



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

SANDHILLS REGIONAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

**Tuesday, March 28, 2017
Seven Lakes, North Carolina
11:00 am - 2:00 pm**

Attendees

Lula Jackson, *Anson DSS*; Sharon Barlow, Cheryl Millmore, Heather Skeens, *Guilford DSS*; Tammy Chaney, Della Sweat, *Hoke DSS*; Lesa Price, *Lee DSS*; Sarah Smith, *Montgomery DSS*; Meghan Kology, Lisa Stern, *Randolph DSS*; Robby Hall, *Richmond DSS*; Karey Perez, *NC DAAS*; Dennis Williams, *NC DMH*; Tena Campbell, Dorinda Robinson, Anthony Ward, *Sandhills Center MCO*; I. Azell Reeves, *Sandhills Center CFAC*; Anne Foglia, *NCIOM*; Michael Owen, *Summit Facilitator*

OVERVIEW & SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Michael Owen (meeting facilitator) welcomed the summit participants to the final meeting and gave a brief summary of the discussion at the February 28th meeting. A summary of that meeting is available [here](#).

Following introductions, Michael asked participants to share a few things that they felt had been accomplished in the previous three summit meetings. Accomplishments named included:

- An acknowledgement that the system/processes are creating barriers (e.g., differing crisis timelines), and an understanding of the different vocabulary used by the two systems.
- Opening up communications and development of a collaborative working relationship between DSS and Sandhills.
- DSS reported reaching out to Sandhills earlier and more frequently to resolve issues at a higher level of management before they escalate or present further barriers to social workers.
- A few DSS also reported working with Sandhills on guardianship and resources for adults.

Additional progress acknowledged included:

- Shared information on funding streams.
- Learned about county-specific projects with Sandhills.
- Began discussion about definition of terms.
- Made a commitment for enhanced training for foster care parents.
- Created a workgroup to create ideas for blended funding options to expedite referrals.
- Created a proposal for jointly funded liaison positions.
- Discussed needs of parents who lose Medicaid.
- Identified key issues/problems in serving people in guardianship.
- Considered a structure for on-going regional meetings.

UPDATES FROM WORKGROUPS

Training

Anthony Ward, Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer at Sandhills Center, updated the group on the progress of a workgroup that met to talk about training needs. The focus had been expanded from to include child and adult needs. Training is being planned for foster parents in the fall and staff serving adults in the spring—trainings will be held in the Guilford-Randolph area, southwestern, and southeastern areas of the region. DSS staff will also receive invitations to an upcoming training on Autism.

Annual cross-trainings were also proposed to cover topics such as authorizations, leveling, funding, appeals, foster care, information sharing, court, and case plans.

DSS and Sandhills Liaisons

The potential roles for liaison positions, local action steps, and guidelines for both agencies to navigate the creation of the position and the process of sharing information continues to be discussed both at and between summit meetings.

Robby Hall, Director of Richmond County Department of Social Services, and Anthony Ward proposed continuing to hold quarterly regional DSS/Sandhills meetings. A planning committee as well as standing committees on service needs and access points, blended funding and MOE opportunities, and information sharing/utilization would help the region assess needs and continue to move the work started in the summit forward. This proposal was met with agreement from the other leaders present as well as the suggestion that the statewide steering committee should also continue to meeting and facilitate communication at the state level.

ADULT SERVICES

Michael asked DSS and Sandhills representatives to consider what can be done to better serve the jointly-served adult population. Suggestions included:

- Need better residential options for adults and in-home aids for adults.
 - Resources to implement residential services are limited, but the group all acknowledged the challenge to find adequate services. Participants suggested looking to other states to identify potential service definitions and Medicaid waivers to help create residential services for adults similar to those provided for children and youth.
- Need well-trained personnel in adult group homes and adult social workers.
 - Already working towards this.
- DSS needs support in taking on the role of guardianship, especially with young adults. DSS staff need a better understanding of how to access existing services, and how to handle issues new to social workers such as building financial competence and protecting against financial exploitation.
 - Guilford DSS has found the Elder Justice Group a useful resource. Trainings by DAAS and Eastern AHEC were also recommended.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE & FUTURE PLANS

- Participants suggested a future check-in with all the counties to identify impact.
- In addition to continuing quarterly regional meetings, and suggesting that the statewide committee also continue to meet beyond the Bridging Local Systems project, participants suggested that a periodic conference be held to address the needs of both systems with both regional and state level leadership present.