

Soldiers' Home in Holyoke Board of Trustees Operations Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Board of Trustees Operations Committee of the Soldiers' Home Holyoke (HLY) was held virtually and telephonically on Tuesday, May 24, 2022. The meeting began at 6:02 PM.

Committee Members Present on WebEx:

Chairman, Sean Collins, and Carmen Ostrander

Committee Members Not Available

Mark Bigda

Also Present on WebEx:

Michael Lazo, Interim Superintendent (HLY); Kelly (Hansen) Jones, Quality Manager, (HLY); Dr. Dietzen, CMO (HLY); Caitlin Menard, Director of Social Work, (HLY), Robert Engell, Interim Administrator (HLY); and Kathleen Denner, Recording Secretary (HLY).

Roll Call:

Chairman Collins conducted a Roll Call as follows: Carmen Ostrander (Yes), and Sean Collins (Yes).

Pledge of Allegiance - All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Upon motion by Trustee Ostrander and seconded by Trustee Collins to accept the minutes of the April 26, 2022, Board of Trustees Operations Committee meeting, it was unanimously VOTED to accept the minutes of the Board of Trustees Operations Committee meeting held on April 26, 2022.

Old Business

ADM-002 Admissions

Trustee Collins asked Mr. Lazo if there were any additional changes. He responded that there were no additional changes at this time we are on hold with the Bylaws committee to finalize their version. Trustee Collins asked if it is still in legal, Mr. Lazo would have to check.

Update on Contract Listing Review

Trustee Collins would like to review this quarterly but realizes we are not ready to do that. Mr. Lazo added that they had sent over the updated list. Trustee Collins stated that he did see the update on charters, the charters for family advocacy veteran advocacy, grievance committee and the policy and procedures and for the administration policy there was no charter, but the policy was attached. He continued on with charter review: medical team charter, pain management, ethics,

antibiotics stewardship, ops committee is under review and the safety review has a current charter.

Standard Agenda Items (Updates) / Dashboards

KPI Updates

Trustee Collins discussed the main dashboard he asked for the observation of the veteran falls that he was looking for the backup data for that because in the past the tracking was great. Ms. Jones stated that the investigation has been a little bit unsatisfying and after looking at them she was hoping to find a trend, i.e. new admissions or something you can point to, there was no one thing to attack, no reoccurring trends to speak of. She continued that the strange thing that she found in April of last year there was a similar spike, but it looks like we are trending in the same direction for May with more work to come. Trustee Collins stated that the trend may be occurring for May as well, that the number of the antipsychotic jumped significantly in May. She will look a little further into it may just be who happens to fall. Ms. Jones added that the antipsychotic over all are down and that one of things that will contribute to May with more falls on care center 1 because there are less activities because the person dedicated to that unit is not there anymore, I think that is contributing to May.

Trustee Collins continued with the behavioral events having an uptick a bit, we discussed at the last meeting Operations Committee and at the full Board meetings with the issues around that the pattern with new veterans adjusting to the new environment. Ms. Jones added that they continue to see staff reporting more frequently, I don't want staff to think it is ok that a veteran is yelling or hitting and that is the way they behave, this should not be the acceptable answer. She is encouraging staff to report all of those so we are seeing and increase veteran to staff verbal behaviors being reported and veteran to veteran verbal as well. Mr. Jones believes capturing behaviors is just an import part of capturing the true work the staff is doing. She hopes this will continue to flow over to MDS which will then be reflected in the case mix index, so that each of those things takes time, even if we are not talking about a physical assault if a veteran is upset for whatever reason and they are yelling it does take staff time to intervene. Trustee Collins asked if this is captured by the staff electronically or a paper copy, how is the data captured. Ms. Jones replied that most are paper so behaviors and falls are reported through the same process, it is a form that asks what was happening at the time, narrative section, and necessary notifications. Trustee Collins wanted to make sure it is being categorized for further education or other opportunities to do some interventions. Ms. Jones added that MDS it is electronic with a 7-day look back in a quarter and during the 7-day lookback did the veteran exhibit any behaviors.

Trustee Collins said the communication piece is still in red but the trend from January to April it is going in the right direction. He continued that in response to problems it has been brought up to 91 so we are in the green, recommendation rate is in the green again this month we will continue to watch the trends. Trustee Collins

stated that in skin injuries that we are still establishing a benchmark, but we are at zero. Ms. Jones stated that she will have to confirm with Ms. DeWitt because she does not believe it is zero, she will double check.

Trustee Collins stated that case mix looks stable, but he observed that on 4East the numbers look very different from the beginning of the year, Ms. Hansen replied that 4East has jumped up because they have had a few new admissions that are actively receiving therapy services so if you are actively participating in rehabilitation you have a higher tendency of falling, so a little more in your case mix when people participating in rehabilitation.

Trustee Collins discussed the weight change number on the 30-day mark and asked if these are the same kind of repeaters. Ms. Jones said it can be some repeats but when people get towards the end of life they do start to lose weight, it is a natural progression. Trustee Collins stated that the numbers were 3 and 1 in March and April and no in May it is 5 so was that somebody who really made a lot of progress and you got the food they liked and they put a little weight on and then in May stopped eating again. Ms. Jones said some are and some are not depending on what is happening.

Trustee Collins likes the infection prevention control report the dashboard is terrific. I like the way you broke it down in regard to types of organisms and how many incidents for the month, the site, it is presented well. Trustee Collins stated it would be nice to review monthly and a great way to do trending. Ms. Jones said some of the numbers of the KPI's dashboard comes from these numbers, it is done every month so it can be shared.

Trustee Collins reviewed the starting of antibiotic in patient hospitals, there were 5 veterans started on antibiotics. He continued that he is not into making more work, but when he sees something he gets curious to see if these patients were started on antibiotics in the hospital that may have had an acute hospitalization and then looking at all the other numbers. He continued what was the antibiotic started for a UTI, pneumonia or skin infection by looking at some of the medications you can guess. Trustee Collins thinks that it may be helpful for the subcommittee to look at the trends. Dr. Dietzen shared that we look at what they were prescribed and the report shows what the antibiotics were given for.

Trustee Collins discussed antibiotic stewardship review score card for April. You have a license independent practitioner by number and the antibiotics prescribed and the antibiotics appropriately prescribed. He continued that these come from chart review and it says 63% accuracy rate so what contributes to that in regard to that not being higher. Dr. Dietzen stated that the infection prevention team compares the things that were used to diagnose a potential infection with a list of standard criteria and what they are reporting is whether it matches those criteria or not. She continued that we all recognize that there are times when antibiotics get prescribed that don't necessarily match a precise set of criteria or might have been

prescribed by the hospital and we chose to continue them not having the rest of their assessment as part of our in-house report card. Dr. Dietzen stated that this not something that is an absolute, they discuss each case and if there is a pattern or something we can learn from it. Ms. Hansen believes that when people are started on antibiotics in the hospital you do not get all the diagnostics every single time from the hospital or their decision tree for having started antibiotics and those get continued through their course if they have 2-3 days left of antibiotics when they come back to the facility.

Trustee Collins asked regarding the SBARS if someone could walk him through what it means and what the goals are. Ms. Jones replied that the goal of this is to review how many SBARS are completed. She continued that the SBARS are designed to be a proactive surveillance prior to prescribing diagnostics, prior to thinking someone has an infection. Ms. Jones explained that the SBARS is a report sheet that the nursing staff fills out, there are different ones: upper respiratory infections, skin infections, UTI and COVID. It walks you the McGreer Criteria which is the accepted infection control criteria that defines what an infection would be. Ms. Jones explained that for a UTI it would walk you through if the person has a temperature, bladder or pelvic pain, urgency, frequency it walks you through that equations resulting in the decision do they have symptoms to see if they need antibiotic, if they do not meet the criteria, it is still reviewed by the physician but they would think twice before ordering additional diagnostics for a patient or ordering antibiotic. She shared that the SBAR is proactive surveillance, so we are only doing surveillance and only screening people who meet the criteria. Trustee Collins made the observations that the SBARs are low and seeing that it is a proactive piece of it are you displeased with that number, that it should be much higher. Ms. Jones replied that it should be higher. Dr. Dietzen agreed it should be higher and that the infection prevention nurses are following up and asking people to complete this paperwork, but it does not happen as consistently in real time when someone picks up that there is something unusual going on, Ms. Jones added that they need more education.

Trustee Collins reviewed that COVID dashboard and the one thing that caught his eye was the flu vaccine is the rate really that low, Ms. Jones replied yes. Dr. Dietzen said it is not mandatory.

Trustee Collins said keep up the great work.

Medical Staff Update

Trustee Collins looked at the minutes and is interested in the Benadryl audit and Dr. Izenstein's diabetic formulary foot recommendations. He asked on the Benadryl audit was there something driving that like an over usage or an audit. Dr. Dietzen she noticed that there were a few people and was not certain on how prevalent it was so thankfully I am able to ask the pharmacy run a report and she audits the

charts for find themes or patterns. Dr. Dietzen added that the medical staff will be spending time discussing this specific diabetic veteran in the House to see if that sheds any more light on our thoughts.

Outside Agency Audits / Inspections / Review of Tracker

Trustee Collins stated that Mr. Lazo sent out the VA's survey, but did you send the response of the findings. Mr. Lazo replied that the corrective action plan was sent, and it has been accepted and we are now provisionally accredited. He continued that we have the option to show the VA the documented proof that the corrective action plan has been implemented and we can turn that provisional accreditation into a full accreditation, and we are working on that right now. Trustee Collins asked if there has been any DPH drop ins and Mr. Lazo that we are pending a visit from the joint commission, and we are ready whenever they show up. Trustee Collins asked if they are virtual. Mr. Lazo replied that we expect them to be in person.

Supporting Patients / Families / Staff / Community Stakeholders

Ms. Menard reported that they did have a snafu with the family advocacy meeting and the active leadership were on a different link, so we did send out communication apologizing about that. She continued that nobody has gotten in touch with any aggravation about it and the veteran advocacy meeting went well. Ms. Menard shared that as far as the community stakeholders goes, she is still in contact with them as far as the Domiciliary guys. Trustee Collins asked regarding the issues with the activities in general have we been able to get that back into a reasonable exposé to activities. Mr. Lazo replied yes, not quite at the trips yet due to COVID but the numbers are going up a bit, our positivity rate is somewhere around 10. He continued that we do have some activities in home, still performers coming in and yesterday the Finance Committee authorized some money for bands to perform in the pavilion, and they allocated \$3,000 for the trustee picnic in August. He continued that Ms. Feyre in the recreation department is doing a great job lining up activities to keep the veterans busy.

Trustee Collins referring to the Pinnacle report tries not to get excited about a month to month or a monthly number but watch the trend over time, this month we had a lot of dips. He continued that dining service, quality of food, individual needs, laundry service, activities, professional therapies are actually down from the last three-month average. Trustee Collins shared there were some really good to see like communications went up and it was good to see, with dignity and respect and recommend to others. He asked Mr. Lazo if anything came out in the discussions on these issues and Mr. Lazo stated that a lot of the low numbers this month is because we only had two respondents this month and it was marked low because they did have an answer, so they marked it low because he did not know. Mr. Lazo stated that the traditional food and laundry remain low, and we continue to work on those and for a good effect for the food numbers is that the canteen is going to open on June 8 so the veterans will have options for breakfast and lunch. Trustee Collins

confirmed that only two respondents and a lot of the answers were low because they did not know, and the things they knew about they gave fives.

Update The Soldiers' Home in Holyoke Transition Plan August

Census Update¹ in acute care

Mr. Lazo reported that right now we have 100 veterans in house with 1 in an acute care setting. He shared that they did a process review of admissions and we have streamlined our process so that we have a good understanding of where the veterans stand on the waitlist. He continued that we have been able to move through the waitlist fairly quickly and that we have had a good number of folks say they not ready yet so the waitlist is 9-10 lower than last month. Mr. Lazo stated the one challenge that continues is that 1 North secure unit remains closed and we are creating a backup for folks who need that secure unit.

New building update / Status

Trustee Collins asked if there is a timeline to start demolition. Mr. Lazo replied that there is nothing in stone at this point my best understanding is that the end of summer to early fall the dormitory will come down, there need to have some movement in construction they will have to do abatement work first because of asbestos located in that building and the chiller building will come down too but the equipment needs to be moved into the basement of the main building first. Mr. Lazo shared that if everything goes according to the plan hopefully, we will get a shovel in the ground the end of the year or beginning of the next year. Trustee Collins asked if there were any updates on the VA financial list. Mr. Lazo stated there have been no updates but the priority list came out and we are 5 but we still have not heard from the VA what the budget will be towards these projects.

New Business / Interest Items

Ombudsman Report

Trustee Collins stated that this will be on hold it until next meeting.

Policy Review

Trustee Collins no issues with any of the policies.

ADM-128

IP-031

NSG-125

Staffing update

Trustee Collins thanked Mr. Lazo for sending the report and this answers all the issues that come up at the last board meeting were answered in this report regarding who you have for agency staff, organic staff and it is awesome. He will be putting this on the dashboard to show the board that you are really keeping track of it and keeping numbers up for what your report for ratios. Mr. Lazo gave kudos to the staffing

department because they do a tremendous job of balancing the call outs and the vacation days and the need of the Home. He continued particularly with COVID we have a fair number of staff members that can be out of the building so that does drive the agency and a little bit of overtime. He continued that he understands where Trustee Jourdain was going with if you want to be good stewards of the Commonwealth's money but our bottom line is that we have people in our building. Ms. Jones added that the goals for the clinical staffing department are to staff the building safely for the both the veterans and the staff, the second goal would be to eliminate agency from the building, and then looking down the road strategical for the new building. She continued that some of the questions that Trustee Jourdain had when you start looking at how staff is distributed it becomes very evident, employees are assigned to either A or B weekend and they are assigned when they are hired so changes to that would need to be negotiated. Ms. Jones stated that if you look at the ideal staffing per unit it is probably somewhere between 3 and 4 people on a unit for the day shift which translates to 32 people in the building average day shift, the weekend adds the complexity to have 32 to staff my dayshift then I would need 64 because everybody only works every other weekend and at some point there is going to be some overlap, sometimes more than the ideal number because you cannot employ and have enough people to cover, above the ideal. She continued that one of the benefits of being employed at the Home is Work is Paid Time Off and if you look at the average that each employee earns you need about 1.3 FTE for every actual FDA to back fill the time. You are going to have excess but in order to staff weekends or give someone a weekend off you will need more staff to cover that. You are not going to have 32 people on every given day it is not as black and white as that.

Sharing of Superintendent Goals

Trustee Collins part of this committee is to bring the Superintendent's goals to the full board for consideration who will then share with Secretary Poppe.

Mr. Lazo shared a mix of his personal goals as well as the goals that Secretary Poppe has set for him. He continued that he was appointed as interim Superintendent in December 2020 where I had a 6-month learning curve which was a very drastic learning curve and unions were not on our side at that point, so my immediate goal leading into this particular fiscal year was to learn as much as I can and do the best he could with starting to adjust the culture of the building. Mr. Lazo stated one of the goals was to learn as much as he can and work towards licensure and I do appreciate Secretary Poppe's support as well as Mr. Engell to get me into an apprenticeship program to help me towards that goal. He continued that his goal is achieved as of yesterday I am officially licensed in the Commonwealth. He shared that someone told him that he had to remind everybody on how hard he worked to get that and particularly with being a commander in the National Guard. Trustee Collins stated that this was a daunting task and he remembered asking Secretary Poppe what was the process was for someone to become licensed because if that is a stumbling block not only for you but for us as an organization and the response was it is a lot of work. He congratulated Mr. Lazo on sharing that goal. Mr. Lazo shared that managing the results of the pandemic on the Home and our ability to

manage COVID led to some of the changes in the culture, meaning that we were able to establish an isolation unit when we did have positive veterans in late 2021 early 2022 the staff managed them perfectly and got the veterans into the isolation units and we did not see any lateral spread. He continued that we were able to maintain a total of 5 positive veterans during that time period where other homes were averaging double digits in the 30's and 40's for positive residents. Mr. Lazo was happy to say that the team executed drills and really did a great job across the board all levels of the Home.

Mr. Lazo shared his next goal to maintain survey readiness and we hit the ground running on that one though 2021 where we were accredited by both the VA and the Joint Commission and we are better this year in that we had an average of 97%-98% go rate on the VA survey this year with a very quick provisional accreditation. He continued that we have places where we can improve and we will continue to do so but we are in a very good spot right now and I think this speaks very highly to our staff and our leadership, our veterans are very well taken care of.

Mr. Lazo shared that particularly in our upper levels of management we have a bit of a diversity issue and we would love to continue to hire recruit diverse individuals to bring different perspectives and a broader experiences into the Home. He continued that one of his goals was to educate himself through the state systems and provide education to the leadership team. Mr. Lazo was not able to get with diversity officer but there was a change in the officer and the way the state does the diversity program we did have a diversity officer in house but that has since been centralized so we do have one but not in the Home. Mr. Lazo so we were not able to get the classes done for leadership, on with the way diversity is managed as well as the COVID situation but he was able to take a number of classes through our various systems via HealthStream, LinkedIn Learning and MyPath system. Mr. Lazo reported that it has been a very successful year for the Home and me personally in terms of meeting the goals that were laid out and the goals I set for myself.

Trustee Collins asked regarding your licensure what was the hardest thing you had to face, what surprised you. Mr. Lazo replied that it is hard to pick one specific thing that his background in acute care supply chain; geriatrics, hospice palliative care that type of level of treatment was brand new to me so just to understand the mission of the Home and taking care of these folks was understood but some of the details behind it and the things that the staff focus on everyday were new to me. He continued that he has not taken a standardized test in 40 years so to have to study and take test, I was deployed overseas and shot at and I don't think I was as nervous as I was waiting for the lady to hand me the result of that test. Mr. Lazo shared that was probably the most pressure I have felt in my life for quite some time. Trustee Collins is very proud and appreciates how hard doing something new while executing your job, you did not meet the minimum standard you met the requirements for licensure and that is huge. He continued that you tackled it during a very challenging time and as well as being a citizen soldier, being a guardsman is a lot of work on top of everything else.

Trustee Collins will summarize our thoughts and get together with the full board and get some items to Secretary Poppe on how from an outside perspective and what we have seen pull together with the team. He continued that your success is a reflection of your teams' success and that is something they should be proud of as well. Trustee Ostrander wanted to personally congratulate Mr. Lazo because this accomplishment was definitely something I personally could have never done what you have taken on along with already running the Home is incredible and I am incredibly proud of your accomplishment. Mr. Lazo thanked the board for their support through some tough times and I do appreciate the support of the Board.

Wrap up / Adjournment

Next meeting

Trustee Collins will ask Mr. Bigda if not having a meeting for July and let Ms. Denner

Trustee Collins concluded the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Denner

Acting Secretary for the Board of Trustees

Attachments:

