

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Behavioral Health Division Administration
INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE: August 31, 2012

TO: Marina Dimitrijevic, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Héctor Colón, Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Prepared by Paula Lucey, Administrator, Behavioral Health Division

SUBJECT: **Report, from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, on the status of the 2012 Purchase of Service Contract and Audit recommendations related to Our Space for the Behavioral Health Division**

Issue

Per the request of the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Administrator, Behavioral Health Division, the Department of Audit completed a review of the Our Space contract related to peer support services. The audit results were presented at the June Health and Human Needs Committee and, at that time, the Committee requested monthly reports on the status of the contract, implementation of the audit recommendations and status of the other recommendations suggested by community agencies.

Discussion

Shortly before the December meeting of the Health and Human Needs Committee, it was brought to the attention of the BHD administration that there were some concerns with the Our Space contract. BHD met with Our Space and the individuals who brought the concerns forward, and all parties agreed with a BHD developed plan to conduct an audit of the Peer Support component of the Our Space contract. To ensure that these valuable services were maintained for BHD clients while the concerns were reviewed, BHD recommended, and the Board approved, a four-month contract for Our Space from January 1 – April 30, 2012 for a total of \$116,054. BHD then returned to the Board in March 2012 and asked to extend the Peer Support service area of the Our Space contract through June 30, 2012, since the audit was still pending. That was approved and services for clients continued without interruption.

Audit released their final review of the Our Space issues in May 2012. No audit results suggested that Our Space should not continue to provide Peer Support services to BHD through their purchase of service contract. The audit was submitted to the County Board in the June cycle and, due to the completion of the audit, BHD also requested to extend the Peer Support portion of the Our Space contract through December 31, 2012. Extensive testimony occurred and the committee requested a monthly report from BHD to ensure that the recommendations from Audit were implemented.

This report seeks to continue the format of those monthly reports, the first of which was made in July 2012. Below is a list of the recommendations from Audit and the community authors, along

with a status update. The Department will share the monthly reports with Audit to ensure that they are aware of the progress.

It is worth noting that a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Office of Consumer Affairs was let on July 9, 2012, with responses due on August 6, 2012. A new vendor has been selected and is being recommended for a contract to begin on October 1, 2012 in another board report before the Board this cycle. As such, the current contract with Our Space may only be in effect until September 30, 2012.

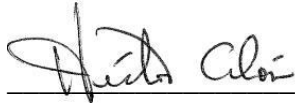
	RECOMMENDATION	SOURCE	STATUS
1	Establish, with input from Our Space and local advocacy groups, criteria for inclusion in peer support services contracts for screening candidates for Peer Specialist positions. DHS 12.06, Wisc. Adm. Code provides guidance in this area	Audit	BHD included this requirement in the RFP that was released in July 2012.
2	Require that Our Space produce current background checks on all employees past the four year re-check period	Audit	This has been completed.
3	Establish a protocol under contract provision #2 (Staffing and Delivery of Services) to review Peer Specialist assignments on a regular basis	Audit	BHD will continue to meet with the Our Space operations manager to review this regularly throughout the duration of their contract.
4	Develop a mechanism to monitor and enforce background check requirements with contracted agencies	Audit	BHD is working on this with Contract Administration and the Community Services Branch.
5	Modify the Our Space Whistleblower Protection policy and obtain DHHS - Contract Administration's written confirmation that the policy meets all contractual requirements prior to having the revised policy approved by the Our Space board	Audit	Our Space Board has approved a new Whistleblower policy, which has been reviewed and approved by Contract Administration and is now on file.
6	Distribute copies of Our Space's written Grievance and Whistleblower Protection policies to all current and future Our Space Peer Specialists, and provide awareness training regarding same.	Audit	BHD had planned to survey all Peer Specialists in the fall to ensure this is complete; however, with a potential new vendor starting, this initiative will be implemented with the new vendor.
7	Obtain and retain required employee signatures acknowledging receipt and understanding of the Our Space Whistleblower Policy	Audit	Our Space has indicated that this will be done by September. BHD will monitor to ensure receipt.

8	Seek the cooperation of supportive housing owners to conduct on-site security reviews of supportive housing units serving Milwaukee County mental health consumers, possibly enlisting the Office of the Sheriff	Audit	BHD and the DHHS Housing Division will meet and develop a strategy to address this.
9	Identify resources that could potentially be marshaled to address any security concerns/deficiencies identified from on-site security reviews	Audit	BHD and the DHHS Housing Division will meet and develop a strategy to address this.
10	Work collaboratively with Our Space Management, supportive housing unit owners and any other community resources identified to address any security concerns identified in the on-site reviews	Audit	BHD and the DHHS Housing Division will meet and develop a strategy to address this.
11	Distribute benefits counseling information to all current Peer Specialists as a reminder and incorporate same in the Our Space Employee Handbook	Audit	Our Space has indicated that this is complete.
12	Quality Assurance	Community Authors	BHD and Contract Administration will review all quality assurance provisions in the contract to ensure they are comprehensive.
13	Education for employers related to role of Peer Specialists	Community Authors	BHD is planning a summit and day of learning for employers who are incorporating Peer Support services into their agency. Additional resources are available for technical assistance and will be offered when appropriate.
14	Conflict of Interests	Community Authors	BHD and Contract Administration will review all conflict of interest provisions in the contract.
15	Complaints/ issues from clients regarding Peer Specialists		BHD will report any complaints/issues immediately, including the proposed resolution.
16	Concerns from Peer Specialists brought forth to BHD administration		BHD will notify the vendor and work with all parties to identify a solution

As noted above, in addition to the specific recommendations, BHD will monitor any concerns from clients regarding the Peer Specialists and any concerns brought forth from the Peer Specialists regarding their employment.

Recommendation

This is an informational report. No action is necessary.



Héctor Colón, Director
Department of Health and Human Services

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