

Meeting of the

Consumers Committee

February 15, 2005
Friend's House
1:30-2:30pm

Minutes

Members present: R Abadia, A. Richardson, L. Dolloway, J. Lopez,

Members Absent: K. Butler, F Carroll, C. Cobb, C. Dzubilo, R. Gonzalez, H. Hernandez, R. Gonzalez, B Curry, H. Mateo, D. Woodard, S. Hemraj, C. Craig

Guests Present: J. Livigni, M. Gold, B. Soskind, D. Chandler, J. Henson, R. Jones, J. Chestnut, D. Marshall

Staff Present: I. Gonzalez, S. Bailous, and R. Molina

Agenda Item #1 Welcome /Introductions/Review Agenda & Minutes

Rafael A., Co-Chair opened the meeting and had everyone introduce him/her self then led a moment of silence.

The Minutes of the January 18, 2005 meeting will be reviewed at the March meeting.

Agenda Item #2 Scenarios Planning

Rafael A. reviewed three scenarios an increase, a decrease, and flat funding. The council will approve the three scenarios at it's meeting in Queens February 17th. The most difficult part of this is to plan for a decrease. The Executive Committee will propose a cross the board cut as the decrease scenario that puts a 5% cap on four categories: Quality Management, Planning and Evaluation Initiatives, Planning Council Support, and Data Link. The Executive Committee will also recommend that an ad-hoc task force be formed to develop a process to review the portfolio and determine what services are essential and/or no longer needed. This task force will also evaluate data issues. Consumers will participate on this task force. Rafael recommended that the committee review the service categories and forward recommendations to the tack force.

Joey L asked if the council would move housing categories to rank them as higher priority because of the reduction in the HOPWA award. Ingrid responded that there is no plan to look at any service category separately. The scenario proposed treats all the service categories the same with the exception of the four mentioned before. Joey reminded the committee that HOPWA took some services from the Title I portfolio when the council received a reduction two years ago. Will the council now return the gesture? Steve B. responded that the council reclaimed all those services last year from HOPWA and that in a decrease scenario they will be treated like most of the portfolio. This decrease scenario does not enhance any category.

Agenda Item #3 Service Categories

Rafael A. described the challenges involved to determine if a service category is still needed or can be cut. He shared that consumers have a unique understanding of the services that are needed and need to be actively involved in these discussions. Myron G. asked if the ad-hoc committee would review the utilization data. Rafael responded that all the available data would be used, but went on to say that data is limited in some categories. We all agree that we need the data.

Bruce S. mentioned that some services are provided and funded by other sources like Medicaid. ADAP in some cases pays for items that are covered by Medicaid. There is a problem with duplication and abuse of the system by consumers and providers. Myron G. reported that he has heard that consumers are selling their drugs on the street.

Agenda Item #4 Policy & Reauthorization

Robert J. talked about the political landscape and warned that if we do not come together now to plan for the changes from the government we will be caught off guard later. Rafael replied that is the reason we will be staying for the policy meeting that will follow immediately

Bruce S. shared that the budget proposal from the president offers an opportunity to have debate over funding with compassionate conservatives.

James L. voiced concern that Mike Leavitt, as director of HHS will need to be educated around AIDS issues. Rafael responded that we will have to reach out to our elected officials in the city and state on Medicaid /Medicare issues. We will need to partner with others around a common agenda.

Anthony R. mentioned that there would be a rally in Washington organized by Housing Works and others in May.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20pm to prepare for the policy meeting at 2:30pm where this conversation will continue with a presentation from CAEAR Coalition.