

**BRIDGING LOCAL SYSTEMS:
STRATEGIES FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COLLABORATION**

EASTPOINTE REGIONAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

**Wednesday, January 18, 2017
Beulaville, NC
12:00 - 3:00 pm**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Eastpointe Regional Leadership Summit openly discussed organizational changes that may occur within the region during 2017.

Members agreed to continue to use the Summit meetings to shape future collaboration between the LME-MCO and DSS agencies.

DSS and Eastpointe staff agreed to work on educational materials (webinars) targeted to DSS to explain MCO regulations, processes, and inter-agency communication.

A workgroup from the Summit will consider and, if feasible, propose a plan to create joint MCO-LME/DSS liaison positions within the region.

Eastpointe and DSS agencies committed to improve collaboration around discharge planning for individuals leaving inpatient settings.

A workgroup from the Summit will consider strategies to improve communication and collaboration related to adults participating in the Transitions to Community Living Program.

MEETING SUMMARY

ATTENDEES

Kim Hedrick, *Duplin County DSS*; Sarah Bradshaw, Lynn Fields, *Sampson County DSS*; Wendy Stanton, Jennifer Byrd, *Scotland County DSS*; Don Hicks, Kathy Stone, *Wilson County DSS*; Angela English, Lynnette Gordon, Victoria Jackson, Karen Salacki, Lou Ann Simmons, Sarah Stroud, *Eastpointe*; Beverly Bell, Adgenda Turner, *DHHS*; Mary Hooper, *NC Council of Community Programs*; Anne Foglia, *NCIOM*; Michael Owen, *consultant/facilitator*.

OVERVIEW

Michael Owen (meeting facilitator) gave a summary review of the Bridging Local Systems project including the sponsors and goals. The goals of the Bridging Local Systems project are to strengthen communication and collaboration between LME/MCOs and DSSs, and improve shared outcomes for two shared populations: (1) children and families served by child welfare and behavioral health, and (2) adults served by adult protective or guardianship services. Michael's slides are available [here](#). A summary of the first summit meeting was distributed and is available [here](#).

INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Following Michael's summary participants introduced themselves and shared announcements and goals for the summit. Sarah Stroud, CEO of Eastpointe, thanked everyone for prioritizing the initiative and taking the time to be present. Ms. Stroud also addressed the recent press release stating that Eastpointe has entered into a non-binding letter of intent to merge with Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Solutions. Definitive agreement to merge requires approval from the Eastpointe Board of Directors as well as the secretary of NC DHHS. The projected date of consolidation is July 1, 2017. Ms. Stroud also acknowledged the recent disengagement from the Eastpointe network by Nash County. The issue has been taken up by Eastpointe legal counsel. When asked to offer guidance to the DSS agencies regarding how these changes, particularly the merger, impact planning and collaboration, Ms. Stroud indicated that business should continue as usual and emphasized that information that can be shared on either change will be communicated with stakeholders on a timely basis. Several participants commented that the system is continuously changing, and that it is important to continue moving forward with establishing and strengthening collaborative relationships for the benefit of the county residents.

REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Michael Owen (meeting facilitator) gave an overview of some of the initiatives coming out of leadership summits in other regions. The Partners Regional Leadership Summit participants, for example, are convening a group of Transitions to Community Living Initiative staff and DSS adult services supervisors to develop a collaborative process for helping clients transition successfully. The Sandhills Regional Leadership Summit participants identified the need to build a more common vocabulary to bridge the two institutional cultures (e.g., treatment vs. placement). Sandhills Summit participants have also drafted a proposal for blended funding for a position to expedite the referral-assessment-authorization process for DSS children (the draft proposal can be found [here](#)). DSS agencies in the Partners, Sandhills, and Alliance Regional Leadership Summits requested overviews of the specific initiatives undertaken in each county.

REGIONAL GOALS

The Summit participants identified several goals and strategies for the Eastpointe region:

Education

Improve educational opportunities to enhance understanding among DSS, LME/MCO, and provider staff of the responsibilities and regulations of each partner and help prevent future breakdowns in communication.

Strategy

Develop a series of orientation webinars to educate staff on a number of common issues surrounding regulations, processes, and inter-agency communication, including:

- Care coordination and key contact information
- What to expect from a provider—outpatient and inpatient.
- How to follow up with providers about service authorizations—SAR, expedited requests
- Responding to authorization denials—administrative denials, appeal rights
- Medicaid change of residency processes
- Service definitions and criteria

Eastpointe and DSS agencies will solicit key questions to address in the development of educational resources.

LME/MCO Liaisons

DSS agencies expressed the need for a point of contact for navigating the LME/MCO system present at the DSS.

Strategy

Sarah Bradshaw from Sampson County, Kathy Stone from Wilson County, and Victoria Jackson from Eastpointe volunteered to work on a proposal to create a liaison position at the DSS based on the draft example from Sandhills. Eastpointe agreed to check what resources are available to meet the immediate need in the meantime.

Collaborative Discharge Planning

Participants discussed concerns surrounding hospital discharge planning and the need for improved communication during often-compressed timeframes. DSS should be included in discharge planning as the guardian from the beginning and should notify Lou Ann Simmons at Eastpointe when a DSS ward is entering inpatient treatment.

NEXT STEPS

The next meeting will be pushed back to accommodate a morning provider meeting and take place from 1-4pm on Wednesday, February 15th at the Eastpointe Beulaville Office.

Participants will break into workgroups to further develop plans around each of the stated goals at the next meeting, February 15th. A workgroup will also address TCLI and how the summit can be leveraged to address adult needs as well as the needs of the child population.