



ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 19, 2007

MINUTES

The KSF Advisory Council met on Monday, March 19, 2007 from 5:00 to 7:00 in the Peace Chapel. Members present were: Sharon Smith, Terri Klawonn, Debbie Humphrey, Fr. Bill Hitpas, Bernadette Middeke, Fran Smith, Tom Mulhall, Philip Speicher, Tom Smith, and Kevin Smith (via phone conference). Members absent: Bruce Holland and Peter Carmany.

We began with an open discussion about **KarlaKare**. There was general agreement that the basic concept was valid and valuable, and that KSF should pursue developing this program. Debbie Humphrey volunteered to survey other mental health leaders in Illinois regarding the possible existence of other programs similar to KarlaKare. Tom Smith indicated that he would check further into some programs he discovered with a web search. We discussed the number and frequency of home visits the program would provide, and concluded that the number would be determined more by the needs of the client family. The Council preferred that the home visitors be volunteers, rather than paid professionals, and that KSF liabilities would be lessened if these visitors were volunteers, not employees. If they would be paid, it would be better if they were employed as contractors with KSF, not part-time employees. These volunteers must be trained appropriately. KarlaKare would partner with hospitals, treatment centers, and agencies to recruit families willing to participate in this program. We would determine the suitability of a potential client family for KarlaKare through dialogue with the hospital, treatment center, or agency and the family. The Council suggested that we begin this program as a pilot and make the necessary adjustments as needed and through experience. We brainstormed about the goals of the program and identified these initial goals:

1. To help the family and friends understand the nature of the mental health issues of their loved one and the impact this illness has on the whole family.
2. To answer questions and concerns of the family regarding the mental health issues of their loved one.
3. To provide information about available resources in the community.
4. To acquaint the family with the nine KSF strategies for coping with the mental illness of a loved one.
5. To encourage the family and friends to participate in the KSF support groups in order to gain further support and information about the mental health problems of their loved one and to learn how to cope with the illness.



We ended this initial discussion with the suggestion that the term KarlaKare may not be the best way to describe the program. Most people agreed that keeping the personal name of Karla in the title somewhere is beneficial. Perhaps something like: Karla Home Care with a descriptive subtitle would be better. The naming of the program needs more thinking and discussion.

We then began brainstorming about “**faith based initiatives**”. The first observation revolved around the ambiguity and political implications of the term itself, and we left it unresolved until we clarified further what this topic involved. After further dialogue about what the needs are, the Council identified two related but distinct areas to pursue:

1. The potential for education and awareness raising among faith communities regarding mental illness and suicide prevention. One suggestion was to approach the clergy in various denominations in order to educate them about the prevalence of mental illness and suicide within their faith communities.
2. Sponsor prayer services and create prayers for use in parishes and congregations reflecting the needs of the mentally ill and their families and friends. There was discussion about the frequency of these prayer services but a general consensus that there is a value in offering these services. KSF could sponsor these services and/or encourage local faith communities to sponsor them.

The Council agreed that KSF should pursue this faith based approach.

The **Directors’ Report** included an update on the financial status of KSF and the principles developed by the Financial Aid and Education Committee for budget determination. This committee will also develop forms for check requests and budget proposals. KSF received the award for Region VII (Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana) Catholic Family Life Ministers of the Year for 2007 and we will also be panelists at the National Conference of Catholic Family Life Ministers in June. Fran Smith then listed the activities and presentations we have made since our last meeting.

Tom Mulhall reported for the **Communications** committee. He distributed flyers for the “Erase the Stigma” Mental Health Conference on June 2 and 3 at the Shrine. This conference is co-sponsored by the Shrine, the Archdiocese of St. Louis, and KSF, with the St. Clair County Mental Health board and St. Elizabeth Hospital also joining in the planning. A solid program and extensive publicity will hopefully generate a large audience for this conference. Newspaper ads reflecting the mission of KSF will be the focus of our publicity for this year.

Sharon Smith from the **Fund Raising** committee then updated the Council on the planning for the Dinner/Auction on June 30. Much of the detailed planning is



progressing well. The major issue is the guest speaker, who is yet to be determined. Sharon asked for suggestions and will pursue some more possibilities. She also asked the Council for lists of potential donors and sponsors. Letters will go out soon. The Run/Walk has been postponed until next spring with the second dinner/auction on November 1, 2008. Major fund-raisers would then be six months apart.

The **Resources** committee did not distribute the results of their work since Peter Carmany was not able to attend the meeting. Fran Smith showed the Council the Welcome Folders she and Tom Smith developed for the two support groups.

The major items from the **Financial Aid and Education** committee (KarlaKare and the budget report forms) were previously discussed but Bernadette Middeke informed the Council that KSF was moving to QuickBooks as our financial record keeping system.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 with a reminder that the next meeting will be on June 11 at 5:00 in the Peace Chapel.