



**RYAN WHITE CARE COUNCIL
RURAL ISSUES COMMITTEE
MANATEE COUNTY RURAL HEALTH– BRADENTON
TUESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2007
12:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

- CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order by Deborah Robinson, Chair, at 12:15 p.m.
- ATTENDANCE** Members Present: Linnwood Davis, John Halman, King James, John Melartin, Deborah Reinhardt, Deborah Robinson, Regina Stevens
Members Absent: Ismael Colon, Ovidiu Cotea, Brenda Davis, Ellen Gates, Donald Hinton, Angela Kendall, Linda Rogers, Vivian Swanigan
Guests Present: Belinda Alexander, Mardell Bates, Gilbert Crespo, Juanita Escobedo, Richard Leclerca, Wendell Martin, Lisa Obando, Ronald Weston
Grantee Staff Present: Wilma Genter
Health Councils Staff Present: Nicole Brown
- CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO AGENDA** No changes were made to the agenda.
- ADOPTION OF MINUTES** There was not a quorum present to approve the June meeting minutes.
- CARE COUNCIL REPORT** John Melartin gave the Care Council report for the July meeting. There was no Care Council meeting held in August. He stated the Wendell Martin was elected the new Chair and that Carla Baity was elected the new Vice-Chair. The Council also approved ten new voting members, the 2007 Demographics and Epidemiology Report and changes to the nutritional supplement standard of care. In addition, there was a presentation on the homeless population of Pinellas County.

FUNDING UPDATE

Deborah shared that the Polk County Health Department is receiving a Part C grant for \$200,000 that will enable them to hire seven new employees including two eligibility specialists. She said that they were to receive the grant in 2007 but the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has now put the grant on hold until 2008. Deborah also said that the state government is requiring that 10% be cut from each county health department budget. This will affect some health department money that will no longer be used for HIV/AIDS services in Polk County.

Wilma Genter added that Manatee County recently had an \$18,000 cut in funding. She said that there was additional Part B funding for our total service area (TSA) this year and that \$18,000 was allocated to Manatee County to replace the funding cut. \$39,000 was allocated for Polk County and the remainder was allocated to Hillsborough and Pinellas County to provide for an eligibility specialist for each county.

Deborah and Wendell pointed out the importance of having rural representatives as active members of the Resource Prioritization and Allocation Recommendations Committee (RPARC).

PHARMACY ONE PRO

John Halman gave a presentation on Pharmacy One Pro. He said that they are a full service pharmacy that specializes in HIV/AIDS medications. They service the entire state of Florida and accept most insurance plans. He stated that they work as advocates for treatment adherence and have a free vitamin program.

ISSUES OF LIVING IN A RURAL COMMUNITY

Wendell said that in his opinion clients in rural communities are better off than people living with HIV/AIDS in a metropolitan area. He said that there is a better quality of service in rural communities and providers treat clients well. He said that he feels comfortable talking to providers about client issues and that this has helped to improve services.

Belinda Alexander said that Manatee County has good dental services provided through Part C and that the services are very accessible. She also said that while they do not receive free bus passes from the county, bus passes are provided through donations from community churches. They also have a county grant to provide Wal-Mart gift cards to clients so they can purchase nutritious food. Wendell added that there are good optical services available in Manatee County.

Belinda also said that they have city HOPWA (Housing

Opportunities for People with AIDS) in Bradenton and that there is not enough funding available to service all clients in need or for as long as a client needs help. It was noted by Deborah and Belinda that it is difficult for clients to qualify for this assistance because of strict city or state guidelines and a lack of affordable housing in Florida.

**OTHER COMMITTEE
REPORTS**

John Melartin stated that Hillsborough County was drastically under represented in the Anonymous Needs Survey for people with HIV/AIDS. He said that efforts are still underway to collect more surveys in Hillsborough County.

**COMMUNITY
CONCERNS AND
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Deborah stated that there was not a good turn out for the consumer town hall held in Polk County in July.

Deborah also announced that there have been some staffing changes at the Polk County Health Department including the hiring of a new case manager.

Belinda announced that there will be a Patient Care Network Conference in Orlando the last week of September.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to come to the Committee, meeting was adjourned at 2:18 p.m.

4/27/2007