

Action Group
Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2012

The meeting opened at approximately 10 a.m.

Introductions and celebrations were shared by: Joanie B, Mary Beth E, Mary Jane T, Deanna J, Alicia D, Leslie S, Rosemary R, Lynda C, Christine H, Deb F, Cindy P, Danielle S., Neil E, Richard V, Marji S, Kim G, Bob P, Martha L, Ernie R, Nicole E.

Agenda – the agenda was reviewed and accepted as is. Mary Beth noted that the meeting would run short (end at 11:30am) due to urgent commitments by some of the other attendees, including herself.

Standing Agenda Items:

- Mary Beth (MBE) reminded all about video-conferencing tips; cell phones off, hands up to speak
- Please sign in at all offices and provide preferred contact information
- Reviewed December meeting notes, Cindy motioned to approve, Ernie seconded.

Action Items from December's meeting –

1. Meeting Notes will be available on Recovery website.
2. MBE sent email to Children's managers asking if they needed assistance with planning for Children's mental health week in May. Joanie followed up and asked Mary Hubbard (Chief Operations Officer for Children's Services). Mary was pleased to hear there was interest and said if anyone is interested in helping with plans, to please contact her at her Cadillac office (231-876-3297) or email at mary.hubbard@nlcmh.org. MBE spoke with Melissa Trout and Karen Hatley (Children's Managers) about it and were pleased to hear that a non-staff member originally asked to get the group involved in this project.
3. The Group will keep Tom H's name on this Action Item list to follow-up and have him show up at future meeting to discuss how and where he can present on the issue of bullying and suicide.
4. The Group will keep the action of coordinating speakers/activities between this group and other CMH groups/activities/speakers as a standing item on the Action Items list.
5. The 5 Focuses will be discussed later in meeting under the Action Group Charge.
6. Deb F still has purchasing a video camera on her wish list – when available will be used to do some new lobby monitor promotions on peer-delivered groups and classes.
7. Anti-Stigma and Leadership issues were added to standing agenda items. This is where we share information about 1) things we have seen or heard since our last meeting that we saw as being stigmatizing, and 2) how we can be leaders.

8. The Volunteer Clearinghouse Sub Group meeting was going to be held, but timing was bad. This will be held in the future.
9. Joanie said we can look for fundraising ideas but will have to run all ideas by the Executive Team and Finance before we do anything specific.
10. Alicia asked Cindy to clarify where door prizes were being collected during the year. Cindy asked each office to hold on to any door prizes that are collected/ donated for the Recovery Celebration. She asked that we keep track of the count of male vs. female gifts and wrap accordingly if we are able to. Rosemary agreed to be the collection point for Cadillac.
11. MBE and Cindy will look at various venues for the Recovery Conference and report back in February. If anyone has any suggestions, please email either one. The decision will be based on cost, capacity, and location. It sounds very positive that the Recovery Band is willing to come back even though their payment will be less than previous times.
12. Consumer Advocacy Council (CAC) still has openings for Council members. Members represent all 6 counties. The Meetings are usually in Traverse City, but with advance notice, a video connection can be set up in the other office locations (HL, Gray, Cad). The Action Group intentionally scheduled our meeting on the same day as the CAC to allow people to come for the Action meeting and stay on for the CAC meeting. This announcement will also stay on the action item list.

Sharing Local Office Information and Activities

Traverse City:

1. Photobiography classes – we are forming coaching teams for each NLCMH office to lead photobiography classes into the future. The coaches will receive training on January 12. Ideally each team will offer the class twice per year. The classes will be featured in the first set of mini-conferences with each office's class starting fairly soon after the mini-conference. During the second set of mini-conferences, people who completed their recovery stories will have an opportunity to perform them! Traverse City is the first in the rotation – their class will be promoted at the January 19 mini-conference; the class will run six weeks starting March 1, and then the April 19 mini-conference will include their performances. The teams will include a non-peer staff, a peer staff, and a consumer.
2. Dannie shared about her Spirit Doll Workshop that will be held in Traverse City on Tuesdays from 1pm – 3pm between 2/28/2012 through 4/3/2012. There are six two-hour sessions in which she will lead eight participants in creating a doll. Dolls are found in all cultures throughout history. They are a universal symbol of humankind. Their appeal is very approachable, nonthreatening or judgmental and each offers acceptance and warmth. One session will include a field trip to Joann's to purchase supplies. Participants will learn a sewing skill. At the last

meeting, the dolls will be put on display. She received a NLCMH Mini-Grant to fund this class.

3. There will be a tobacco addiction treatment class in TC taught by an addiction specialist. Cost is usually \$150 per participant but for this special opportunity will be subsidized for NLCMH consumers to only cost \$5.00. There is a cost as the thought is that if people have a monetary investment/commitment in the program it may help them to stay motivated and committed to attend and succeed at the workshop. The funding for this group is provided by a NLCMH mini-grant. There are 7 classes held on Wednesdays from 1-3 pm from March 14 through April 18. The tobacco addiction issues tie in with the co-morbidity studies that show people with a mental illness often die 20 years younger due to the combination of mental health and physical health issues.
4. The NLCMH groups and classes are always listed on the northernlakescmh.org website under Consumer Events.

Request and Input

Lobby Monitors – Recognition was given to Rosemary, Leslie, Alicia, Mary Beth, Martha, Nicole, and Deb for their work on getting relevant and timely content on the lobby monitors.

Super Saturday Special - on Saturday, 2/4/12, from 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., at the TBA/ISD Career Tech Center in Traverse City there will be a workshop on budgeting, home-ownership, banking, tax preparation and other classes. NLCMH will participate with an informational booth. Child Care will be available.

There will be a community conversation event on bullying at the Hagerty Center in TC on March 15.

Volunteer Opportunities

Rosemary announced volunteer opportunities to help with placing inserts in the **Guide to Services** in Cadillac and TC. Check with Rosemary for Cadillac or Cindy for Traverse City if you are interested. Rosemary acknowledged the volunteer assistance she has already received from Deanna and Alicia.

Deb spoke about the mindfulness segments at Mini-Conference, which will be a recurring segment. Volunteers are needed to lead this segment at each of the sites for future conferences. The primary duty is to read the exercise in a soothing, mindful way. Mary Jane volunteered to do in Cadillac. Bob volunteered Barb (HL - RN) to do in Grayling and Houghton Lake.

Bob volunteered to take part in the photo-biography training.

Anti-Stigma

- Rosemary spoke about a sign outside of a motorcycle parts store in Cadillac with the words “You don’t have to be committed” followed by more words. She will look at the sign again to get the exact words, but the meaning seemed to have a negative connotation about being “committed to a mental hospital.”
- Leslie spoke about “riffing” – saying or interpreting things out of context. Need to be careful not to go overboard. Don’t make a big issue over something that may not be there.
- Ernie said we have to be sure that we’re not being over-sensitive. Stigma has to be deliberately derogatory in order to be stigma.
- Cindy reported this morning she heard on a TC radio station, jokes being made about a phone tree for people calling in for help with suicide or mental health issues. She will think about what the appropriate action should be for something like this. Whether it should be a single or group effort in asking the station to consider the stigma they are promoting by saying these things.
- Bob reported that he walked into the CMH office recently and someone asked him if he put up the Christmas tree, when Bob acknowledged that he did, the person told him that it was “so gay”. Bob was shocked that this person would say that to him. Later he went to a group at CMH and was shocked to hear people talk about “f’ing gay” people. Bob was commended for speaking up and not letting these kinds of comments go by as they are unacceptable.
- Margie mentioned an experience she’s had at the hospital. In the past when she or went to the ER for a medical condition, she was automatically put in the Psych ward regardless of the issue. The last time she went to the ER she spoke up and insisted on being treated at the ER where staff were much kinder. Leslie encouraged Margie to file a Rights Complaint so the hospital learns about these problems. Other people may be experiencing the same thing, but if no one says anything, nothing happens and the problem keeps going on.
- Christine said we can laugh at ourselves, but it’s different – and unacceptable – when outsiders laugh at us. The crochet group has called themselves the “Looming Idiots” and they laugh at themselves about it. She agreed that things won’t change if we don’t do something about it.
- Dee learned some recent info about her partner’s son who is dating someone who is intellectually slow and has a four year old son who is also slow. Dee was very upset to hear her partner’s son call the boy “dummy”. She made it very clear to him that was not acceptable.
- Mary Jane pointed out that in working with families who have children (including adult children) or other relatives with developmental disabilities, the families are often very stigmatizing in what they say.
- Neil pointed out that conservatives and Christians are also two groups that are put down all the time and have been stigmatized.

Leadership Activity - MBE postponed the “Leadership” Activity she had planned for this month and will do next month as we were running out of time.

Suicide Prevention Coalition and Opportunities for Community Action

Nicole Ellens introduced herself as the NLCMH Youth Suicide Prevention Coordinator in Crawford and Roscommon Counties. Her position is funded through a grant from the Federal government, channeled through the State and then distributed locally.

One of the trainings she provides is called Safe Talk (Suicide Awareness For Everyone) and is available for anyone to take. She also provides ASIST training which is for caregivers, clergy, CMH and other agency workers.

Suicide Prevention Coalitions exist across our 6 county area. There are coalitions based in Wexford/Missaukee and Crawford/Roscommon counties and all have benefited from this grant. Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties are set up somewhat differently (explained later). Trainings were done in Craw/Rosc counties and continue to be done. Each community has different activities to promote suicide prevention/awareness. Wex/Miss does a Suicide Awareness walk in September. Craw/Rosc did a 5K walk/run as a Suicide Awareness activity. The Craw/Rosc group also has sponsored movie nights partnering with youth groups, and also looking to partner with theaters.

Workers are trying to change the language of suicide awareness and prevention. The groups are also looking to work with survivors of suicide. The Craw/Rosc group will have something at the end of January. People are welcome to come to the coalition meetings and help with the various projects and activities. There are many opportunities to do things better when more people are available to work. People from outside the specific counties mentioned are also welcome to come. In addition, some communities have collaborative bodies that include various organizations and agencies and part of their agenda is to discuss suicide prevention. In Crawford the collaborative meetings are free. In Wex/Miss, members pay dues.

Project Connect – neighborhood connections will be a new project that Nicole and her group will be working on. She needs volunteers. Various groups need doers. It would be good to have a representative of the Action group to attend these meetings.

Nicole has a separate grant for LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender) persons and groups who have Substance Abuse/Mental Illness (SA/MI) co-occurring issues. There is a need to make people aware of changing language, anti-stigma programs for this group as well. Nicole will provide us contacts for of the collaborative groups and coalitions and other groups for all six counties. She will keep us in the loop to receive information. Bob P has offered to be an Action Group representative for Nicole's group(s). Margie offered to distribute flyers in the TC area when they are made.

Deb noted that Terry Kelty is representative for the collaborative in Grand Traverse Leelanau counties. Nicole said that GT meetings are set up somewhat differently with three smaller sub-groups to accomplish their goals. Cindy recommended the "Fierce Goodbye" as a good movie to show to groups. She was present at a panel discussion at the Traverse Area District Library. Deb offered a copy of the movie to Nicole if she doesn't already have it. Nicole thought she may have a copy of this movie.

Nicole said that there are suicide prevention/awareness programs in the local High Schools. She uses a holistic approach training both students and staff. She generally uses the Safe Talk training for schools. She has also used this training with High

School youth groups (SADD, SALD). Some schools also have their own training that they do in March during Health and Fitness week

Cindy asked what terms could be used in place of “commit suicide”. Nicole offered: “completed suicide”, “died by suicide”, “suicided”.

Neil asked why teen suicide rate is higher in Michigan. Nicole offered there is often less help in rural areas and that guns are more readily available due to families participating in hunting. Suicide attempts by gun are often fatal; people don’t make it to the hospital, as they would if they attempted suicide by poisoning. The highest rate of suicide completion is actually by middle-aged men.

Due to a lack of time a review of the “Action Charge” was moved to next month’s meeting. Please review in the meantime and prepare to provide input at next month’s meeting or prior to if desired.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday February 8 from 10 a.m. – noon, in the TC, Grayling and Cadillac offices.

The meeting ended at approximately 11:30 a.m. with Christine reading the NLCMH Recovery Definition.