

**MEETING MINUTES FOR THE  
GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2015**

**Members present:** Linda Bryan, Anne Mulready, Cherie Cruz, Sarah Dinklage, Sandra Delsesto

**Appointed members present: none**

**Statutory members present: none**

**Ex-officio members present:** Jeffrey Hill (DOH); Ray Neirinckx (OHCD); Sharon Kernan, Jessica Mowry (EOHHS); Linda Mahoney, Michelle Brophy, Anna Meehan, Linda Barovier (BHDDH), Ruth Anne Dougherty, Chris Strnad (DCYF)

**Guests:** Brian Sullivan (Operation Stand Down RI); Lisa Tomasso, Thomas Joyce (TPC/Anchor); Lisa Conlan (PSNRI); Craig Dwyer (Office of Lt. Governor); Rachel Plummer (DOH intern) & Oyediya Ezikpe (BHDDH legal intern)

**Staff:** Jim Dealy

**Review of minutes** (Anne Mulready): Although a quorum was not present, the meeting was called to order. Motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes presented. There were no comments or revisions. A Motion was made for acceptance and passed.

**Update from BHDDH (Linda Mahoney):** BHDDH convened a meeting on June 6<sup>th</sup> that brought together 53 physicians to talk about pain management and prescribing. Dr. Seals from Washington, D.C. spoke and created an atmosphere which encouraged the physicians to talk among each other. A key recommendation that he might was that physicians only discharge patients with a functioning discharge plan.

On Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, the Mental Health Summit drew 245 people to the Radisson Hotel. The Governor and Director Montanaro, among others were there. Three topics were discussed: (1) The epidemic of overdoses and what the feedback from the community has been to address it; (2) Establishing a no wrong door access to treatment for individuals with behavioral health needs who are in the ACI, including those leaving prison on probation and parole, and how to stop people from going there whose primary need is for behavioral health treatment. (3) What the community believes can be done better in treating the Severe

and Persistently Mentally Ill. Minutes have been summarized and on the BHDDH website along with the action steps of what will happen going forward. The Governor is behind all three issues and wants an action plan folded into the development of Medicaid services.

The grants that BHDDH is applying for which were discussed last month have passed initial screening by SAMHSA. The Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHI) grants will only be awarded to six states. BHDDH has been asked by SAMHSA for additional information on its application for the Youth Treatment grant. We are waiting to hear back on the Certifying Community Behavioral Health Program which is a planning grant related to the AIDS Demonstration program and is due August 5<sup>th</sup>.

On September 4<sup>th</sup> there is a Rally for Recovery kick-off at Rhode Island College, with the goal of trying to engage young adults. Volunteers are needed and sign up is available on the BHDDH website under Rally for Recovery. September 19<sup>th</sup> is the official rally date at Roger Williams Memorial Park. The theme is “You’re Vocal, You’re Visible, You’re Valuable”.

**Update from EOHHS (Sharon Kernan):** We been busy with the Reinventing Medicaid project, looking at various comprehensive initiatives that have been identified and developing preliminary work plans for moving forward. Nothing will be finalized until the budget is completely passed. Many of the initiatives need federal waiver authority or state plan amendment changes, and we are doing a comprehensive analysis of what is needed. We are also working with DCYF and BHDDH to look at issues that affect their various populations.

**Update from DCYF (Chris Strnad):** DCYF’s budget was passed as recommended by House Finance on Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>. It includes more or less level funding for the System of Care, which was \$72 million last year. DCYF is also systematically looking at its contracts and trying to identify redundancies, look at modifying contracts so that they include performance expectations and decide which contracts to renew and for how long. One intent of this process is to be able to reinvest about \$1 million into foster care. The contracts are not necessarily going to be ended, and some may be extended but no final decisions have been made on any specific contracts. Conversations with individual vendors have already occurred. We are continuing to look at our service array for the next fiscal year and are evaluating whether to extend the Family Care Networks contract for short term and then potentially issuing RFPs for a changed service array after that.

The question was asked whether DCYF had decided to end funding for PSN. Lisa Conlan said that PSN has already started layoffs. All staff, with the exception of two, will be

leaving by June 30<sup>th</sup>. This is taking place now in case DCYF doesn't renew its contracts with PSN. Lisa had promised the staff who are under the System of Care expansion grant that if that funding is renewed in FY 2016, the same staff will come back if the program is level funded and if PSN is able we can maintain the same infrastructure. Currently PSN has four main funding sources: (1) Mental Health Block Grant, (2) Title 4B Child Welfare Funds, (3) State Appropriations, and (4) the State Implementations Grant.

Several members noted that PSN has played a critical role in representing the needs of parents of SED children and also youth/young adults in the Council.

Chris clarified that no decision on the PSN contract has been made yet. He noted that this is all within the context of DCYF having \$10 million plus deficit this current fiscal year.

**Prevention Subcommittee:** Last month Shannon Spurlock requested that there be a letter sent to the Governor about the SYNAR funds. That letter was hand-delivered to the Governor and we have asked for a copy to be sent to Senator Weed and Representative Matiello. To date there have been no responses. Anne will check with Rich to see if he has had a response from either.

**Healthy Transitions Committee:** A Healthy Transition Subcommittee meeting was held on Wednesday, June 10. The Subcommittee has several concerns that it would like the full Council to be aware of. A very important part of the Subcommittee's work is to help establish services for transition aged youth/young adults as a permanent part of RI's service system. One thing we hope will help that effort is the reinstatement of the Children's Cabinet, which has made it into the House Budget and is supported by a Senate Resolution. We're hopeful that transition for Youth and Young Adults with Behavioral Health needs would be one of the things that the Children's Cabinet will focus as it starts its work. The Subcommittee felt that it would be critical for the Governor to appoint leaders in the State Departments as the decision makers to really move the Children's Cabinet agenda forward. In another development, there was a reference at the Mental Health Summit to having a Children's Mental Health Summit, possibly in the fall. Another piece of establishing youth transition services will be the education of Legislators, so as legislation is proposed that will support these new services, they know what they are voting on. These and other efforts to build support for youth transition services need to start now so that there will be state support by the time the grant ends. The Subcommittee also wanted to bring the idea to the full Council of taking a more proactive step, for example writing a letter to the Governor asking for her support. The Subcommittee will draft a letter and present it at the next meeting for approval by the Council.

**Old/New Business (Anne Mulready):** It was noted that the Council is required by state law to have four state legislators as members, and therefore the matter of legislative Representation is being put on the agenda for next month. A Democratic representative has said he is interested in being on the Council. Decided to send letter to Senator President and Speaker of the House requesting they select people, and we could also potentially give a list of those who have supported Behavioral Health issues. This letter will also be put on the agenda for next month's meeting.

Linda raised the question as to whether or not the Department of Labor and Training has any grants to help people with behavioral health issues and developmental disabilities with temporary or full-time employment. Linda also wants to see if Governor Raimondo is interested in signing on to the initiative to help those with developmental disabilities obtain employment as a first option in services to help them get integrated into the community. It was noted that BHDDH's Behavioral Health division is working with Medicaid to see whether supported employment services could become a Medicaid funded service.

The meeting was adjourned by vote of the members.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 14, 2015, 1:00 P.M.**

**Barry Hall**

**Conference Room 126**

**14 Harrington Road, Cranston, RI 02920**

**Statutory and Public members, please let Jim Dealy know if you cannot attend**

**This meeting is open to the public.**

**If you plan to attend and you require special accommodations to ensure equal participation, please contact Jim Dealy at the Division of Behavioral Healthcare Services at 462-0118.**

