

# Department of Behavioral Healthcare Services

## Community Relations Plan 2019-2021

### Overview

The City of Portsmouth – Department of Behavioral Healthcare Services (DBHS) is committed to recovery-based programming, increasing clinical competency of staff and exposing staff to best practices. The success of recovery and transformation initiatives is that the community supports the process. One of the primary goals of the Community Relations Plan is to make the community aware of the myths and to dispel the stigma attached to addiction. Plan forums and participate in events within the City of Portsmouth and all surrounding areas when possible. Surveys and informational exchange are used for strategic planning, such as assisting Department of Social Services with Medicaid Expansion and registration of insured residency.

### Accomplishments: 2019 – 2021

- DBHS sponsored a Mental Health Awareness Day event to raise awareness and to erase the stigma via a drive-through giveaway
- DBHS conducted Mental Health First Aid trainings to staff, schools, and local churches
- DBHS collaborated with Get Suited, LLC to provide more “Passport to Services” (DBHS pamphlets outlining our services) for their lunch box program for homeless men.
- DBHS partnered with Dorian Finney-Smith Foundation to assist citizens with food, PPE, and other household necessities via a drive through event.
- DBHS collaborated with Portsmouth Public Schools’ (PPS) School Psychologists and School Social Workers to present information pertaining to social emotional learning and other mental health issues.
- DBHS provided medication lock boxes and medication disposal bags during an event with Portsmouth Redevelopment Housing Authority and the Office of Youth Risk Prevention in recognition of National Drug and Alcohol Facts week.
- DBHS collaborated with Region 5 Prevention staff for an event to support the 6th Annual Shatter the Silence event.

- DBHS sponsored two events to celebrate National HIV/AIDS Testing Day and National Overdose Awareness Day (both events were drive through giveaway of PPE, and other household necessities – Narcan trainings and private HIV/AIDS tests were also available).
- Environment Strategies which advertised Opioid Awareness information on buses, billboards, and mobile devices.
- DBHS produced a PSA for Mental Health Awareness Month that centered around suicide awareness and opiate overdose that was advertised on PCTV and city’s social media pages.
- DBHS sponsored the Suicide Awareness Summit in collaboration with Chesapeake, Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg Community Services Boards.
- DBHS continue to provide person-centered services via the Warm Line in an array of settings.
- DBHS continue to increase Regional advocacy and collaboration efforts.
- DBHS was awarded Prevention Grant to develop environmental strategies
- DBHS awarded training grant
- DBHS held its annual youth summit at I.C. Norcom “Youth Outreach Summit advertised as the YO Summit. Whereby police and community and civic groups come together in an effort to fight crime and increase prevention awareness.
- DBHS coordinated and assisted with the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. community breakfast and the Umoja Festival (African American community festival).
- DBHS assisted with coordinating Regional Recovery and Empowerment Conference.
- DBHS supported conference to combat homelessness with Portsmouth Parks and Recreation.
- DBHS supported and coordinated Regional Conference and provided support to ex-offenders.
- DBHS improved community relations with stakeholders and area businesses by increasing security and decreasing loitering in and around program premises.
- DBHS evaluated and updated department’s strategic plan.
- DBHS partnered with the Police Department’s Rapid Engagement of Support in the event of Trauma (RESET) program designed for agencies to respond with the Police Department when trauma has occurred in the community

**Targeted Population**

- Faith based community

- Health Professionals
- Community at large
- Homeless population
- Single Parents
- Recovery Community
- High Risk Population
- Elected Officials
- Judges
- Educators

### **Methodology**

- To increase the community's knowledge of addiction, its success and accomplishments:
  1. Meet with faith based community weekly – Church and Community In Action
  2. Coordinate festivals, summits, workshops and trainings
  3. Have monthly meetings with Probation & Parole
  4. Disseminate Information thru interviews, workshops
  5. Annually – Coordinate Regional Recovery Conference
  6. Apply for state training grants for staff and community training, festivals
  7. Hire Peer Support Specialist to increase engagement.

### **Results**

- Increase knowledge base of the community through advocacy to get bills and appropriations passed yearly, work closely with VACSB for advocacy and awareness, NAMI and SAARA

### **Impact**

- Decrease in stigma
- Education of citizens and others
- Detailed information about services that are provided by DBHS

### **Goals 2019 - 2021**

- Make presentations to various professional, civic, social, sorority organizations throughout the community
- Peers continue to provide service by way of managing the Warm-Line.
- Increased opioid awareness and suicide awareness

- Increase the number of Mental Health First Aid Classes for teachers, Guidance Counselors and other community organizations
- Focus on issues related to family dysfunction'
- Continue regional and local collaboration with Probation & Parole and other agencies to decrease substance use and abuse in our community
- Continue stakeholder and consumer input through surveys to seek continuous improvement of services
- Newsletter will be utilized to increase awareness among stakeholder and the community that treatment does work and Methadone decreases illicit drug use in the community.
- To increase prevention and awareness of HIV/AIDS state and local trends through education and testing
- To continue to develop and accomplish goals in the department's strategic plan
- To follow the COSIG charter
- Increase environmental strategies in order to educate and inform
- Increase merchant education on sales of tobacco products
- Suicide Awareness conference at the Edmonds Center here in the City of Portsmouth. Peer support advocates were a significant part of this event.
- Used peer support with EMT (fire Department)
- Reduce stigma
- Increase awareness
- Increase in Peer activities

### **Stakeholders**

- Citizens and Staff of Portsmouth
- City Officials
- Judges
- Consumers
- Faith Based Organizations
- Health Professional
- Colleges
- Sororities
- Fraternities

### **Results**

- Approximate 2000 citizens will be presented with current trends in city, state and country with HIV/AIDS, as well as trends in substance use and treatment issues.

## **Impact**

- Increase in Advocacy
- Increase in Funding /Grants
- Increase in community awareness
- DBHS assisted registering residents for Medicaid
- Increase in Peers
- Reduction in stigma
- Increase in awareness

Staff involved to carry out the Community Relations Plan is: Director, Assistant Director, members of the Management Team, Program Administrator, HIV/AIDS Coordinator, Prevention Specialists, and Substance Use Outpatient Treatment Staff.

Reviewed 08/2020

Revised 5/2021