

**TASK FORCE ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT SERVICES**  
**October 29, 2013, 10:00 a.m.**  
**Room 130, State Capitol, Little Rock, Arkansas**  
**Meeting Minutes**

The Task Force on Substance Abuse Treatment Services met on Tuesday, October 29, 2013 in Room 130 at 10:00 a.m., in the State Capitol, Little Rock, Arkansas.

**Task Force on Substance Abuse Treatment Services Legislative members attending were:**

Senator Joyce Elliott, Senator Stephanie Flowers, Representative Deborah Ferguson, and Representative Henry “Hank” Wilkins, IV. Also in attendance was Representative Jeremy Gillam was also in attendance.

**Non-Legislative members attending were:** Diane Bynum, Gary Morgan, Kimberly Brown, Dennis Amaral, and George Weaver.

Senator Elliott called the meeting to order.

**Approval of Minutes from the December 10, 2012 meeting**

The minutes were approved as submitted.

**Election of Chair**

Representative Wilkins, IV, made a motion to elect Representative Deborah Ferguson as House Co-Chair of the Task Force on Substance Abuse Treatment Services. Representative Flowers seconded the motion. The motion carried. Representative Flowers made a motion to re-elect Senator Joyce Elliott as Senate Co-Chair of the Task Force on Substance Abuse Treatment Services. Representative Wilkins, IV, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Review of 2012 Task Force Recommendations**

**Seek new funding resources to expand treatment capacity including Expansion/Reimbursement Parity to Medicaid; Continued funding of SATS; Reimbursement Parity within the Health Information Exchange between Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services; and Support Drug Courts**

- Concern about how the Affordable Care Act’s (ACA) Medicaid plans will affect the state’s Medicaid reimbursement Parity and Access to Recovery (ATR) services.
- Target funding issues that negatively impact the Arkansas Department of Human Services reimbursements for Episodes of Care.
- Need a funding stream to keep drug courts opened and their continuum of providing treatment services.
- Concern about the only juvenile drug courts that remain open are run by private grants.
- Important to keep a workforce of personnel who are highly trained with the insurance billing process and provide high quality treatment of care.
- Medicaid will not reimburse Mental Health Professionals for certain services who do not hold IC & RC credentials, which are as highly qualified as Mental Health Professionals who are IC and RC credentialed.

**Continue Accountability and Quality Improvements**

- Concern that not all transitional houses are licensed.

**Support a Treatment Continuum of Care**

- How do we demonstrate sustaining drug abstinence.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMSA) Access To Recovery (ATR) grant provided services to individuals recovering from addiction as they transition back into the community. The grant will no longer be available at the end of September 2014.

**Revise Involuntary Commitment Laws**

- The Mental Health Council of Arkansas is working with the Division of Behavioral Health Services legal counsel toward unity between hospital policy and state laws regarding hospital emergency rooms refusing to provide medical care for substance abuse users.

**Support Advocacy**

- Need a statewide awareness campaign addressing chemical addiction as a treatable illness.

**Future Agenda Items**

- Invite DHS/Medicaid Division to speak on Medicaid policy/insurance issues
- Invite the Arkansas Insurance Commissioner's Office to speak on insurance requirements
- Invite Division of Behavioral Health Services regarding agency accountability and quality improvements
- Invite drug court staff to address family support services and continuum of care
- Invite Arkansas Department of Community Correction to speak on their budget and fund distribution
- Invite Prison officials to speak on drug treatment and mental illness programs in prisons
- Invite Law Enforcement to speak on Substance Abuse training, how they recognize mental illness and addiction users
- Invite Division of Children and Family Services to speak on children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.