

**April 23, 2018**

**2017 Southern Arizona Human Rights Committee Annual Report**

**Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System  
Division of Healthcare Advocacy and Advancement**

**Southern Arizona Human Rights Committee's  
ANNUAL REPORT  
JANUARY – DECEMBER 2017**

**Our Mission**

The Human Rights Committees (HRCs) were created by the Arizona Legislature to assist the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) and the Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (RBHA) in promoting the rights of children and adults who receive publicly funded behavioral health services.

**Our Responsibilities**

The Southern Arizona Human Rights Committee (SAZHRC) provides independent oversight and review of the following:

1. Allegations of illegal, dangerous, or inhumane treatment of clients and enrolled children;
2. Reports filed with the committee under Ariz. Admin Code R9-21-203 and R9-21-204 concerning the use of seclusion, restraint, abuse, neglect, exploitation, mistreatment, accidents, or injuries;
3. Reports filed with the committee under Ariz. Admin Code R9-21-203 and R9-21-204 to clients identified under R9-21-301 as in need of special assistance;
4. Violations of rights of clients and enrolled children and conditions requiring investigation under the complaint process as set forth in R9-21-403 to R9-21-409.
6. Any other issue affecting the human rights of clients and enrolled children. Ariz. Admin. Code R9-21-105 (G).

**Executive Summary**

2017 was a challenging year. The committee had several long standing members who needed to either step down or minimize their involvement. This has offered an opportunity for new members and potentially new leadership. We have worked this year on increasing and improving communication, both within our own committee and with other state HRC's. To this end, we had a meeting in Casa Grande with the representatives of Northern Arizona, Maricopa County, the respective provider networks, and the state hospital HRC. We learned that although each area presents its own challenges and

opportunities, many of our issues remain similar. All the HRC's seem to struggle with membership and attendance.

The inclusion and addition of a representative from TPD has proved invaluable, and in time will be an important tool in increasing the communication and understanding between the police departments and people who experience or advocate for individuals with mental illness. Our own Sgt. Winsky his team and the law enforcement agencies in southern Arizona have successfully managed many incidents that could have turned tragic without the training they receive on an ongoing basis. The plan for law enforcement in this area going forward is to increase the number of officers trained in CIT. We look forward to more of this collaboration in the coming year.

In early 2018, we will be reviewing committee bylaws for possible changes that reflect the different needs of our community.

We have also structured our committee a bit differently in hopes of increasing efficiency. There are reporting individuals for specific advocacy issues that address progress on those issues each meeting.

#### Death, Incidents and Accidents Reports

In 2017, there were approximately 450 unexpected deaths. Of those deaths reviewed (approximately 300), 11 were homicides, 40 were suicides, and 52 were drug overdoses (for the purposes of this report, drug overdoses that were listed as intentional were grouped with suicides.) There are approximately 150 deaths for which there isn't a clear cause. The last quarter of last year and the first month of 2018 presented some challenges with online access to the reports and this has been resolved. It is apparent that rampant opioid abuse has contributed significantly to the deaths of system recipients this year. Failure to coordinate care in a consistent manner has contributed in many cases as well and was not limited to a single provider.

#### Room and Board issues

#### Special Populations issues

#### Outreach

#### Recruitment

By no means are these the only issues that require attention, but it is a starting place for us to better enable focus and make progress.

In 2018 we hope to increase our numbers and structure our efforts to improve the likelihood of action on needed items. We plan to add more members, specifically people who represent consumers of mental health services. The committee will also look at transportation and access to services. We also hope to spend more time and effort on the legislative process as it applies to the individuals who have mental health issues in the public system.

## **Organizational Structure**

- The Southern Arizona HRC has 13 voting members and 1 advisor as of December 31, 2017. Recruitment of new members continues to be a priority. The membership is diverse with family members, consumers, and representatives of law, medical, education, as well as advisors from AHCCCS and Cenpatico.
- Each member participates in at least one work group, each addressing more specific issues related to advocacy, rights, review of incident/accident, deaths and seclusion/restraint reports, Legislative, CIC/Update, Media Relations, review of research proposals, site reviews, CIT and community education. The Committee members are very committed to their work and spend five hours monthly on average.

### **Committee Members:**

Ken Karrels, Chair                      Amy Sherwood, Vice Chair    Dorothy Yanez

Barbara Carling                      Judy Kowalick                      Susan Moreno

Connie Stevenson                      Dave Ruitenber                      Joe Mucenski

Eleanor Schorr, Advisor

Jason Winsky

### **Advisors and Guests:**

Yisel Sanchez, AHCCCS HRC Coordinator

Melissa Brown, Human Rights Committee Liaison, Cenpatico Integrated Care

Kathy Roberts, Center for Disability Law

## **2017**

This year the committee focused on the identified special assistance clients with increased site visits, children's issues, continued assertive Community Education Outreach to reduce stigma, and increasing communication and interaction between providers and Cenpatico.

## **Children's Issue's**

Cope and Codac have expanded their programs to include youth programs.

Intermountain has gone to telemed and parents are upset about the means of communication, in particular their children having to sit in front of a computer screen.

Young Adult Programs have now gone under the Adult networks, since the children's networks are no longer handling them. La Frontera is having problems with their young adult program due to staffing rations and caseloads.

DKA should represent Young Adult System to avoid young adults getting lost in the system. This has been an issue for many years and nothing has been done. A pilot program is needed.

What does Department of Child Safety (DCS) do with their SMI 18 year olds? Providing peer support might be more effective for this age group. Diane Taylor of Centpatico to speak to committee regarding transitional age programs and work development.

Pima Youth Transition Fair was held April 28<sup>th</sup>.

The children's community is still in need of accredited behavioral analysts.

## **Site Visits**

Committee completed a total of 3 site visits in 2017.

Mt. Oak Boarding Home- Good review

Bernice's Boarding Home- Good review

Desert Dreams- Good review

## **Community Education/Reducing Stigma**

- Out of Darkness Walk
- Mental Health Week
- NAMI Candlelight Service
- Cornerstone Behavioral Health open house
- Art Show
- New HRC posters designed and distributed to more than 200 people and organizations
- Cenpatico Peer and Family Advisory Council Monthly
- Pima Youth Transition Fair

- NAMI Walk
- 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Southwestern School for Behavioral Health Studies Conference
- HRC brochures updated and continue to be given to providers

**IAD/QOC Reports**

<b>Total # of Seclusion &amp; Restraints 2016 Reports</b>	<b>1105</b>
Total # of Seclusion 2016 Events	234
Total # of Restraint 2016 Events	871
Personal Restraint Events	557
Mechanical Restraint Events	130
Chemical Restraint Events	184

<b>Total # of Incident/Accident/Death 2016 Reports</b>	<b>1290</b>
Total # of Incident/Accident 2016 Events	859
Total # of Death 2016 Events	431

The Committee wishes to thank the staff at Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) and the Cenpatico for their support.

Respectfully submitted,

**Kenneth Karrels, Ph.D.**

Ken Karrels, Ph. D.  
 Chairperson,  
 Southern Arizona Human Rights Committee