

**COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX
MINUTES OF THE HEALTH, HOSPITALS & SOCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON JUNE 22nd, 2009**

PRESENT

Philip Friedman
Steven Balicer
Beverly Fettman
Steven Froot
Maria Khury
Damian McShane
Joyce Pilsner

AFFILIATION

CB 8, Committee Vice Chair
CB 8
CB 8
CB 8
CB 8
CB 8
CB 8

Introductions:

Guest Speakers: Mary O'Mara – St. Joseph's Medical Center
Barbara Kiernan – St. Joseph's Medical Center
Lowel Feldman – Terrace Health Care Center
Debbie Egel – Office of Alcohol & Substance Abuse Services
(OASAS)
Belinda Greenfield – New York State OASAS
Susan M. Anderson – St. Joseph's Medical Center
Gilda Dentico – Terrace Health Care Center

Vice-Chairperson's Report:

- Vice Chair acknowledges the great contributions former Chairperson, Dr. Martin Katzenstein, made to the committee (Dr. Katzenstein was not reappointed to the Community Board.)

Agenda Items:

Terrace Health Care Center

- Mr. Feldman has been owner of Terrace Health Care Center since 1983.
- Terrace Health Care is comprised of 240 residents of all ages. The facility specializes in HIV & substance abuse.
- The representatives of OASAS indicated they are in attendance due to their interest in the community's input relating to the proposed outpatient methadone clinic being proposed for Terrace Health Care.
- Opening of the proposed methadone clinic is slated for the Fall '09.
- OASAS representatives offer to answer any questions regarding the proposed clinic. They state that the goal of the clinic is to serve the residents of Terrace Health Care.
- OASAS wishes to clarify items from the previous Health & Hospitals meeting minutes: minutes stated that the cost of client transportation was \$50k; actual cost is closer to \$110k.
- It is further stated that it is a violation of the client's rights to be publicly transporting them to the current treatment facility at St. Joseph's Medical Center. Additionally there are health and safety risks relative to transporting some of the clients; clients using walkers, are blind, etc.
- It is stated that methadone distribution regulations have been re-written recently; this allows for the possibility of a clinic within a nursing home/health care center.

- The Terrace Health Care clinic would be capped at 100 clients maximum; initially only 50 clients would be allowed until clinic is confirmed to be operating per regulations. Once confirmed, program would be expanded to 100 clients.
- It is indicated that potential clients from outside Terrace Health Care can petition to use this facility at Terrace Health Care; it is the law that they be allowed to use the facility provided there are client spaces available.
- It is noted that the need for these clinics is increasing due to the aging population of methadone users.
- It is noted that St. Joseph's, the clinic operator, will be provided with a conditional operating certificate initial which will be re-evaluated by OASAS over the course of operation.
- It is noted that the average age of clients for this facility is approximately 48 years old.
- It is noted that the Terrace Health Care has approximately 12-15 admissions (new clients) per month.
- It is further noted that the typical methadone client has resided at the facility for several years and are the older population; average age 60 years old.
- OASAS states that it could be (6) months to one year before the clinic is allowed to expand from (50) to (100) clients.
- Terrace Health Care representatives discuss that their facility assists all types of clients, from rehabilitation of 21 year old gunshot wound patients, etc.
- Terrace Health Care further discussions that there is no special unit for the methadone clients. The facility has an integrated population; i.e. HIV, stroke, methadone clients are intermingled.
- Currently (48) clients at Terrace Health Care are transported for methadone treatment.
- It is noted that Terrace Health Care Center has a total of (240) beds. They maintain approximately 99% occupancy and that 99.5% of residents are Medicaid clients.
- It is noted that methadone payments are separate from the Medicaid payments. Further it is noted that transportation of methadone clients for Terrace Health Care to St. Joseph's is paid for by Medicaid.
- OASAS indicates it is not interested in St. Joseph's financial break even point for the clinic at Terrace Health Care. Quality care is the primary concern for the initial (50) clients.
- OASAS is in favor of the clinic at Terrace Health Care due to better quality of care, that it is safer for the clients and maintains the clients dignity.
- It is reminded that Terrace Health Care Center will be the first 'nursing home' in New York State with a methadone clinic since new regulations put into place.
- St. Joseph's representatives state that their interest in this program is to provide better care than associated with transporting clients from Terrace Health Care to St. Joseph's.
- Inception of the idea of this clinic was a joint request by St. Joseph's and Terrace Health Care to the State under the newly revised regulations.
- OASAS states they are looking at this pilot program as part of a state-wide revamp.

- OASAS stated that they do not require anything from CB8 for implementation of the clinic; they reiterate that they would like the community's cooperation and is willing to answer any questions.
- As of this meeting, there has been no construction at Terrace Health Care for the proposed clinic. There are still to be meetings with The NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) and the Health Department.
- Added to the methadone clinic revamped regulations was to foster community relations. This is the purpose of the OASAS representatives attending the meeting.
- A committee member requests periodic reports to the Community Board (CB) relative to progress of the proposed clinic upon opening. OASAS indicates that this would likely not be done.
- OASAS indicated that they will inspect the clinic for compliance but will not publish it's findings for the public.
- It is noted that the proposed operator of the methadone clinic, St. Joseph's has been granted 3-year licenses; the longest duration granted to a provider. This indicates that St. Joseph's has been found compliant to the state regulations relative to methadone treatment. Thus it is anticipated that St. Joseph's will operate the clinic at Terrace Health Care with the same diligence. Further, St. Joseph's main license is attached to the Terrace Health Care License. If the clinic at Terrace Health is not operated properly, it could endanger St. Joseph's primary license to provide methadone treatment.
- It is noted that the only difference between the St. Joseph's clinic and the proposed clinic at Terrace Health Care is that there will be no transportation required.
- Terrace Health Care will be leasing space to St. Joseph's for the clinic. Otherwise, Terrace Health Care has no other affiliation with the clinic.
- It is noted that for pain management, Terrace Health Care can dispense methadone to residents. Only if the resident is an addict is St. Joseph's required to dispense methadone.
- OASAS notes that they can not limit use of the clinic to only Terrace Health Care; that outside clients could be treated as well. Additionally, the program can not be limited to 6-8 outside clients. As long as there are spaces available within the clinic, clients who petition from outside Terrace Health can be treated.
- It is noted that St. Joseph's currently treats approximately (300) clients at their current on-site facility.
- It is noted that across the street from Terrace Health is the Jericho Project which offers a similar methadone program. Additionally, the V.A. Hospital has a methadone program.
- It is proposed that the clinic at Terrace Health would likely operate from 6:30AM – 2:30PM daily. Some clients pickup methadone daily; some pickup 30-day supply.
- It is noted that the clients from Terrace Health and outside clients would always be separated via (2) different waiting areas; they would not be treated at the same time.
- St. Joseph's is starting the application process for the clinic with the Department of Health and OASAS. When conditional approval is granted, St. Joseph's will begin construction at Terrace Health Care.
- Committee proposes holding a meeting at Terrace Health Care.
- Committee to send thank you letters to all guests and request to keep updated on progress of proposed clinic.

- A committee member indicates concern that OASAS would not be apt to releasing reports of proposed clinic's compliance.

Old Business:

No old business

New Business:

H1N1

- It is indicated that this topic will be discussed at the next committee meeting in the fall.
- H1N1 is a potentially major concern, especially for the young and senior populations.

Mosquito Spraying

- Expecting a large mosquito population this summer. Would like to request spraying schedule from the city.

New Committee Distribution List

- A new committee membership list will be developed and distributed for the fall.

Miscellaneous:

- It is requested that content relative to the Health, Hospitals and Social Service Committee be provided for inclusion on the CB8 website.

Meeting Adjourns 9:05PM

Submitted by,

Philip Friedman
Vice Chair
Health Hospitals and Social Services
Committee