



North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care

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Coordinated Assessment Exchange Meeting Notes December 13, 2016

Attendees: Melissa Eastwood, Kimberly Green, Chris Hoover, Michelle Knapp, Faye Pierce, Amy Steele, Monica Frizzell, Linda Mandell, Candice Rountree, LaTasha McNair, Susan Pridgen, Anisse Avery, Thadeous Carr

Staff: Brian Alexander, Emily Carmody

Topic: Grievance Policies

Announcement: The BoS Steering Committee approved the new Coordinated Assessment Plan Template which will be used by new Regional Committees to submit their new plans to the Coordinated Assessment Council for final approval by April 1, 2016.

- BoS staff will hold two CA webinars in place of the CA Exchange for the months of January and February – Regional Leads and Coordinated Leads as well as others that are part of the planning process should plan to attend. Registration information will be forthcoming. These webinars will be specifically on coordinated assessment planning using the approved template.
- BoS staff will also be sending out the link for the template to Regional Leads and the CA Exchange email list this week.

Discussion of Grievance Policies and Procedures

Question: On the CA Outcome Reports, there are not very many grievances being reported – neither agency nor client grievances. What does this look like on the ground? Have there been grievances filed in your communities?

Onslow: No grievances. Susan thinks maybe this is because the agencies involved can come to an open meeting. They can see the open, transparent process and the clients that are being selected for the program. She thinks good communication with agencies can mitigate these disagreements or concerns. She believes one program might file a grievance if she knew how to do that. Agencies are probably not aware that they could do this. This would apply for clients as well.

Piedmont: They let the agencies know how clients can file a grievance. They inform the clients that if they are unhappy with their score, they can file a grievance. They have not had any clients come back after scoring to file a grievance.

Burke: They let clients know that if they are unhappy with the score or process, they can file a grievance. This is done verbally, but they could include this in the information that they are using with the client – potentially on another sheet with the ROI. They want to give them a policy or procedure to inform clients about what they can do to file a complaint. They do have some side door issues in the

system. There are complaints from agencies, but those are usually handled in the moment rather than a formal grievance procedure.

Down East: They have not had any grievances, but they also have not done a great job informing clients or agencies that they can file a grievance if they are not happy with the process. This is something they need to develop for their Regional Committee.

Common Threads:

- Thinking through the education and awareness process for the grievance policy.
 - If the policy is small type or not published, this might indicate that the system doesn't want grievances.
 - For folks in crisis, they need a process for filing a grievance. It helps the client be heard but also tells us as a system what's working and what's not.
 - Could put in paperwork that agencies are giving to clients so they have the information in case they want to use it.
 - Just handing out a form to them will not be enough. Need to think about highlighting the grievance policy and educating clients about the possibilities. Potentially having them initial next to the policy to ensure that it has been explained.
 - Chris suggested a template for a grievance policy that could help programs be uniform in how they are doing this in the CA process.
- Need to think about the power dynamic in the grievance process. Clients wanting a grievance form should not need to ask the assessor or the person who they may be filing the grievance against. This protects the client and ensures that the client feels comfortable filing the grievance.

Question: Have your systems reviewed your community's grievance policy? This would be helpful for communities to do on a regular basis, especially in light that not many grievances get filed. This would help prepare the system to respond and respond in a timely way and appropriately.

- Thadeous says that there is a difference between a grievance and someone who is dissatisfied with the solution.
 - Emily says to think about this as a feedback loop. The system needs to hear from people who are disgruntled.
 - It's valuable to listen to them in a conversation, allowing them to be heard and allowing providers to understand the population better.

Question: Could communities have a group that meets with a client(s) that are dissatisfied that would discuss solutions that might work for them?

- Alamance: There are situations that are not easily solved (i.e. mother with eight children with two evictions). The community tries to create a solution but either the client does not want the services or the program cannot find housing.
- Staff mentioned that an open dialogue about potential solutions with a variety of community members could help stem problems with clients with severe issues that might be difficult to place. Include the client in the conversation about possible solutions and be sure to be transparent about what is and is not possible with the resources.

