



Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council

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www.cga.ct.gov/ph/BHPOC

Co-Chairs: Rep. Mike Demicco, Terri DiPietro & Beresford Wilson
Meeting Summary: March 9, 2022

Via Zoom

Next Meeting is Wednesday, April 13, 2022 @ 2 PM via Zoom

Attendees: Representative Mike Demicco (Co-Chair), Terri DiPietro (Co-Chair), Beresford Wilson (Co-Chair), Malek Al-Shammary, Dr. Lois Berkowitz (DCF), Carlos Blanco (Interpreter), Carrie Bourdon (Beacon), E Carrena, Neva Caldwell (CFAC), Rebecca Colasanto, Ed, Alice Forrester (Clifford Beers), Dr. Frank Fortunati, Jr., Eliza Fawcett, Heather Gates, Jennifer Greer, Colleen Harrington (DMHAS), Stephen Heredia (DCF), Dr. Charles Herrick, Jill Holmes-Brown, Amanda M. Knef, Bryan Klimkiewicz (CSDE), Jen Kurowski (Beacon), Sarah LaBarre, Barbara Lanza (Jud), Tanja Larsen, Stacey Lawton, Linda Masel, Mariette McCourt, Steven Moore, Nichelle Mullins, Ally Nadeau, Mzboray, Andre Newfield, Laura Nesta, Margaret O'Hagen-Lynch, Maureen O'Neill-Davis, Lisa Otto, Kelly Phenix, Donyale Pina (DCF), Robert Reed, Galo Rodriguez, Howard Sovronsky, Dr. Stephney Springer (DCF), Bollepalli Subbarao, Janine Sullivan-Wiley, Lori Szczygiel (Beacon), Victoria Tran, Sabrina Trocchi (Wheeler Clinic), Ann Turkington, Dr. Jeff Vanderploeg, Rod Winstead (DSS), Valerie Wzykowski (OHA), and one other by telephone

BHP OC Administration

Co-Chair Terri DiPietro convened the meeting at 2:02 PM. She announced that Carlos Blanco was going to give Spanish Translation Services for the meeting. Co-Chair Beresford Wilson introduced Lori Szczygiel (Beacon) for an announcement. Lori told Council Members that she was promoted to the National Market (and would not be leaving CT) but Carrie Bourdon would take over as the Head of Beacon CT and Andrea Goetz would take over the Child and Adolescent Division

Action Items

None

Connecticut Behavioral Health Partnership Agency Reports: Department of Social Services-Rod Winstead (DSS)

Rod Winstead (DSS) gave thanks for the Calendar Invite and congratulated Lori, Carrie and Andrea for their promotions and said that he looks fondly to continuing working with them. He announced that Bill Halsey was in another meeting. He then spoke of legislation related to

Children's Behavioral Health and thanked Beacon for data related to the proposed legislation. He reminded the Council that there will be a 60-day advanced notice from CMS when the Public Health Emergency (PHE) will end which may be in June or July. He gave Members the link for the Substance Use Disorder Demonstration Project. It is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' effort to combat the ongoing opioid crisis, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) created an opportunity under its authority. See link below:

<https://portal.ct.gov/DSS/Health-And-Home-Care/Substance-Use-Disorder-Demonstration-Project>

Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services- Colleen Harrington (DMHAS)

Colleen Harrington and newly promoted Deputy Commissioner of DMHAS reported on the 1115 Substance Use Disorder Project and residential providers. Currently, DMHAS is holding level of care meetings that are on-going. The DSS Website has the link for all meetings regarding the 1115 SUD Waiver. See link above. Colleen also congratulated Beacon for its promotions amongst its staff.

Department of Children and Families – Dr. Stephney Springer (DCF)

Dr. Stephney Springer (DCF) announced that the Department's Family First Plan has been approved and is grateful for the feedback on the plan. Negotiations are underway for the expansion of EMPS services and space for community providers. Therapeutic Foster Care is in action.

Judicial Branch – Barbara Lanza (Jud)

Barbara Lanza (CSSD) announced that CSSD has removed the mask requirement for everything except for detention centers and Congregate Care Infirmaries. Encouragement of mask use and social distancing will remain in place.

State Department of Education- Bryan Klimkiewicz, Special Education Director (CSDE)

Bryan Klimkiewicz (CSDE) spoke of the new Individual Education Program (IEP) forms are now in use. See the new IEP website: [New IEP/CT-SEDS](#) for the program document template. Before the Pandemic, it was hard to recruit and retain special education teachers and it is more so now, during the Pandemic because special education concerns for Social emotional referrals and are on the rise. Mask mandates are now done locally by district and not by the State. 9-12 remote learning standards are in place just in case of another mass closing of schools.

Department of Developmental Services- Tammy Venenga (DDS)

Due to the absence of Tammy Venenga, no report was given.

The Behavioral Health Workforce Emergency: National and State Perspectives- Michael Hoge, Ph.D., Professor, Yale School of Medicine Senior Science & Policy Advisor, The Annapolis Coalition on the Behavioral Health Workforce



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Committee Reports:

Coordination of Care: - Rep. Jonathan Steinberg, Co-Chair, Janine Sullivan-Wiley, Co-Chair, Kelly Phenix, Co-Chair, and Sabra Mayo, Co-Chair

Co-Chair Janine Sullivan-Wiley announced that the next meeting will be on March 23, 2022 at 1 PM. The discussion will include a follow-up to home COVID-19 testing and accessibility.

Child/Adolescent Quality, Access & Policy: – Steve Girelli and Jeff Vanderploeg, Co-Chairs

Co-Chair Jeff Vanderploeg said the next meeting will be on March 16, 2022 at 2:00 PM via Zoom. At the February meeting, Beacon gave a presentation for the Child Through Put System, numbers and trends in discharge delay. They went over set goals for the committee and came up with Access to service for the committee to focus on this coming year.

Adult Quality, Access & Policy: -Paul Acker, Howard Drescher and Dr. Frank Fortunati, Jr. Co-Chairs

Co-Chair Dr. Frank Fortunati, Jr. informed Council Members that at the March meeting the y before, Beacon (Bert Plant and Elizabeth McOsker) gave a presentation on HEDIS measures. The State of Connecticut is average to above average in various performance measures and some below the National average in the New England States. There is room for improvement noted.

Operations: – Heather Gates and Laura Nesta Co- Chairs

Co-Chair Heather Gates had to leave the meeting early so Terri DiPietro announced Laura Nesta as the New Co-Chair of the Operations Committee! Welcome Laura! The 1115 SUD Waiver was reviewed and questions were followed-up at the committee March meeting.

Committee on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Behavioral Health:

Alice Forrester and Selma Ward Co-Chairs

Co-Chair Alice Forrester said that at the March meeting Workforce issues were discussed. Data from DPH with diverse races in the workforce were reviewed and discussed. The next meeting will be on April 5, 2022 at 11 AM via Zoom.

Consumer and Family Advisory Council (CFAC) Update –Neva Caldwell

The update was given by Tri-Chair Neva Caldwell. There was a retreat held on March 3, 2022

with focus groups on Leadership objectives, developing a two-year goal for workshops and Young adult recruitment strategies. The April meeting will center on the Family focus Group and maternal and child health resources.

New Business/Meeting Announcement/Adjournment

Co-Chair Terri DiPietro thanked Michael Hoge for his presentation. She announced the next meeting will be on Wednesday, April 13, 2022 at 2:00 PM via Zoom. She asked for any other announcements or new business. Hearing none, Terri adjourned the meeting at 3:37 PM.

The next meeting date: Wednesday, April 13, 2022 @ 2:00 PM via Zoom