiple offices in the creation of a multi-disciplinary Complex Case Management team to effectively coordinate persons moving from psychiatric hospitals and local emergency rooms to community levels of care. SAMHS will retain contracting functions within the portfolio of Residential Treatment facilities (PNMIs) and remain a part of current discharge planning groups at the state psychiatric hospitals.

In the coming months, SAMHS and the Office of the Attorney General will be working on a proposal to reconcile the days to assignment (2 days for class members who are hospitalized, 3 days for class members in the community and 7 days for non-class

members) with upcoming changes in Section 17 of the MaineCare Benefits Manual, which will require a 7-day referral to service. With these rule changes, we intend to negotiate an amendment to the Settlement Agreement to align the required assignment times to the proposed change to Section 17.