



# COUNTY OF HUNTERDON NEW JERSEY

## HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION MENTAL HEALTH BOARD



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**REFERENCE:**

- Council
- Mental Health
- Youth
- Disability Services
- Substance Use Disorder
- Transportation

Approved February 22, 2023

### HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

#### Regular Meeting

Wednesday, January 25, 2023, 3:30 p.m.

Human Services Conference Room  
and via Microsoft Teams

#### MINUTES

| <u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u> | <u>EX-OFFICIO</u> | <u>STAFF</u> | <u>GUESTS</u> | <u>COUNTY DIV. REPS.</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| S. Cohen               | R. Horoschak      | N. Troche    | M. O'Reilly   | B. Renkens               |
| J. Gorman              | R. Cooper         | M. Scherer   | E. Neukum     | L. Case                  |
| M. Laquaglia           | F. Leddy          |              |               | C. Sagona                |
| J. Cassano             | L. Piazza-Long    |              |               | G. Veliz                 |
|                        |                   |              |               | J. Parauda               |
|                        |                   |              |               | J. Collevchio            |
|                        |                   |              |               | J. Abbott                |
|                        |                   |              |               | L. Zeller                |
|                        |                   |              |               | L. Haynes                |
|                        |                   |              |               | L. Mermini               |
|                        |                   |              |               | L. Oramas                |
|                        |                   |              |               | M. Moore                 |
|                        |                   |              |               | S. Lax                   |
|                        |                   |              |               | L. Merson                |

#### \*Designees

#### **I. CONVENE: OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT:**

“This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21. Notice of this meeting has been published in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Courier News. A public notice announcing this meeting has also been placed in the lobbies of the Hunterdon County Department of Human Services, the first floor of the Main Street County Complex, 71 Main Street Building #1, Flemington, NJ; the first floor of the Route 12 County Complex, Building #3, 314 State Route 12, Flemington, NJ and County Clerk’s Office.”

The Council allows time for comments from the public at the end of each meeting. Public comments are limited to three (3) minutes per person per meeting, in order to ensure that all attendees have an opportunity to be heard. Brief written comments may also be submitted for

distribution during the meeting.

J. Gorman opened the regular monthly meeting of the Council at 3:30 p.m. with a quorum present.

J. Gorman read HSAC's Statement of Purpose.

- II. \*APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion was made by J. Collevchio and seconded R. Horoschak to approve the meeting minutes of October 26, 2022. All members were in favor. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

**III. PRESENTATION:** Hunterdon County EISS Program – Kimberly Merson

K. Merson introduced herself and the Hunterdon County EISS Program. K. Merson conveyed their program, Early Intervention Support Services, is often referred to as EISS.

**Goal and Purpose:** The goal of EISS is to reduce the number of referrals to Screening and local emergency rooms. The primary purpose of the program is to identify individuals at risk for referral to Screening and to intervene with immediate short-term, intensive services and appropriate referrals.

**Target Population:**

- Individuals seeking services from the Screening Center presenting with urgent concerns as opposed to emergent concerns.
- Individuals discharged from emergency rooms or Screening Center who need immediate services to maintain stabilization.
- Individuals engaged in other services such as case management, supportive housing or the Community Wellness Center who have stopped their involvement in treatment and are at risk for referral to Screening.
- Individuals with psychiatric disorders who are released from jail and have no mental health services.

**Not the Target Population:**

- 17 years of age and younger.
- Enrolled with PACT
- Primary substance abuse or developmental disability without a psychiatric disorder diagnosis. Individual will need to identify some type of mental health disorder.

**Program Design**

- 24/7 availability to take initial referrals.
- Seven day a week availability for initial face-to-face assessments.
- Person-centered, strength-based approach
- No wait list, appointments are offered within 24 hours of referral.
- An average length of stay of about 30 days with discharge to further treatment (if appropriate)

### **Direct Care Staffing**

- Clinician Supervisor
- One full-time APN
- Five full-time Mental Health Clinicians
- One full-time case manager
- One full-time peer support specialist

### **Program Components**

- Assessment which includes clinical evaluation as well as appraisal of quality-of-life elements (medical, housing, income, social and family supports, vocational goals and needs)
- Person-centered Treatment Planning based on consumer's expressed goals.
- Medication management and education
- Emergency assistance to purchase medication.
- Intensive individual therapy
- Treatment for substance abuse difficulties
- Case management
- Assistance with transportation to EISS appointments if necessary
- On-call clinician for crisis calls and referrals
- Outreach
- Linkages to the following: longer-term mental health treatment, medical treatment, entitlements, housing support, substance abuse treatment, employment support, educational support, socialization resources.

### **Contact Information**

Luz Oramas, LCSW- Program Director 973-289-0982

Greg Fitzpatrick, LCSW – Director of Emergency Services - 732-235-5150

Kim Merson, LMFT – Clinician Supervisor 848-334-0488

K. Merson conveyed once Hunterdon County EISS is fully staffed, they will be open from 9:00 am – 7:00 pm Monday through Thursday and 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Currently, they are on-site Monday through Friday from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm. A telehealth component is currently being used for the weekend hours. Intakes in person will be available the second week of February.

R. Horoschak requested to know who provides the funding for EISS? K. Merson advised The New Jersey Division of Mental Health Services provides funding for EISS.

J. Gorman asked K. Merson how busy is EISS currently is? K. Merson advised since partnering with Hunterdon Center for Behavioral Health for screening, there have been more intake appointments.

J. Collevchio asked what is EISS' process if an individual calls in and the clinician feels the

need to utilize emergency services based on information they have been provided? K. Merson stated the screening center, along with EISS, would be conferenced into the call with the individual. The screening center would determine the risk factors and if a screener is not available to respond out to that individual's location, 911 would then be utilized.

K. Merson advised EISS' primary goal is to keep individuals out of the Emergency Room. At times that is not possible based on risk factors.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS:** M. O'Reilly stated J. Collevchio's HSAC membership ended 12/31/2022. M. O'Reilly advised J. Collevchio exhausted her second term as a member of HSAC so the Council would need to consider a motion to approve her as Vice Chair or to nominate a HSAC member as Vice Chair. = M. O'Reilly requested if anyone would be interested in the current position and if so to let J. Gorman know.

**V. OLD BUSINESS:** M. O'Reilly reported on the Human Services Advisory Council Survey. M. O'Reilly stated the county has received approximately 100 responses currently which is a much lower number than expected. M. O'Reilly requested if the planning and integration committee would like to organize meetings between HSAC meetings to discuss a more efficient way on how to deliver the survey to participants in order to obtain a larger number of responses. M. O'Reilly stated the chair of planning and integration committee was absent for this meeting.

J. Gorman advised, in regard to the Food Pantry, one idea would be to offer a gift card incentive for the survey.

J. Gorman asked how many responses were received the previous time the survey was sent out? M. O'Reilly stated approximately 700 surveys were completed.

J. Collevchio requested to know if the last survey was only available for one agency to take? M. O'Reilly advised in the past there were two surveys, one for agencies and one for community members.

**VI. REPORTS:**

**A. County Department of Human Services (CDHS):** M. O'Reilly reported a change in commissioners for 2023. The Commissioner Director is now Z. Rich, and the Deputy Director is now J. Kuhl, he will continue to be the liaison for 2023 for Human Services.

M. O'Reilly stated the Point in Time Survey is being sent out today. M. O'Reilly stated she has sent all agencies who are involved an email with the information along with the live survey link. M. O'Reilly advised that if there are any issues to contact her.

M. O'Reilly reported the Department of Community Affairs has opened their housing choice voucher waiting list. M. O'Reilly stated all information has been sent out via email to all county email groups including agencies involved in the Point in Time Survey. M. O'Reilly stated DCA's initiative is to encourage individuals experiencing homelessness to engage with community members completing the survey and register for the DCA waiting list. M. O'Reilly conveyed it was suggested by DCA as an incentive so they can apply for the waiting list. M. O'Reilly stated the waiting list closes February 3, 2023.

M. O'Reilly reported speaking to the county administration about the status of hiring a social

worker. M. O'Reilly stated she will be putting in a request for the 2023 budget. M. O'Reilly advised the Social Worker Position will be 35 hours per week and anticipates hearing back from county administration within the next few meetings on the position approval.

- B. NJ Department of Human Services (DHS):** N. Troche reported the additional SNAP Benefits provided during covid are expiring shortly. The decrease in SNAP benefits will affect approximately 75,000 individuals.

N. Troche advised there will be a public hearing for the 988 program to assess how to make it operate more effectively.

J. Gorman asked when was the last discussion about diapers and hygiene products being offered into the SNAP program? N. Troche advised the need for those items has drawn interest and all information can be found at <http://www.njsnap.gov>.

- C. NJ Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P):** M. Scherer reported in December 2022 DCP&P is working with (212) youth, (13) youth in placement and has received (35) referrals.

- D. HSAC Committee Reports:** R. Horoschak reported meeting several times between October 2022 through January 2023. R. Horoschak advised R. Cooper created a letter with input from committee members on affordable housing status in Hunterdon County. R. Horoschak advised R. Cooper will be sending the letter out to all mayors and their respective municipalities. R. Horoschak advised attempting to obtain an understanding amongst the county community boards about affordable housing in Hunterdon County.

R. Horoschak reported affordable housing posters have been sent out by K. Burghardt to the entire state. R. Horoschak advised he would like to converse with landlords on investing in affordable housing. R. Horoschak reported currently reviewing the Lambertville Housing Group Land Trust at this time. R. Horoschak stated possibly getting donations of land at less than market value, while ownership remaining in the Land Trust, would help hold the property to build affordable housing on.

**VII. GOALS & ACTION:** None at this time.

**VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT AND QUESTIONS PERIOD:**

Public comments are limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes per person. Brief written comments may be submitted prior to the meeting for distribution during the meeting.

**IX.\* MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

F. Leddy made a motion and L. Piazza seconded. The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m. The next meeting will be held February 22, 2023.

**\*= Item Requires Action**

**Note to Council Members:** If members are unable to attend the meeting, please notify the Hunterdon County Department of Human Services.