



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: April 13, 2022

Via Zoom

Next Meeting is Wednesday, May 11, 2022 @ 2 PM via Zoom

Attendees: Terri DiPietro (Co-Chair), Beresford Wilson (Co-Chair), Dr. Lois Berkowitz (DCF), Carlos Blanco (Interpreter), Carrie Bourdon (Beacon), Chris Bory (Beacon), Neva Caldwell (CFAC), Rebecca Colasanto, Kim Davis, Judy Dowd (OPM), Howard Drescher, Sarah Eagan (OCA), Jennifer Fiorello, Kathy Flaherty, Dr. Frank Fortunati, Jr., Dr. Steven Girelli, Kerri Griffin, Colleen Harrington (DMHAS), HES Policy, Bryan Klimkiewicz (CSDE), Jen Kurowski (Beacon), Barbara Lanza (Jud), Tanja Larsen, Stacey Lawton, Linda Mosel, Steven Moore, Laura Nesta, Maureen O'Neill-Davis, Lisa Otto, Kelly Phenix, Donyale Pina (DCF), Amy Soto, Howard Sovronsky, Dr. Stephney Springer (DCF), Ashley Starr-Frechette, Janine Sullivan-Wiley, Victoria Tran, Ann Turkington, Mark Vanacore (DMHAS), Brad Weeks, Michael Williams (DCF), Rod Winstead (DSS), and one other by Telephone

BHP OC Administration

Co-Chair Terri DiPietro convened the meeting at 2:01 PM. She announced that Carlos Blanco was going to give Spanish Translation Services for the meeting.

Action Items

None

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

Rod Winstead (DSS) reported that on April 8, 2022, DSS announced the appointment of William Gui Woolston as the new CT State Medicaid Director. His previous position was with CVS Health and that Director Woolston would like to come to the May BHPOC meeting to express his goals and vision to Council Members. He also added that Bill Halsey was named Deputy Medicaid Director for DSS. He then told the Council that on April 12, 2022, the Federal government granted an extension for the Public Health Emergency (PHE) which now puts the end around the end of August 2022. He reminded members that there will be a 60-day advanced notice from CMS when the Public Health Emergency (PHE) will end.

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

Colleen Harrington spoke about the 1115 SUD Waiver Residential provider component. The response rate was high and the department is completing the review process. There are also COVID testing sites available, see the DMHAS Website.

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

Dr. Stephney Springer announced the recent decree of the end of the Federal Government's oversight of DCF due to the success of its many partnerships that the department has implemented. Fiscal responses have been substantial and with the implementation of ARPA initiatives, the department has been able to fund a number of family services such as crisis centers and other RFPs for 24/7 mobile Crisis Centers for several areas.

Judicial Branch – Barbara Lanza (Jud)

Barbara Lanza (CSSD) announced the Behavioral Health Clinic RFPs are still out.

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

Bryan Klimkiewicz announced the statewide four-year process of developing a Special Education data system and the new Individual Education Plan (IED) document will soon be in place and available with a Parent-Portal. It is user-friendly for everyone: teachers, staff, and families. See the new IEP website: [New IEP/CT-SEDS](#) for the program document template. Parents will be able to sign IEPs digitally over the Web and IEPs can be sent to parents immediately and these documents can be sent to families in their native language. There is a Section 504 Module (accommodations) piloting in some districts in the state. With staffing shortages, accommodations, and allowances in flexibility, new regulations on a statewide platform have allowed for recruitment nationally. There is now reciprocity from Maine to Virginia in some areas of education. A program will use Federal dollars for support and services for families over the summer months.

Department of Developmental Services- Tammy Venenga (DDS)

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

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 reported that Kathy Flaherty (CLRP) gave a presentation to members on Request for Proposals (RFPs)- see Coordination of Care Webpage for March 23, 2022. Comments and recommendations from advocates should include consumer experiences in all RFPs in the development process. The May meeting will include a presentation on CONNIE-state information exchange and a review of State Agency RFPs for NEMT and ASOs. Advanced Behavioral Health Directives do not currently exist in Connecticut and this will be a topic for a future meeting.

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

Co-Chair Dr. Steve Girelli reported that the March 16, 2022 meeting had a presentation on the expansion of Enhanced Care Clinics (ECCs) and that presentation on how DSS and providers have responded to the systems organizations and expanded sites is on the Committee webpage. This is expected to increase accessibility. They also went over the CY '22 Goal Statement and are focusing on access and increasing access of service for families.

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

Co-Chair Dr. Frank Fortunati, Jr. reported that the committee had a presentation from Beacon on HEDIS measures. The next meeting is on May 10, 2022 and will focus on Tele-health in Connecticut during the Pandemic and ongoing.

Operations: – *Heather Gates and Laura Nesta Co-Chairs*

Co-Chair Laura Nesta announced the next meeting will be on Friday, May 6, 2022 at 2:30 PM via Zoom.

Committee on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Behavioral Health:
Alice Forrester and Selma Ward Co-Chairs

DEI continues to work on Workplace Development, specifically as it relates to staff. The March meeting hosted Dr. Sandra Bulmer, the Dean of Health and Human Services from SCSU to discuss how providers can partner with post-secondary educational institutions to influx the pipeline of graduates into the important work we do. The Committee sent Dr. Bulmer away with a couple of action items, so we can gain a better understanding of graduation rates, test scores, etc. The Committee hopes to eventually recommend incentivizing programs, such as loan forgiveness that will help attract and retain diverse talent.

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

Tri-Chair Neva Caldwell reported that there are ten new members who have received an orientation and welcome packet. The April 14th meeting had a focus group on Behavioral Health and Maternity & Child Health. The next iCAN Conference will be on Thursday, September 22, 2022 and will be virtual.

New Business/Meeting Announcement/Adjournment

Co-Chair Terri DiPietro thanked everyone for their reports and wished everyone Happy Holidays. She announced the next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 11, 2022 at 2:00 PM via Zoom and that if anyone has ideas for presentation to contact her or David Kaplan. She asked for any other announcements or new business. Hearing none, Terri adjourned the meeting at 3:16 PM.

The next meeting date: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 @ 2:00 PM via Zoom