

Meeting Summary for BHP Child/Adolescent Quality, Access & Policy Committee Zoom Meeting

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The meeting focused on school-based behavioral health services, with presentations from providers highlighting successes, challenges, and integration of telemedicine in delivering care to students. Discussions covered funding issues, sustainability of programs, and the designation process for enhanced care clinics, as well as the importance of collaboration between clinicians and school staff. The conversation ended with announcements about upcoming events and resources, including the ICANN Conference and a new newsletter on behavior and wellness topics.

Next steps

- [Ellen Mathis to bring back information on how to access the CFAC Newsletter to the next meeting.](#)

Summary

April Meeting Feedback Discussion

The meeting began with introductions and announcements, including a reminder about an upcoming live broadcast on CTN in the afternoon. There was no conversation about the April Meeting.

School Behavioral Health Service Providers

The meeting focused on school-based behavioral health services, with presentations from three providers: Jennifer Grant from CJR, Amy Lupoli from Klingberg Family Centers, and Tanja Larsen from Community Child Guidance Clinic. Each provider shared their experience delivering services, highlighting successes such as increased access to care, improved clinical outcomes, and strong partnerships with schools. Challenges discussed included funding limitations, with some providers relying on third-party reimbursement while others received grant funding or ARPA dollars. The providers also addressed the need for sustainable funding models to ensure quality care and continued integration with schools.

School Telemedicine Integration Strategies

The discussion focused on how school-based health programs integrate telemedicine and hybrid services to provide accessible care for students and their families. Amy and Jennifer explained that their programs use a combination of in-person and telehealth services, allowing for flexibility during school closures and providing services year-round. They highlighted the success of using Chromebooks with Zoom access for students without technology at home. The conversation also addressed funding challenges, with Dr. Irv Jennings expressing concern about DCF prioritizing new programs over existing successful ones. Howard Sovronsky raised questions about reaching uninsured children, to which Jennifer and Amy responded that while most children have insurance, high deductibles and changing insurance plans pose challenges. They described using grant funding for community health workers and psychoeducation to support families concerned about immigration status. The discussion concluded with Steven inquiring about the ratio of commercial to Medicaid billing, which Amy estimated at about 80% Medicaid, and Dr. Jennings inquiring about the process of designating school-based clinics as enhanced care clinics, which Steven attributed to an action by the Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council.

ECC Designation Process for Schools

The group discussed the process of designating schools and clinics as ECCs, with Amy confirming that Waterbury and New Britain schools had been identified in the past two years. Dr. Jennings inquired about the requirements, and Kelly Phenix mentioned that the license or certificate should be held by the overall provider rather than being attached to a specific address. Steven offered to provide information on navigating the application process, noting that while there had previously been a cap on the number of buildings that could be designated as ECCs, this restriction may no longer apply.

School-Based Behavioral Health Integration

The group discussed experiences with school-based behavioral health clinics and the integration of employed mental health practitioners. Tanja and Amy shared that early resistance from school social workers was overcome by clearly defining roles and boundaries, with collaboration becoming more effective over time. Jennifer highlighted the importance of community buy-in and explained that clinicians' roles vary depending on funding, with some schools allowing for both outpatient billing and school-based interventions, while others focus solely on outpatient care due to liability and financial constraints. The discussion also touched on the challenges of defining boundaries in crisis situations and the pay differential between school employees and nonprofit clinicians.

School Mental Health Funding Challenges

The group discussed challenges with funding and sustainability of school-based mental health services, particularly for smaller districts. Jennifer and Amy highlighted the need for year-round services and the difficulties of serving students with complex needs during the summer. They agreed that while the model is successful, it faces barriers including funding, support from communities, and the ability to hire and retain qualified staff. The conversation touched on potential solutions like pension plans for retired school social workers and the importance of securing sustainable funding to ensure quality services.

School Mental Health Service Models

The panel discussed challenges and best practices in school-based mental health services, focusing on the trade-offs between having clinicians split between schools versus maintaining full-time presence in one building. Tanja highlighted the need for clearer oversight and funding structures, suggesting potential collaboration between state departments to support children's mental health services. Jennifer described their current supervision model, which includes weekly on-site visits and monthly Zoom groups, while emphasizing the importance of selecting clinicians who can work independently. The discussion concluded with Amy sharing positive experiences from Waterbury and New Britain, where having supervisors based in rural communities has improved service delivery and staff support.

iCAN Conference and Newsletter Updates

The meeting discussed the upcoming iCAN Conference on September 25th at the Artist Collective in Hartford (on Albany Avenue), marking their 10th anniversary. Ellen Mathis announced a bi-weekly newsletter featuring behavior and wellness topics, community meetings starting later this month, and a reminder to register for HUSKY Health program benefits. Steven inquired about the newsletter subscription process, which Ellen Mathis agreed to investigate and report back at the next meeting. The next meeting was scheduled for June 18th at 2 PM, and Steven thanked the presenters for their insights on school-based mental health services.