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Healthcare Subcommittee
Minutes 2-9-21

Attendance:

Sherwood Taylor
Myrna Keklak
Dan Kelly
Lillian Smith
Fran Kuhn

Minutes were placed online, but were not reviewed or approved.

The meeting began at 3:05. There were some housekeeping issues that were discussed related to the scheduling of future meetings. Dr. Sheila Quinn was anticipated to be part of the discussion and was to be introduced at the meeting, but unfortunately had a conflict and was unable to attend. Alan Beatty also had a conflict with the time. Therefore, the plan was to move the meetings to Thursday as this appeared to be best for Alan, who is co-chair of the committee.

The committee then moved to community needs and updates with the discussion focusing on the job postings for Pharmacy Techs. Sherwood Taylor discussed the community college's award for part of the scaling apprenticeship grant that was initially to target pharmacy techs, however, while there are many positions posted on the CVS website, he indicated that there are no positions listed in this region. He has therefore opted not to start the pharmacy tech apprenticeship program. He stated he does not believe there is demand for the credentialed training program because it is not required. Applicants can just walk in to CVS, get hired and get trained.

Lillian Smith, of Atlanticare, stated that the hospital is in need of pharmacy techs, however they are hired with the expectation that they will be registered and certified within a year of hire. The training is delivered internally. Atlanticare hospital has both the hospital and five retail pharmacies for employing pharmacy techs, so there is a need for this service. Fran Kuhn stated that he has been trying to reach out to Deb Kepics (?) to establish a relationship with the hospital and identify positions that the workforce development board could help fill through its labor pool on an ongoing basis. Lillian stated that they are always hiring Medical Assistants (MA), Patient Access Associates and Client Service Reps. She stated that the patient access associate and the client service rep are positions that do not require a high level of training and can transition from other industries such as the casinos, to those positions. She also emphasized the continuing need for Mas and respiratory therapists. She stated that Atlantic Cape has been an extraordinary partner in providing certified quality candidates to hire for the MA positions. She also stated that Atlanticare has a minimum wage of \$15 per hour.

Director Kuhn asked for an e-mail from Atlanticare indicating their need for MA and their preference for individuals from ACCC. There are concerns that the other providers do not provide the same quality of training and certifications that the institution needs. Because this effort would be employer driven, the emphasis from the One Stop's perspective would be

on connecting the training candidate to an employer through the preferred training program. There was additional discussion regarding the requirements that accompany the college training program. The other private career schools do not have the ability to qualify for ACCCs program. The requirement is the 11th grade level in reading. Sherwood Taylor stated that all 17 of the students from the MA class had obtained jobs.

Sherwood Taylor also stated that there was a similar situation with the school's nursing program. He stated that the students that they are accepting are coming to Atlantic Cape because they know that they can be employed upon completion of the program.

Myrna Keklak asked Lillian Smith if she saw a need for registered nurses currently. She stated that both Atlanticare and Cape Regional were not permitting the nursing students to complete clinicals currently because of the pandemic. Access to those resources has been stopped with no time frame for when the training component would be re-opened. She also said that the position of the local hospitals was unique as most of the other facilities in south jersey did not have the same policy in place and were continuing with nursing students' clinical experiences. The current concern is that the graduating class that is being delayed with no time frame for re-opening access will create a healthcare gap for the local hospitals, especially Atlanticare. The current class of students have not received any clinical experience since December. Further compounding the issue is the fact that there are over 200 students that are delayed in receiving that training. This conversation continued with planned follow-up discussion to resolve the issue. There are concerns that there are 97 seniors that need the clinicals.

On the issue of the need for respiratory therapists, Ms. Keklak discussed the plan to create a bachelor's level program at Rowan University to address that need. The course work will be in respiratory care. She stated that the proposal has gone as far as bringing in architects to design a building proposal for the program. She also stated that Atlantic Cape has completed an articulation agreement with Brookdale. The program will be an associate level program with the first year of instruction provided by Atlantic Cape and the second year managed by Brookdale. Students interested in pursuing this career opportunity could pursue a two-year program or a four-year program. Director Kuhn said he could reach out to the workforce development board director in Gloucester to see what she knows about the program. Inspira appears to be the primary clinical site for the program.

There was a brief discussion about the CNA programs and the inability to place newly trained workers in to the long-term facilities, again because of the need to provide some clinical experience as part of the training.

The group then took up a discussion regarding the possible use of OJT in the medical field. Dan Kelly, who is the CEO of Community Quest stated that his agency had discussed it briefly in the past but was advised against it because of potential liability concerns. The discussion continued considering various aspects of an OJT program and possible application within the healthcare field.

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
WDB Staff