

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Behavioral Health Division Administration
INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE: June 26, 2012

TO: Supervisor 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 issues 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 have 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 establish the format of those monthly reports. As the time between the initial committee meeting and this report is quite short, this report will only share the items that will be included in future reports. Below is a list of the recommendations from Audit and the community authors, and each month the status of this recommendation will be updated. The Department will share the monthly reports with Audit to ensure that they are aware of the progress.

	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 will include this requirement in RFP to be 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 requested by BHD
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 meet with the Our Space operations manager to review this on a regular schedule
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. The policy is attached to audit as part of the Our Space response. COMPLETED
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 will survey all Peer Specialists in the fall to ensure this is complete.
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	Audit	BHD and the DHHS Housing Division will meet and develop a strategy to

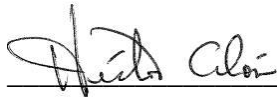
	security reviews of supportive housing units serving Milwaukee County mental health consumers, possibly enlisting the Office of the Sheriff		address this.
9	Identify resources that could potentially be marshaled to address any security concerns/deficiencies identified from on-site security reviews	Audit	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. BHD will obtain Documentation.
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 Community Services Branch plans to invest in a new employer training that will address this issue and will also secure technical assistance for Our Space on the key element within the Wisconsin Peer Specialist Employer Guide.
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.

Lastly, it was requested that surveys be done regarding of the current Peer Specialists related to their perception of their employment and a survey be done with the clients related to their interactions with Peer Specialists. BHD administration will work on this and report back to the Board in the September cycle.

Recommendation

This is an informational report. No action is necessary.



Héctor Colón, Director
Department of Health and Human Services

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