

**Wellesley Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2010**

Present:

Shepard Cohen, Chairman
Marcia Testa Simonson, PhD Vice Chair
Lloyd Tarlin, MD Secretary

Staff:

Deadra Doku Gardner, Administrator
Lenny Izzo, Environmental Health Specialist
Cheryl Lefman, Health Communications Specialist
Mary Suresh, Director

In Attendance:

Helene Buchler- Human Resource Board, Liaison to Board of Health
Robert Evans, Ed.D. Executive Director, HRS
Chatham Flynn, LICSW, High School Outreach Counselor, HRS
Mark Kline, Psy.D., Associate Director, HRS
Linda Perlmutter, resident and former Board member
Maura Renzella, Youth Director, Wellesley Youth Commission
Alex Rosenstein, PsyD, Middle School Outreach Worker, HRS

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

The meeting minutes for September 16, 2010 and November 18, 2010 were approved.

1. Mental Health

a) HRS

Rob Evans reviewed Human Relations Services (HRS) FY2011 first quarter report. Dr. Evans reported that HRS is seeing a steadily increasing number of Wellesley families in crisis, and a younger population with mental health issues in Wellesley, Weston and Wayland.

Dr. Evans reported that there is evidence of childhood depression appearing earlier and with more serious family dysfunctions than in the past. There is also

an increase of alcohol and drug abuse disorders. While many families are able to function quite well professionally, they are however not developmentally functioning. Many parents are very focused on how children can excel, contributing to high level of accomplishment but with high levels of stress and depression.

Rob Evans also noted that many Pediatricians are unable to spend enough time with parents, who might have basic parenting questions and concerns.

Dr. Evans reported that he has completed one round of PTO meetings. Maura Renzella reported that she and Chatham Flynn also co-facilitate a mothers group at the high school.

Chatham Flynn reported on student issues at the High School, where there is a great deal of school truancy, anxiety and depression. Chatham reported that these issues seemed to have increased since last year. Chatham reported that she also offers support to students moving back into the classroom through the Bridge Program. This program is capped at 12 to 13 students; however there are currently 15 to 20 students in the program. Chatham noted that these numbers have also increased since last year.

Ms. Flynn reported that each assistant principal is in charge of two classes. She meets weekly with the assistant principals, student support teams, and various school administrators. These meetings address any students who are having issues and who may need a referral to the outreach worker.

Alex Rosenstein reported on the student issues at the Middle School. Mr. Rosenstein is present at the school two days a week, and sees students with social difficulties, anxiety, and some depression issues. Mr. Rosenstein reported that it appears that many parents put a lot of pressure on the students. Referrals to the Middle School Outreach Worker come from guidance counselor group meetings.

Maura Renzella also reported that she receives calls directly from concerned parents. She works closely with Officer Brian Spencer of the Police Department who makes referrals of children.

Maura Renzella, Alex Rosenstein and Chatham Flynn reported that students with adjustment, mental health or stress concerns are now more likely to reach out for

help than in the past. Many of these students are already under the care of a therapist.

Dr. Evans reported that HRS is fully subscribed at this time. Should the patient numbers continue at this pace, the agency's resources will be stretched. Dr. Evans reported that they do see a small group from the Barton Road Housing Authority. However they have no contact or communication with the outreach worker from the Housing Authority.

b) Fund for Wellesley Grant Update

Ms. Suresh reported that the WellesleyActs.org website is operational. Maura Renzella reported that she has introduced the website to the mothers group at the High School, and that it has been well publicized in the Wellesley-Weston Magazine. Ms. Renzella reported that the website is being used as a resource by both parents and students.

c) Project Interface

Mary Suresh reviewed the referral helpline service provided by Project Interface. The Board of Health agreed that, since this type of service is already being provided by HRS to some degree, the Department will not contribute to the Project at this time.

The Board of Health will further discuss with Rob Evans the value of hiring a part-time mental health coordinator.

d) Newton Wellesley Hospital

Mary Suresh reported on her meeting with a representative from Newton Wellesley Hospital. Shep Cohen will contact hospital administrators to discuss how the hospital can assist Wellesley in the area of mental health services and medical services for the underserved Housing Authority population.

e) QPR

The Board of Health agreed that in January 2011 an effort must be made to ensure that teachers and others are being trained in QPR suicide prevention by the QPR instructors who themselves were trained during the summer.

2. Administrative

a) Annual Report

Shep Cohen suggested that next year the annual report should include more data to indicate mission- and objective-based outcomes.

b) Staff update

Mary Suresh reported on the interviewing process. She reported that she has interviewed three candidates for the Public Health Nurse Supervisor position.

c) FY12 Budget

The Board of Health approved the FY12 Budget at the last meeting, and will be presenting the budget to the Advisory Committee on December 15, 2010.

3. Community Health

a) Seasonal Flu

Mary Suresh reported that the Health Department continues to vaccinate residents at smaller clinics throughout town.

4. Environmental Health

a) Housing Authority

Mary Suresh reported on her meeting with the new Housing Authority Director, Pam Allen, Lenny Izzo of the Health Department, and Gayle Thieme, Director of the Council on Aging. Ms Suresh reported that apparently Ms. Allen's office has no information or data as to the status of healthcare needs of the residents.

Lenny Izzo reported that he recently had four referrals from Barton Road, three of which he reported to DCF (Department of Children and Families). Mr. Izzo reviewed various cases at Barton Road.

The Board of Health agreed that a meeting be scheduled with the Housing Authority Board, after more information is gathered and an action plan developed. It was suggested that the public housing research group at Boston University School of Public Health be contacted.

b) Food Establishments

Mr. Izzo reported that Gelato Café and Bobby's Grille have closed. Three new food establishments are coming to Wellesley; Justine's Restaurant (Rte 9), JP Licks (Central Street) and Old School Pizza (Washington Street).

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deadra Doku Gardner