

Family Council **February 9, 2016**

Present: Sue Bailey, Ernie Goodman, Betsy Hayes, Bill Hayes, Nancy Seger, Judy Stewart Vidal. **Resident Council Representative:** Jean Pysnik.

Administrator: Shannon Cayea.

Introductions and Announcements

Betsy convened the Council meeting at 1:35 p.m.. The attendees introduced themselves. Betsy announced that a free six-session, two-hour “Living Health Workshop” series will be provided in Oneonta by Ida Baker of Bassett’s Center for Rural Community Health. This will be on Wednesdays, 4:30-7 p.m., March 9-April 13. Betsy noted that she and Ernie Goodman had each taken this workshop series, and found it very valuable in addressing methods for coping with the challenges of aging and illness, both as caregivers and for themselves. Register by calling Ida Baker at 607 547-3464.

Minutes

The minutes of the January 12 Council meeting had been distributed by email to Council members, and have been available at the lobby desk as well. Two revisions were made: reference to a “Self Care” program mentioned by Sue Bailey should read “Consumer-Directed”, and the Council’s request to have an organizational chart of FOCUS at Otsego should have been noted during Administrator’s Update. On a motion by Bill, seconded by Sue, the revised minutes were accepted.

Council Discussion

Employee Handbook: Betsy announced that she had been contacted by CSEA Regional Office representative Tim Moretti, who asked that the Council be aware that the Employee Policy Handbook mentioned several months ago comes from the facility but needs to comply with law or the collective bargaining agreement between CSEA and management.

Council Leadership: Council members reviewed the draft By Laws developed by Judy and revised at the January meeting. Following other items on today’s agenda, the draft version was accepted as the final version, on a motion by Sue and seconded by Judy. The By Laws provide for nomination of officers in January each year, and further nomination and vote in February. The current chairperson and secretary have no nominees contending for office, and will continue to hold office. The Vice chair position has no nominees at this time; this (and any vacant position) can be filled by the Council at any point. The Vice Chair would substitute for the Chair if the Chair is unable to serve as convenor and facilitator of meetings. Betsy noted that she and Bill will not be at the April meeting.

Family Support Group: Betsy reminded the Council of Ombudsman Chris Geertgens’ offer to run a support group for family members, a different purpose than the Council. No attendees indicated an interest in this at this time; the issue can be raised again

Updates from Administrator

Shannon Cayea joined the meeting.

Staff Recruitment and Retention: Since last meeting, 2 LPNS were let go and 3 new ones hired, a net gain of 1. Three CNAs were let go and 9 new ones hired, a net gain of 6. There is a vacant position for an full-time LPN for evenings and one for nights. Recruitment ads are now running on the sides of 2 OPT buses, on a billboard facing I-88 in Oneonta, and in the regional Pennysavers. Shannon described the current salaries as “competitive”, after some upgrades last year. Discussions are underway with Bassett to develop a system of “career ladders” to facilitate employees’ advancement within their profession or shifting to a new direct care position.

Organizational Chart: Shannon distributed copies of a chart demonstrating the positions and lines of responsibility within FOCUS at Otsego. During discussion, several revisions or additions were made; Shannon will provide an updated copy to the Secretary to append to these minutes.

Daily Fee: The Council had asked in December for an explanation of the increase in daily fee, which amounted to a 20% increase within the past two years. While Shannon did not have a statement from the owner, she noted that the facility, which had run a deficit under County ownership, receives payments from Medicaid, Medicare and private pay that are \$49/resident/day less than it costs to run the facility. Proposed increases in NYS minimum wage to \$15/hour would require a series of adjustments for all staff, to address seniority and experience above minimum wage. Additional income and cost-savings must be found. Currently, Medicaid pays about \$200/day for each Medicaid-covered longterm care resident, and Medicare pays \$400/day for people in short-term rehab who are getting PT/OT and or Speech therapy and who are making progress toward resuming baseline functionality. Private pay residents are now charged \$300/day, which is approximately the average rate in a multi-county Northeast NY State area which includes the capital district and the rural north country.

A Council member noted that the federal coordinator of Medicaid and Medicare (CMS) has mandated that facilities receiving such funding establish and maintain certain staff/resident ratios of RN hours, LPN hours and CNA hours per resident per day, in an effort to improve quality of care. Beginning July 1, 2016, facilities receiving Medicare and Medicaid payments must report on their compliance with recommended staffing patterns. NYS legislature has drafted legislation reinforcing this effort. Research cited by CMS has demonstrated that more robust staffing can improve certain health parameters while decreasing staff stress and turnover; studies of California hospitals and nursing homes following staffing improvements, have shown improved financial stability of the facilities complying with these practices. Shannon stated that this is an issue promoted for years by nurses’ unions, but that it is being resisted. She notes that specific staff ratios are rigid in that they are numbers-only, and do not take into account the variation in acuity of care needs demonstrated by residents served in facilities (which range from bedbound or technology-dependent folks needing total care, to those who can walk and talk but still need nursing observation and care). Betsy asked whether there is currently a written plan for staffing patterns at FOCUS. Shannon stated that there isn’t one, but that she keeps in mind her own goal of having 4 CNAs on each unit during the day shift, 3 on evenings, and 2 at night. Various factors make

ending up with these numbers a challenge. Agency temps continue to be used to try to fill the gaps.

February Announcements: The *Food Service* has recently changed from Sodexo (which tends to serve hospitals and large institutions) to Central Care Solutions (a smaller, Linden NJ based, company specializing in efficient purchasing solutions for food and other products needed by nursing homes, according to their web site). There is not yet a designated CCS manager on site; FOCUS food service staff are continuing their work in food preparation and delivery, and are using Sodexo supplies and menus for now. Bill notes that there is an Albany area office run by someone with an associates degree in a related field, and significant years' experience in direct food ordering and prep and in supervision. A Council member commented positively on last night's meal in "Fine Dining".

Hospital Readmission Prevention initiative is underway over the past year, assessing factors that may lead to returns to the hospital of residents recently discharged from a hospital. FOCUS participates in the Leatherstocking Region's DSRIP (Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment program), part of NY State's effort to reduce patient readmissions to hospitals. FOCUS is using Interact computer programs from IPRO (Independent Peer Review Organization) to flag residents' issues that may prompt readmission. Information about the results of this effort will become available. Bill noted that hospitals, themselves, have been working to address this as well, with particular attention to assessing risk factors as early as pre-admission, and being careful to communicate with patients and caregivers at discharge (and scheduling early outpatient doctor followup, and sending a discharge summary to the local doctor). A Council member noted that preventing problems is difficult when a patient cannot recall or articulate an accurate history, and when the doctor in the hospital is not the doctor who follows up, especially when different doctors have differing notions about what medications are appropriate. Shannon reported that the new Electronic Medical Record at FOCUS is working well, and that staff seem much happier with it than prior systems.

Events: There will be a Valentine's Day Dance for residents this Friday afternoon, 2/12. The theme is "Honky Tonk", and there are some fun outfits and décor being planned.

Shannon left the meeting.

Staff Recognition

The Council recognized Danielle Clements RN, Inservice Coordinator, for her work during the transition of ownership, her willingness to help with staffing, and for devising and presenting various training sessions for direct care staff (RNs, LPNs and CNAs). She has gone above and beyond the call of duty! Betsy will notify Danielle, and will post a certificate of appreciation in the lobby.

The Council meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Bill Hayes, Secretary

NEXT MEETING
Tuesday March 8 @ 1:30 p.m.
Family Dining Room, off the Lobby