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| **L*ouisiana***  **C*ommission on* A*ddictive***  **D*isorders*** |  |  |
|  | ***MINUTES***  ***November 2010*** |  |
|  |  | ***11/16/2010*** |

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| **COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** | Freddie Landry  Kathleen Leary  Tom Lief | George McHugh  Tony Wick |

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| **COMMISSION MEMBERS PARTICIPATING VIA**  **CONFERENCE CALL:** | Kathy Hayward  Jon Lance Nickelson | Shelley Mockler  Damon Marsala |

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| **COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:** | Lana Bel  Lloyd Hernandez |  |

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| **OBH / HQ STAFF ATTENDING:** | Kathy Kliebert | Dr. Rochelle Head-Dunham  Daryl Koerth |

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| **GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:** | Lisa Schuster |  |

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| **I. Serenity Prayer & Roll Call** |

Freddie Landry called the meeting to order. Kathleen Leary led the Commission members in the Serenity Prayer. Daryl Koerth conducted roll call.

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| **II. Approval of October Minutes** |

The members of the Commission reviewed the October meeting minutes of the Louisiana Commission on Addictive Disorders. Ms. Landry called for a motion to approve the minutes. Tony Wick made a motion to approve the minutes, and Kathleen Leary seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion to approve the October meeting minutes passed.

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| **III. Change of Commission Leadership** |

Kathy Hayward, Chair of the Commission, formally announced her decision to step down as the Commission’s Chairperson due to personal circumstances. This position also includes a seat on the Drug Policy Board. Kathleen Leary made a proposal to the Commission to nominate Freddie Landry as the Commission’s new Chairperson (and Drug Policy Board representative), and George McHugh as the Commission’s Vice Chair and Liaison to the Legislature. There was no objection to this proposal, and it was put to a vote.

Tom Lief made a motion to elect Freddie Landry to the position of Chairperson. Tony Wick seconded this motion. Hearing no opposition, the motion passed and Freddie Landry was elected the Chair of the Commission on Addictive Disorders. Kathleen Leary made a motion to elect George McHugh to the positions of Vice Chair and Legislative Liaison. Tony Wick seconded this motion. Hearing no opposition, the motion passed and George McHugh was elected Vice Chair of the Commission and Legislative Liaison.

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| **IV. Certification & Licensure Discussion** |

George McHugh opened the Commission’s discussion about certification and licensure standards for addiction professionals in Louisiana. He noted all of the recent changes – the behavioral health merger, the privatization of programs, and others – and inquired about the role of the Commission in the new environment. In addition, he said the Commission must be more aware of certification and licensure standards in the state’s programs, especially as more and more programs are privatized. Kathy Hayward responded that though the Commission certainly needs to remain aware of these standards and the need for improvement, the Department of Health and Hospitals does manage licensure requirements.

Tony Wick asked Dr. Rochelle Head-Dunham, Medical Director for the Office of Behavioral Health, about the standards and requirements outlined for privatized programs. Dr. Dunham explained the requirements for certification and licensure. Freddie Landry then asked if the Office of Behavioral Health monitors those programs to ensure they are meeting the requirements stipulated in their contracts. Dr. Dunham responded that all privatized programs are monitored in the same fashion as those the agency already contracts and monitors. George McHugh stated that monitoring is the main issue: the agency must be able to reasonably ensure that programs are actually doing what they say they are doing. Dr. Dunham agreed, and responded that there is currently some debate and discussion about budgeting programs based on outcomes rather than services. She stated that because outcomes are measureable and demonstrative of a rate of success, they are a much more solid indicator of a program’s adherence to the evidence based practices outlined in their contracts. In the future, she said, monitoring may even include client comments.

Tom Lief expressed concerns about the need for qualified workforce and counselors – more so than just certification and licensure. Lisa Schuster, the Executive Director of the Louisiana Addictive Disorders Regulatory Authority, stated that a majority of universities in the United States do not require coursework in addiction. She said that the OBH Implementation Advisory Committee raised and investigated this issue during the development of its recommendations for the behavioral health merger. Dr. Dunham added that strategic partnership with universities is part of the workforce plan recommended for the future of the state.

Dr. Dunham stated that Medicaid’s requirements are a bit more stringent than our providers are used to, and that documentation itself is an issue that needs to be addressed. Lisa Schuster added that the lack of clinical documentation is “woeful” across the board: mental health and addiction professionals both struggle with documentation. George McHugh raised the question of who should be responsible for teaching documentation principles to clinicians. Lisa Schuster stated that this issue goes back to increasing the educational standards at the university level, as well as building competency through clinical supervision. Dr. Dunham said that there are some deficits/deficiencies in the addiction workforce, and that the first step in addressing them is acknowledging them. She also acknowledged that clinical supervisors may be competent and certified, but that does not necessarily mean they are consistently supervising the other clinicians. Lisa Schuster said that the responsibility for teaching competency in documentation rests first with the educational system, and second with the employer. According to her, clinicians should be competent in documentation before they ever get to the certification system.

George McHugh raised the possibility of using the demonstrated ability to write as part of the certification process. He said that it is the responsibility of the certification and licensure organizations to assess the weaknesses in the workforce and address them. Without competency in the identified critical areas, no certificate or license should be issued. Kathleen Leary gave a review of her experience with the certification process, and asked if it was still similar. Lisa Schuster explained that the process is still similar to Ms. Leary’s experience: clinicians still need to meet the same requirements, with the exception that there is no longer an oral exam. She gave a brief explanation of the requirements for certification/licensure. Tom Lief asked about bolstering the requirements for documentation in the certification process. Lisa Schuster responded that the standard for certification/licensure is the IC & RC exam – something Louisiana doesn’t have the authority to change – and they only require basic documentation of symptoms, nothing about grammar or expression. In other words, she said, there is a difference between writing basic notes and actually portraying the urgency or delicacy of a patient’s situation. The real deficiency lies in the latter of these two. Kathleen Leary stated that this isn’t a new deficiency in the clinical workforce: this is about the future and doing things differently. She suggested a fixed agenda item for ADRA and LASACT reports at every Commission meeting.

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| **V. High Priority Departmental Initiatives** |

***Privatization***. Kathy Kliebert, Assistant Secretary of the Office of Behavioral Health, gave the Commission an update on the privatization process for six addictive disorders inpatient treatment facilities. She stated that all initial contract awards have been made and all contracts are currently in the approval process. Also, layoff notices have been posted for the affected employees at these facilities. All layoffs will be effective on December 31, 2010. During the layoff period, some employees will be offered job relocation or preferred employment status (first choice of available vacancies). Ms. Kliebert noted that the savings from this privatization process will be reinvested in Access to Recovery (ATR).

***Budget Update***. Ms. Kliebert gave the Commission a brief update on the status of the agency’s budget. According to Ms. Kliebert, mid-year budget cuts may not need to be as large as originally estimated. She also stated that at this point no definitive budgeting for next year has been done. Finally, the issue of Medicaid reimbursement for addiction services is not expected to be resolved until September of 2011.

***Coordinated System of Care Update***. Ms. Kliebert stated that the Coordinated System of Care initiative is still moving forward aggressively. She added that the Office of Behavioral Health, in its capacity as State Purchasing Organization, will soon ask for applications for regional “pilot” sites to participate in the initial phases of implementation. This initiative proceeds through consultation with Mercer, an organization with extensive experience in developing this type of managed care system in other states.

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| **VI. Next Commission Meeting** |

The next meeting of the Louisiana Commission on Addictive Disorders was discussed, and the date, time and location were set. The next meeting will take place in Baton Rouge, at OBH Headquarters, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., on Tuesday, December 14th.

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| **VII. Adjournment** |

Freddie Landry called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tom Lief made the motion to adjourn, and Tony Wick seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.