



MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert H. Healy
City Manager

FROM: John G. O'Brien
Hospital Administrator *JGO*

DATE: September 27, 1991

RE: CAHILL 3 OUTPATIENT ADDICTIONS TREATMENT UPDATE
(COUNCIL ORDER #16, 6/24/91)

RECEIVED
91 SEP 27 AM 11:36
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

This is to provide an update on the Cahill 3 Outpatient Addictions Treatment Program as requested by the City Council.

As you know, the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health has historically funded a number of staff positions providing outpatient counseling services to alcoholics in acute stages of withdrawal and to patients with the dual diagnosis of alcoholism and severe mental illness. Over the past five years staff positions have been gradually eliminated by the Department of Mental Health and the staffing decreased substantially over that period. As of June, 1991 there were seven individuals providing these services five days a week from 9 to 5 with some evening activity twice a week. On June 14, 1991 these individuals all received layoff notices from the state, along with almost fifty other mental health professionals providing services to Cambridge residents.

In recognition of the urgent need to assure the provision of outpatient services for substance abusers, I asked the Division of Ambulatory Services, the Department of Medicine and the Department of Psychiatry to put together an emergency transition plan that would continue a minimal level of basic triage and crisis intervention services for people with acute addiction problems during the next six months to a year. During this period they will be developing, in conjunction with other agencies in the community, an expanded Outpatient Addictions Treatment Program to address the need for substance abuse treatment more comprehensively.

Mr. Robert Healy
September 27, 1991
Page 2

It is unfortunate that the Commonwealth's actions were so precipitous that there was little time to communicate these changes in services effectively. There were a number of incorrect rumors, circulating in the community, i.e., that the service on Cahill 3 would close or that alcoholic patients would be using the Emergency Room rather than Cahill 3. I would like to assure you and the members of the City Council that it has never been our intention to discontinue providing services to people with substance abuse problems.

Currently, there are four professional staff (three of whom are former state employees who were working on Cahill 3) providing outpatient triage and crisis intervention and counseling services to people with alcohol problems. Over the next six months to be a year, we plan to increase the staffing in order to accomplish the following goals:

- 1) Services provided should address the needs of an economically, racially and culturally diverse population that may be having difficulty with alcohol, other drugs, a combination of drugs and alcohol, and those with addictions and serious mental illness (dual diagnosis).
- 2) Services provided should continue to address the needs of people who are in the acute stages of alcohol/drug withdrawal; particularly triage and crisis intervention.
- 3) Services provided should include an organized system of aftercare services for patients discharged from the inpatient Addiction Treatment Unit (formerly Cahill 3).
- 4) Services should include a variety of ongoing outpatient treatment modalities appropriate to the needs of people with a broad range of addictions, including group and family counseling.
- 5) Outpatient substance abuse services should be fully integrated with other related programs provided by the Hospital's Department of Psychiatry, i.e., the Psychiatric Outpatient Department, the Minority Mental Health Teams and the North Charles Drug-Free Outpatient Department (Impact Program).
- 6) Services should be provided in coordination and collaboration with other related programs in the community, i.e. CASPAR, Concilio Hispano, SPAL.

Mr. Robert Healy
September 27, 1991
Page 3

- 7) Services should be developed that can generate revenue from third party payors and that will be compatible with the growing emphasis on managed care. The program should be able to finance its own growth.
- 8) Services should be provided by a multi-disciplinary team of staff with clinical training and experience in a variety of addiction treatment settings. It will be particularly important to recruit a racially and ethnically diverse staff.

In sum, the recent lay-off of the Cahill 3 Outpatient staff was both a crisis and an opportunity to comprehensively address the above goals with an expanded constellation of services.

JGO/kw



City of Cambridge

16.

IN CITY COUNCIL

June 24, 1991

COUNCILLOR WALSH

- WHEREAS: For over 21 years the Alcoholism Outpatient Services on Cahill Three at Cambridge Hospital has provided continuous crisis intervention, counseling, group and aftercare program for men and women in Cambridge with alcohol dependency, as well as their families; and
- WHEREAS: It is reported reliably that due to the imminent cessation of funding for six professional positions in the Cahill Three unit by the Commonwealth's Department of Mental Health, the Administration at Cambridge Hospital has determined to close the Alcoholism Outpatient Program on Cahill Three in July, 1991; and
- WHEREAS: The result of this closing will be that no around the clock haven of help will be any longer available in Cambridge for such persons in crisis and an additional consequence will be that some who would otherwise be served on Cahill Three will now use the Emergency Room services; now therefore be it
- ORDERED: That it is the sense of this City Council that we encourage the City Manager to work with the Administrator of Cambridge Hospital and to make every effort to try to provide some minimal professional presence on Cahill Three to preserve the unit's existence, if at all possible; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to provide an update on this matter to the Council at the Council Meeting on July 29, 1991; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution to the Administrator of the Cambridge Hospital as soon as possible.

1.



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FAX. 349-4307

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

October 7, 1991

To The Honorable, The City Council:

With reference to Awaiting Report Item No. 24, regarding an update on the Cahill 3 Outpatient Addiction Treatment Center, please find attached a response from John O'Brien, Administrator of the Cambridge Hospital, relative to this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Healy", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mev
attachment

CONSENT AGENDA # 1

S-1880

Awaiting Report Item # 24 regarding
the Cahill 3 Outpatient Addiction Treatment
Center.

In City Council,

October 7, 1991

Placed on file