



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: June 8, 2022

Via Zoom

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

Attendees: Terri DiPietro (Co-Chair), Beresford Wilson (Co-Chair), Donaicis Alas (DSS), Tyler Anderson, Dr. Lois Berkowitz (DCF), Carlos Blanco (Interpreter), David Borzellino, Carrie Bourdon (Beacon), CT-N, Neva Caldwell (CFAC), Rebecca Colasanto, Brittany Cooper, Sandra Czunas (OSC), Maria Cruz, Kim Davis, Howard Drescher, Jennifer Fiorello, Kathy Flaherty, Alice Forrester, Dr. Frank Fortunati, Heather Gates, Jr., Elizabeth Gemski, JoShanda Guerrier (DCF), Jessica Guite, Colleen Harrington (DMHAS), Jill Holmes Brown, Judy, Bryan Klimkiewicz (CSDE), Sean King (OHA), Amanda Knef, Jennifer Kolakowski, Barbara Lanza (Jud), Tanja Larsen, Stacey Lawton, Keri Lloyd, Steven Moore, Nichelle Mullins, Laura Nesta, Maureen O'Neill-Davis, Kelly Phenix, Donyale Pina (DCF), Julie Revaz (Jud), Melissa Riley, David Seifel (DSS), Shaunseyk, Jeff Shaw, Amy Soto (DHP), Howard Sovronsky, Dr. Stephney Springer (DCF), Rep. Jonathan Steinberg, Janine Sullivan-Wiley, Victoria Tran, Sabrina Trocchi, Mark Vanacore (DMHAS), Jeff Vanderploeg, Tammy Venega (DDS), Selma Ward, Alison Weir, Rod Winstead (DSS), Gui Woolston (DSS), Zoom User, Steve Zuckerman, and one other by Telephone

BHP OC Administration

Co-Chair Terri DiPietro convened the meeting at 2:04 PM. She notified members that Carlos Blanco was going to give Spanish Translation Services for the meeting. She announced that the minutes from last month were posted on-line. Co-Chair Beresford Wilson welcomed everyone. Terri reported to the Council that CFAC members would like a diversity, equity inclusion (DEI) focus for all committee meetings.

Action Items

None

Connecticut Behavioral Health Partnership Agency Reports: Judicial Branch – Barbara Lanza (Jud)

Barbara Lanza (CSSD) reported that there were few Legislative Bill updates from the recent Session. On July 1, 2022 the Career Pathway Program for juveniles and adolescents will have a \$1 million expansion. Project Longevity will also begin on July 1, 2022. There will

be amendments for the next fiscal year that will affect the unit costs and fees for services for some of their contract. They are receiving a 4% increase for additional funding which is a first time increase in their annual cost budget.

Department of Social Services-Rod Winstead (DSS)

Rod Winstead (DSS) welcomed and introduced Gui Woolston as the new CT Medicaid Director. His report is below.

Expansions

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Fund an Additional 150 Slots on the Autism Waiver | 700,000.00 |
| | |
| | |
| Provide Funding for Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities | 3,000,000.00 |
| | |
| Provide Funding for Domestic Violence Child and Family Advocates | 1,440,000.00 |
| | |

Public Act 22-81 (Senate Bill 2) - AN ACT EXPANDING PRESCHOOL AND MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN as amended by [LCO # 5219](#). The public act contains the following sections that effect DSS:

Section 25 (d)(1) Not later than October 1, 2022, the Commissioner of Social Services shall provide Medicaid payments to an enrolled independent licensed behavioral health clinician in private practice for covered services performed by an associate licensed behavioral health clinician working within such associate clinician's scope of practice under the supervision of such independent clinician provided certain conditions are met. (*Effective July 1, 2022*)

- Division of Health Services

Public Act 22-47 (HB 5001) - AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH As Amended by [LCO # 5592](#).

Section 58 requires OHS, in consultation with the DSS and Insurance Commissioners, to study whether payment parity exists between providers of behavioral and mental health services in the private insurance market and in the HUSKY Health program. OHS shall submit an interim report to the Appropriations, Human Services, Insurance, and Public Health Committees by January 1, 2023, and a final report by January 1, 2024. (*Effective from Passage*)

Section 59 requires DSS to implement a Medicaid reimbursement system to encourage collaboration between primary care providers and behavioral and mental health providers (*Effective July 1, 2022*).

Section 68 creates a 10-member child and adolescent psychiatry working group
Public Health Emergency scheduled to end July 15th will be extended

The link for the annual data collection for the Enhanced Care clinics went out 06/07/22 and due back 07/15/22.

Medicaid Director Gui Woolston will have more extensive report in July

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

Colleen Harrington reported that there is a \$3.3 million increase for Young Adult Services (YAS) for the case load of youth discharge and diversion. There were adjustments made for the 1115 Waiver for the SUD Demonstration project. Mobile crisis services for adults have been expanded for 24/7 accessibility and Young Adult Services have been expanded and 4% COLAs have been provided to non-profit providers.

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

Dr. Stephney Springer reported that \$21 million have been budgeted for urgent crisis stabilization centers and \$8.6 million have directed to expand mobile crisis services statewide and 24/7. The Family First program has been expanded by \$1.1 million and providers have received COLAs.

Department of Developmental Services- Tammy Venenga (DDS)

Tammy Venenga reported that there were no BH bills for DDS action during this past Session. DDS will partner with community providers for access and support for kids with intellectual development which will include respite centers for kids in BH services program. There is an RFP open for a children's step-down unit for ages 8 to 21 years old. They are using ARPA dollars to support their programs such as expanding plans for high schoolers and giving tuition assistance.

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

Bryan Klimkiewicz announced that the new Special Education Webpage and documents will go into effect on July 1, 2022.

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 at the May meeting, Jenn Searls gave a presentation on the Connecticut Information Exchange (CONNIE). There was also a quarterly update on Non-Emergency Medical Transportation given by Veyo. She welcomed Pat Cronin

(DSS) as newly selected to oversee Dental Health as Marty Milkovic is retiring (Congrats Marty!). She said that during the PHE, Connecticut remains one of the few states who have expanded tele-health via phone services thanks to the work of this committee. The Information link for CONNIE is below. This is a must opt out program.

<https://connect.org/frequently-asked-questions/>

Child/Adolescent Quality, Access & Policy: – *Steve Girelli and Jeff*

Vanderploeg, Co-Chairs

Co-Chair Jeff Vanderploeg reported that the May meeting had a presentation on Medicaid 101 from DSS. CFAC member Cheryl D'Argento gave a personal view and story for her family and Yvonne Jones (Beacon) presented on the BHP Behavioral Health Services and Program. The June meeting has been canceled and the July meeting will focus on Population Profiles and the Workforce.

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

Fortunati, Jr. Co-Chairs

There was not May meeting and the next meeting is July 12, 2022 at 10:30 AM. The agenda will center around higher levels of care.

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

Co-Chair Laura Nesta reported that at the June meeting they reviewed and discussed tele-health, IOP, and outpatient rates. They also had an update on the 1115 Waiver. **NOTE:** The next meeting will be on Friday, July 8, 2022 at 2:30 PM via Zoom. This is a new date for the meeting.

Committee on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Behavioral Health:

Alice Forrester and Selma Ward Co-Chairs

Co-Chair Selma Ward reported that at the May meeting they discussed the BH work force in Connecticut, the Office of Workforce Strategy, the licensing process for clinicians, costs, education, rules, etc. Many social work degrees in Connecticut remain unfinished due to some rules. The Committee will be a resource for other committees.

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

Caldwell

Tri-Chair Neva Caldwell reported that at their June meeting they will have a presentation on child BH service crisis initiatives. The next iCAN Conference theme is: Partnership to Transform the System and will be on Thursday, September 22, 2022 and will be virtual- Save the Date! There will be six workshops and one will be on a CFAC-BHPOC partnership initiatives.

New Business/Meeting Announcement/Adjournment

Co-Chair Terri DiPietro thanked everyone for their reports and discussions. She announced the next meeting will be on Wednesday, July 13, 2022 at 2:00 PM via Zoom with a presentation from CT Medicaid Director, Gui Woolston and DSS. If anyone has ideas for future presentations, contact her or David Kaplan. She asked for any other announcements or new business. Hearing none, Terri told members to enjoy the sunshine and adjourned the meeting at 3:37 PM.

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