

Notes of Recovery Residence Taskforce November 9, 2023

- **Meeting Details**

- Date and Time: Thursday, November 9, 2023
- Location: Zoom
- Attendees: Dora Radford, Rachel Thaxton, Nick Stuchell, Jostin Holmes, Angel Hightower, Sandra Harrah, Brent Wolfingbarger, Keith King, Christina Mullins, Matthew Christiansen, Erin, Chloe Cook, James Phillips, Emily Birckhead, Bob Hansen, Jon Dower

- **Presentation on Medicaid SUD 1115 Waiver**

- Medicaid currently funds PRSS services, methadone, and SUD residential treatment
- Medicaid is asking to expanding PRSS services to Emergency Departments, FQHCs and Drug Free Moms and Babies programs
- In addition they were asking to add the follow new services by March of 2024
 - Recovery housing reimbursement for 3-6 months
 - Supporting employment
 - Justice involvement populations care coordination, including MAT on release, and 30 days of MOUD
 - HIV education for sud
 - Reimbursement for QRT
 - Secure withdrawal management and stabilization - overflow to people who would be involuntarily hospitalized more like a 72 hour stabilization unit
 - Contingency management
 - Expanding inpatient care and increasing time to 15-30 days
 - Severe Mental Illness residential services
 - Opening children's crisis stabilization unit
 - California pays for recovery residences
 - Other states have been approved for this initiative
 - Recovery residences has to be wvarr certified only level 3 and 4 will be approved

Discussion of draft recommendations

Recommendation 4 allow for new recovery residences to receive state funding

- The group reviewed a map showing capacity of WVARR certified recovery residences and using the map as part of the Task Force's regulation
- Discussion of provisional certification for beginning Recovery Residence Operators

- Deputy Commissioner Mullins noted that legislators were open to this discussion and making Recovery Residence reviews similar to life and safety reviews so progress could continue between implementation of programs
- Governor's council housing workgroup was also working on this initiative
- Working on mentorship with certified recovery residences
- Brent Wolfingbarer recommendation that before any residence could receive state funding same risk screening similar to what Bureau for Medical Services does should occur

Recommendation 5 - Mandate the use of RecCap/ARMS assessment

- ARMS stands for Advanced Recovery Management System (ARMS)
- Five providers are already using
- 13 are in the process of implementing
- This recommendation revolves around requiring outcomes tracking for recovery residences
- ARMS is used across multiple SUD programs
- It includes time interval surveys to track outcomes
- WVARR has received a HUD funding startup/pilot for this program
- Discussion was had on how to approach this recommendation
- WVARR discussed problems with requiring a specific program to track outcomes; some operators already have a systems in place and have for a long period of time
- Counsel recommended adding what data points we want to track
- Discussion was had on mandating a uniform system without too much specificity to allow for flexibility
- There was good support for this among the group
- The group further discussed building capacity to let new operators have some time to set up data tracking
- The group recommended reframing the language from mandating to making system available to all certified recovery residences
- Some providers do not have financial ability
- This recommendation should be inclusive to capture all sizes of recovery residences
- Deputy Secretary Mullins felt like stronger language was needed to ensure uniform data collection
- Counsel raised the discussion about clarifying intent of recommendation; this speaks to success of programs requirement of HB 3306
- Finally, the group agreed to mandate the reporting of outcomes data to ODCP data dashboard

Recommendation 6 - Designate an agency to assess fines as listed in existing statute

- This recommendation is focused on improper referrals.
- Discussion was had on specifically designating that revenues from these fines by placed into a special account for use in SUD related activities
- Suggestion could be putting that funds into the ryan brown fund or housing voucher program

Recommendation 7 - Create reentry housing infrastructure

- The group discussed a possible solution for improper referrals
- An issue is that individuals cannot leave corrections until they have home plan
- This sometimes happens because a certified recovery residence is not available.
- Could promote changes to this requirement by pointing out the cost of keeping a person incarcerated v. the benefit of releasing them.
- The group discussed asking REACH if they have data on this subject.
- In addition, there would be a need to address funding.
- This is why there is high demand for low level recovery housing.
- This should include quality control recommendations for space.
- The group needed to look at potential existing code and suggested engaging Beverly Sharp for this information at REACH.

Recommendation 8 - Develop a registration process for recovery residences

- Deputy Secretary Mullins discussed the interest of Legislators Rohrbach and Fehrnebarker to be able to assess the number of recovery residences in a community, location, and availability.
- There was discussion of requiring any recovery residence to register so there is a repository of where they are.
- This should be made mandatory.
- This would not be supported by the owner/operator as some may want to remain anonymous, and there is a possible stigma.
- Would like to see a private/internal list.
- Could refine to make it like a domestic abuse home registry to protect persons.
- WVARR has let organizations choose how to publish for example using a general address instead of a specific address.
- Leg. did not ask for a public list.
- Counsel advised that there is a potential for lawsuits.
- Every landlord would need to in order to avoid singling out recovery residences.
- Certified residences are published by mailing address, most affected would be not yet certified.
- Discussion was had on alternatives
- Certificate of occupancy requirement through the health department could be an avenue. However, not every county has a health department that is listed and this would be overly burdensome.
- Perhaps register by zip code.
- Do all counties require a certificate of occupancy? This is based on zoning laws.
- Could this be done through business licensing?
- WVARR supported this idea.
- Counsel would review legalities with this idea.
- SOS would be good for this because most recovery residences would open as an LLC.

Other Discussions

- Discussion was had on the UCAN initiative by Governor Justice to address human trafficking. There was good support for collaborating with UCAN on this issue.
- The group agreed to learn more about this as this could be part of advocacy group recommendation.

- The group recommended continuing the task force after its recommendations were submitted to the legislature.
- Jon Dower would invite someone who resides in a recovery residence before presenting.
- Emily could help get a cross section of different level residents.

- The group would like to meet at least one more time before Dec 15 and have recovery residents on next call

- Bob Hansen reported that the Recovery Residence workgroup of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment was just finishing its draft strategies and those would be done by the 15th.
- They were also working on KPIs for next year's implementation plan.
- They were working on developing residences where there is a lack thereof.
- Their work and the work of this Task Force would overlap.