

## SOAR Dialogue Highlights 6/19/18

Attendees: Emily Carmody, Natasha Posey, Meg Yeates, Connie Ness, Melissa Zhiss, Charlene Meyers, Danielle Arthur, Nichole Shackelford, Monique Venning, Kathryn Coiner-Collier, Diamond Jenkins-Nelson, Pamalia Davis

### Introductions

- Emily Carmody, NCCEH, Raleigh- SOAR Outcomes are due by the end of June for the annual report
- Natasha Posey, Southlight, Raleigh- Became SOAR Certified this month (Yay!)
- Meg Yeates, Good Shepherd Center, Wilmington- no updates yet, working on a case
- Connie Ness, WakeMed PATH team, Raleigh- working on 1 SOAR case and have 2 other cases started
- Melissa Zhiss, Mecklenburg County Criminal Justice Services- Have had a lot of interesting SOAR cases
- Charlene Meyers, CIT Program, Johnston County Mental Health Center- in process with first case, information is at DDS
- Danielle Arthur, Urban Ministry Center, Charlotte- no updates
- Nichole Shackelford, Upward Change, Durham- started 2 SOAR cases, both with DDS at the moment
- Monique Venning, Urban Ministry Center, Charlotte- actively working 5 cases, close to submitting 2 cases
- Kathryn Coiner-Collier, Atrium Health, Charlotte- 6 pending applications, hoping for a decision soon
- Diamond Jenkins Nelson, Southlight, Raleigh- 1 approval for June, 13 cases pending

### Announcements

Submit Outcomes-

- Please remember to submit outcome forms to Emily once a decision is made on a SOAR case.
- June 30<sup>th</sup> marks the end of the program year and all outcomes need to be in by then to be counted for the annual report

### Engaging Community Partners

*Overview*

SOAR caseworkers need a strong relationship with a variety of agencies and systems in their community. Strong engagement with systems can help with gathering medical documentation, partnering on Medical Summary Reports, and even funding SOAR caseworkers. The following are highlights from our discussion about how to engage various community partners in SOAR.

### *Local Jails/Justice System*

Many SOAR applicants touch the jail system frequently. Jails can be partners in a number of ways including completing SOAR applications.

Benefits to partnering with jail systems:

- Jails can have records that are beneficial to SOAR applications
- Jail staff can help SOAR caseworkers arrange visits with applicants who are incarcerated
- Some communities have partnerships where applications are initiated by SOAR-trained, jail staff and then passed on to a SOAR caseworker in the community once the person is released
- Prison systems do Beta IQ testing for everyone entering the system to sort people into facilities, great for records for a case

How to engage jail systems:

- Now is the time to engage jails, many are looking at how to stop the cycle of jail time for people with mental health disorders
- Need to find the right staff member: MCOs have jail liaisons, jail diversion programs, treatment courts
- Selling SOAR to jails:
  - Reduce returns to the jail by stabilizing individuals with income, housing and services
  - Reduces costs to the jail system
  - Potentially reduces behavior incidents within the jail system
- Use a partner who is funding SOAR (LME/MCO, Hospital, etc.) to advocate with the jail and engage them in SOAR work

### *Vocational Rehabilitation/Employment Programs*

Vocational programs often assess individuals for functioning issues as they relate to work. This is vital information for DDS and can strengthen a SOAR application.

Benefits to partnering with Voc Rehab and employment programs:

- Provides great records for SOAR cases
- Programs often pay for evaluations that are hard to access for the uninsured
- SOAR caseworkers may need to make a referral to programs if they decide to not take on an application. It is helpful to have a referral source for employment as an alternative to applying.
- Programs can help people go back to work once they have stabilized on benefits.

How to engage Voc Rehab and employment programs:

- Invite them to local SOAR meetings
- Attend their orientations to get to know their programs
- Be sure to not abuse the referral process to access evaluations.

### *Hospitals and Healthcare Providers*

Medical evidence is crucial to SOAR applications, and healthcare providers and hospitals are the source of much of these records.

Benefits to partnering with hospitals and healthcare providers:

- Getting medical records quickly and getting complete records
- Reducing or waiving fees for medical records
- Having staff help to complete medical summary reports and/or request evaluations for applicants
- Funding SOAR caseworkers in the community

How to engage hospitals and healthcare providers:

- SOAR benefits these systems because they can bill Medicaid for services already provided (up to 3 months prior to the application date) and bill for services going forward
- Important to draw the distinction between SOAR and the business as usual route- higher approval rate for higher need applicants
- Visit the medical records staff in person to explain SOAR

Next SOAR Dialogue Call will be August 21<sup>st</sup>: <http://www.ncceh.org/events/1301/>