


Disability Committee meeting
1/16/2020 at ARS office, Fort Smith

Attendees: Dana Byrum, Darla Melton, Chris Joannides, Dennis Williamson

- Chris Joannides
Executive Director HOPE CAMPUS – discussed implementing a day treatment program consisting of a “Strides” class working on resumes & finding employment. It will be 2hr/day 4day/week. This is a Segway to the day program where they will host classes on Addiction, Mental Health, and Trauma.
- Darla Melton
ADA Coordinator with Adult Ed Crawford County- discussed different barriers she sees and the struggle individuals have taking that first step of asking for help or disclosing they have a disability.
- Dana J. Byrum
ARS- discussed goals for their agency to increase efforts on the hard to serve populations (Hispanic, Native American, & Homeless), increase their itinerary points to “Make ourselves Available” to clients. Chris offered a name at the Good Samaritan Clinic that may be able to help with the Hispanic population (Patty Kembro) and advised to contact Mercy Hospital Spanish Program.
- Dennis Williamson
Staff to board discussed case management training to increase knowledge of how to speak, communicate, & empathize on client level. He talked about the upcoming transportation opportunities in Fort Smith (Lime Bike, Lift One, & Cab Companies). He also talked about a monthly tracking form for the partners to help make clients more accountable and to help agencies track referrals and how many clients follow through.
- As a group we discussed
 - Increasing the efforts to collaborate with community-based programs
 - Attending orientations at partners facilities
 - Utilizing our referral form with just basic client information
 - Medication barriers and how we can help those individuals that do not know they need it
 - Helping individuals with lack of social skills, soft skills, interpersonal skills, reading skills
- Dana provided 3 recent research documents from the Journal of Rehabilitation on:
 - The Influence of Wage Subsidies on the Open Employment of People with Disabilities
 - The Role of Disability in the Hiring Process: Does Knowledge of the Americans with Disabilities Act Matter?
 - Vocational Rehabilitation outcomes for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities and Co-Occurring Psychiatric Disorders

The committee agreed to increase communications and to meet face to face more often if needed to promote better collaboration.

Meeting adjourned


Dana Byrum, chair