

Community Services Reimbursement Rate Commission
Mental Hygiene Administration, Catonsville, Maryland
October 8, 2013
MINUTES

Present

Commissioners: Jillian Aldebron (Chair), Patsy Blackshear, Kia Brown (call-in 7PM), Katherine Humber, Tom Sizemore, Timothy Wiens

Public: Herb Cromwell (CBH), Jaclin Warner Wiggins (DBM), Carolyn Ellison (DBM), Philip Cronin (MD Psychiatric Society)

Absent: Jeff Richardson

1. Proceedings

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. The August 27 minutes were presented and approved.

2. Update on Web-based Data Collection System

The CSRRC has been working with DHMH to design and implement a secure, web-based electronic system for inputting salary survey and cost report information. Initial testing with the CSRRC Chair, DHMH IT, MHA and DDA is slated for next week. Providers will have secure password-protected access. The system will be set up to reject incorrect entries within a certain range and incomplete submissions will not be accepted. Excel spreadsheets and calculations can be downloaded by the CSRRC from the submissions. This new system will go a long way toward reducing data entry errors and the time consuming, labor-intensive need for data verification and provider queries.

3. Annual Report

The consultant has completed review and recalculation of the data tables initially produced by Open Minds with numerous obvious errors. The process has reduced the number of mental health provider entities used in the analysis to 32 because the quality of the data was poor or incomplete. The consultant did not feel comfortable eliminating some outlier data or annualizing part-time salaries for comparative purposes for concern about inadvertently skewing data. Most problematic was the issue of fringe benefits, which are reported at rates that are clearly in excess of discretionary fringe (the definition for the survey), but it is impossible to determine, at the margins, the correct amounts. Mandatory employer contributions for FICA, workers compensation insurance, and unemployment add roughly 12% of salary to fringe benefit costs.

Decision: The Chair will review and recalculate the salaries in Table 1 and 2 to see if part-time data can reasonably be included. The bonus column will be deleted. The fringe benefit column

will remain but with a note regarding lack of confidence in the amounts reported. Herb Cromwell agreed to provide a list of members so that the Chair can determine whether it is appropriate to use CBH data instead of or in addition to that reported on the MHA salary survey.

A number of language changes were suggested and approved for the annual report, with Patsy Blackshear and the Chair assigned to make revisions that required more reflection. Decisions on edits include:

- Executive summary text regarding CSRRC capacity.
- Reason for changing meeting structure
- Wage Initiative -- the issue will remain in the report as an update to last year's report. Valerie Roddy was asked at the last meeting for what was happening on this but offered no information and has failed to provide anything since.
- The text indicating lack of collaboration between DDA and the CSRRC will be changed based on research into what DDA has accomplished in developing the RFP for SIS implementation and new rate structure and change.
- Rewording of reason for changing financial analysis methodology
- Revision of section on CSRRC operating capacity.
- Emphasize fact that other commissions are staffed, while the CSRRC is not. Commissioners noted the excessive workload placed on the Chair and that this situation was not sustainable
- Revise language on adequacy of workforce
- Revise language on correlation between wage rates and tenure

Transportation was recommended for inclusion among issues for future study.

There is concern about the unit costs for residential services compared to rates. The Chair will go back to the data to see if possible to reconfirm, although this business line is intended to be subsidized by personal contributions.

Conclusions section: Suggestions were to include need to improve data quality by, for example, 1) implementing a web-based data system, 2) further educating providers on fringe benefit definitions, 3) work more closely with providers, 4) study transportation costs, 5) attend to issues related to owner-employees and employees with multiple job titles. Among recommendations, more training in how to complete surveys and financial forms was suggested.

The weighted average cost structure was sent to MHA and DDA in July for use in preparing their annual budget proposal, but was never acknowledged. Valerie Roddy was asked about this, too, at the last meeting and had no idea. There is some concern about the amount developmental disability service providers are spending on worker's compensation compared to that spent by mental health service providers. Workers comp is based on salaries times a rate and is roughly equivalent to 2% of salaries. Because this was already submitted, it is too late to review.

Recommendations for formal action: The statute is extremely out of date. Jillian added that the Commission lacks staff; they don't have authority even over their budget. There was agreement that the Commission needs teeth to do its job.

Decision: Patsy Blackshear will make a list of proposed statutory and/or regulatory changes, including the possibility of expanding the CSRRC's mandate to include SUD given behavioral health integration.

ACTION: Each commissioner will send the Chair at least one suggestion for the two conclusion sections, at least one suggestion for the recommendations, and suggestions for future action and the need for formal action by October 14. Jeff Richardson will elaborate on QUIP.

NEXT MEETING: November 12 is cancelled because several commissioners had scheduling conflicts. New date: November 6, from 6 pm-8 pm.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

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