

HillsboroughHATS  
Coalition-wide Meeting  
Wednesday, June 20th 4:00pm – 6:00pm  
Shriners Hospital for Children -Tampa

In attendance:

Coalition members: Joanne Angel, Jacki Frost, Janet Hess, Marybeth Palmigiano, Julie Perez, Daniel Plasencia, Henry Rodriguez, Amanda Vasquez, Joane White, Laurie Woodard.

Community partners: Millie Bucy (FDLRS), Gina Edwards (Bakas), Glenn Fite and Kim (Special Olympics), Isabel Gonzalez (Self Reliance, Inc.), Michele Pernula (FL Kid Care), Maria Russ (School Health Services), Glorie Singleton (Agency for Persons with Disabilities), Sandra Sroka (Hillsborough County BOCC), Melinda Wheatley (All People's Life Center)

Janet Hess opened the meeting with a welcome and introductions around the room.

**Background on FloridaHATS:**

For the new people at the table Me. Hess provided background on FloridaHATs. She explained the Florida legislation that the organization falls under as well as the organizational structure. She defined the target population and emphasized the difference between transfer and transition. Transition is the process of preparing young people for the eventual transfer to an adult practice. FLHATS was organized to improve the transition process particularly for children with special health care needs. Ms. Hess described the state strategic plan and pointed out the various resources available on the FloridaHATS web page, [www.floridahats.org](http://www.floridahats.org).

**HillsboroughHATS Action Plan Update:**

Marybeth Palmigiano reviewed the HHATS Action Plan and the accomplishments and challenges to date. She explained that the Coalition had embarked on a major initiative to identify, educate and recruit adult healthcare providers to get them to take young adults into their practice. Although there has been a lot of effort to recruit these providers and provide tools and resources to assist with a smooth transition, the group has not had much success. The main issue seems to be lack of adequate reimbursement from Medicaid and no care coordination once the patient leaves CMS.

Joanne Angel explained that the recruitment process for clinicians is very difficult. Not only are CMS kids in need of adult providers but other kids with SHCN who do not fall under the CMS umbrella are also looking for new doctors.

The Coalition has done community outreach by attending health and back to school fairs and distributing the HATS materials (Insurance booklet, postcard, 10 steps to a successful transition and the HATS brochure)

Given the barriers encountered to successful physician recruitment the HHATS Steering Committee suggested that the Coalition focus more on community outreach and education with kids and families to help them begin the process earlier and help them to be better prepared for transition.

**Legislative Update:**

Janet Hess provided the legislative update. There was a Health and Transition Services bill this year which passed in the Senate but died in the House. The bill would have extended care coordination to age 26. The concern from the House was the additional cost associated with extended services.

The bill will be resubmitted in 2013 with revised language asking for extended service for those with severe need rather than for all.

**Introductions by Community Organizations:**

Leaders from several community organizations were invited to the table to discuss ideas on how we can work together to assist kids and families to begin the transition process earlier, and prepare youth for the responsibility of managing their care.

Each community representative introduced themselves and gave a brief description of their organization.

Glenn Fite, Special Olympics:

The organization runs a Healthy Athletes Program for kids 8 and up. Each athlete needs a physical before they can compete.

Glorie Singleton, Agency for Persons with Disabilities:

The Agency supports people with developmental disabilities from age 3 and up in living, learning and working in the community. They are currently creating a Community Resources Database.

Joanne Angel, Julie Perez, Joane White, CMS:

CMS provides care coordination for kids 0 -21 years old who have a physical, behavioral and or developmental disability. They must be on Medicaid or KidCare to be eligible.

Dr. Daniel Plasencia, Medical Director St. Joseph's Children's Hospital of Tampa: Dr. Plasencia cares for kids with severe disabilities. 75 – 80% are CMS kids. He has an RN on staff who coordinates care for each patient.

Dr. Henry Rodriguez, Pediatric Endocrinologist, Medical Director, USF Diabetes Center:

Dr. Rodriguez cares for children with diabetes. Kids with Type 1 diabetes typically require more care and there are not very many adult endocrinologists to refer them to.

Amanda Vasques, Social Worker:

Mr. Vasquez works with Dr. Rodriguez to transition patients in the diabetes clinic.

Maria Russ, School Health Services Supervisor, Hillsborough County

Michelle Pernulla, Florida KidCare:

Helps families access affordable health insurance for their children.

Isabel Gonzalez, Self Reliance, Inc.:

Assists people up to age 30 with independent living skills. The organization runs a couple of transition groups throughout the year.

Gina Edwards, Bakas:

County funded organization that provides therapeutic horsemanship to people with any disability ages 4 and up.

Melinda Wheatley, All People's Life Center:

County sponsored organization for ages 5 -22 that provides community-based recreational activities to persons with all types of disabilities

Ms. Wheatley pointed out that we need more groups at the table that serve people ages 21 and up.

Sandra Sroka, ADA Coordinator, Hillsborough County BOCC:

Ms. Sroka may be able to help HHATS with legislative work. She invited the group to attend the event described below. There will be legislators at the event and there may be an opportunity to speak with them.

The Hillsborough County Disability Expo and Public Forum will be held July 25 at County Center from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. This year's theme is ADA: Innovations and Access. This year's celebration marks the 22nd anniversary of a landmark piece of legislation, the American Disabilities Act (ADA). A Public Forum will be held from 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. to discuss previously submitted questions about how the City and County, along with state laws, programs and services affect inclusion of persons with disabilities in our community.

Millie Bucy, FDLRS Parent Liaison:

Parents helping parents navigate the Exceptional Student Education Process and access community resources.

Ms. Bucy also brought up behavior issues and the fact that it is very hard to find an adult practitioner who knows how to deal with behavior issues and who is willing to take a young adult with behavior issues into his/her practice.

Jackie Frost, Care Coordinator, Shriners Hospital for Children:

Ms. Frost deals a lot with families when their kids age out at age 18. She stressed the need to assist families with transition.

Dr. Laurie Woodard, USF Family Medicine:

Dr. Woodard teaches at USF and includes disability education in the core curriculum with medical students. There is a statewide initiative through the FDDC to educate family doctors about people with disabilities. There will be a transition module as part of the curriculum.

**Wrap Up:**

Materials for the various organizations were shared. It was agreed that we should continue the discussion and bring more people to the table who serve older kids.

Laurie Woodward asked that if any of the organizations have opportunities for medical students to work with them on an intern basis to please let her know.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 pm.