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CUMBERLAND COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

Department of Public Health

SIM Taskforce Meeting Minutes

April 13, 2026

Welcome & Introductions, Sanquis Graham

Local Reentry Services Overview, Alina Zimmerman

Alina Zimmerman, the Cumberland County local reentry program coordinator, presented on the reentry services available in the county. She explained the structure of the local reentry council, its partnerships with community providers, and the focus on assisting justice-involved individuals, especially during the critical first 90 days after release. The program offers employment support, case management, transportation assistance, and connections to community resources.

- Alina Zamberman described the reentry council's structure including council members, subcommittees, and advisory committees composed of service providers and justice-involved individuals.
- Alina emphasized the focus on the initial 90 days post-release but remains open to assisting individuals at any stage of reentry.
- Alina highlighted employment services including resume building, employer partnerships, and case management with follow-up policies.
- Alina noted transportation assistance includes bus passes and vendor partnerships for flexible travel needs.

Referral Sources and Enrollment Data

Alina shared referral data showing that most clients come from probation and parole, NC Works, and community partners, with an average of 30-40 referrals monthly. She encouraged self-referrals and highlighted the importance of community collaboration to ensure no one leaves without assistance. The program tracks referral sources to optimize outreach and service delivery.

- Alina reported that 62% of referrals come from community corrections and 18% from NC Works.
- Alina stated that referrals also come from federal prisons, jails, relatives, friends, and walk-ins.

- Alina encouraged providers and individuals to make referrals and participate in the local reentry council meetings.

Upcoming Career and Resource Fair

The reentry council is organizing a career and resource fair at DSS on April 22 to connect justice-involved individuals with employers, housing vendors, transportation providers, and social services. The event aims to provide wraparound services in one location and strengthen community partnerships.

- Alina invited interested organizations to participate as vendors in the April 22 event.
- Alina emphasized the goal of providing comprehensive resources and networking opportunities for reentry clients.

Transportation Services Clarification

Sanquis Graham and Alina clarified that transportation assistance is available for various appointments including medical, probation, and social services, primarily through bus passes or scheduled vendor rides. However, clients must be enrolled in the reentry program to access these services to manage demand effectively.

- Sanquis Graham confirmed transportation is for appointments and job-related travel, not general rides.
- Elena explained bus passes are often issued for multiple appointments, while vendor rides require advance scheduling.
- Elena confirmed clients must be enrolled in the program to receive transportation assistance.

Collaboration Opportunities with SIM Task Force, Charlton Robeson

Charlton and Alina discussed potential collaboration points between the reentry program and the SIM task force, especially regarding unconventional transportation needs and communication barriers faced by justice-involved individuals. They agreed to schedule a meeting to define these points of intercept and enhance coordinated support.

- Charlton highlighted challenges like lack of cell phones and transportation for out-of-county court appearances.
- Charlton offered SIM task force support for unconventional transportation on a case-by-case basis.
- Alina welcomed a follow-up meeting to explore collaboration opportunities.

Service Gaps and Assistance Needs

Alina identified service gaps including delays in obtaining identification documents necessary for employment, lack of transitional housing for families, and utility assistance for clients. Sanquis acknowledged these gaps and noted the task force's capacity to assist with documentation and utility support, while housing remains a broader challenge.

- Alina noted state funding restrictions limit assistance with obtaining IDs and social security cards, causing delays.
- Alina expressed concern about lack of transitional housing options for families with children.
- Alina highlighted utility assistance as a frequent unmet need among clients.
- Sanquis Graham confirmed task force funding can help with documentation and utility assistance, but housing remains challenging.

SIM Task Force Data Reporting and Outcomes, Charlton Robeson & Jay Higgins

Charlton and Jay Higgins shared recent outcomes from the SIM task force, including successful interventions like emergency housing placements and transportation assistance for clients. They emphasized the importance of communication tools like cell phones to connect clients with services and highlighted ongoing efforts to improve data collection and reporting.

- Jay Higgins recounted cases where the task force secured hotel rooms and transportation for clients to support stability.
- Charlton emphasized providing cell phones to clients to facilitate communication with providers and prevent crisis situations.
- Charlton and Jay noted positive feedback from detention center collaborations and virtual visits.

Overdose Data and Trends, Sanquis Graham & Gregory Berry

Sanquis Graham and Gregory Berry presented quarterly overdose data from the police department, showing a decline in overdose calls from January to March. They discussed the impact of adulterants like fentanyl, xylazine, and metatomadine on overdose patterns and the need to adapt metrics to capture evolving risks. Community outreach and Narcan distribution were credited for positive trends.

- January had 26 overdose calls, February 22, and March 15 in Cumberland County according to police data.
- Gregory Berry explained that adulterants in the drug supply may require new health indicators beyond overdose counts.

- Charlton reported distribution of fentanyl, xylazine, and metatomadine test strips to educate drug users.
- Jessie Garner shared emergency department data showing 80 overdoses and 68 Narcan reversals in the quarter.
- Sanquis Graham highlighted targeted outreach in high-overdose areas like Skibo Road and downtown Fayetteville.

Referral Process and Release of Information (ROI), Sanquis Graham

Sanquis Graham reminded participants to use the official referral link and complete the ROI form to facilitate client contact and information sharing across partners. Plans to post the ROI form on the website were discussed to streamline the process. Jay Higgins inquired about the integration of the ROI with the referral system.

- Emphasized the importance of submitting ROI with referrals for timely client engagement.
- The ROI form is currently shared as a PDF but may be made available as a fillable form on the website.
- Jay Higgins asked if the ROI would be included in the referral link; Sanquis clarified it would be a separate link but fillable online.