



COUNTY OF HUNTERDON NEW JERSEY
HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL
LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE
YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION
MENTAL HEALTH BOARD



908-788-1253
 908-788-1372
 908-806-4204 FAX
humansvc@co.hunterdon.nj.us

P.O. Box 2900
 Flemington, New Jersey 08822-2900
 (Location: 8 Gauntt Place)

REFERENCE:

- Council
- Mental Health
- Youth
- Disability Services
- Substance Abuse
- Transportation

Draft to be approved September 27, 2023

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, July 26, 2023, 3:30 p.m.
Human Services Conference Room I
And via Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

<u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u>	<u>EX-OFFICIO</u>	<u>STAFF</u>	<u>GUESTS</u>	<u>COUNTY DIV. REPS.</u>
M. Deo	R. Horoschak	N. Troche	C. Wildermuth	S. Nekola
L. Vendome	J. Cassano		S. Lax	K. Burghardt
R. Cooper	S. Elliot		T. Kero	S. Becker
M. Eichorn	B. Renkens		L. Haynes	E. Neukum
B. Otter	J. Gorman		N. DaSilva	
S. Cohen	L. Case		E. Ramirez	
L. Piazza-Long			J. Selitto	
			B. Bauxbaum	
			C. Sagona	

I. CONVENE: OPEN PUBLIC MEETING 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 lobby of the Hunterdon County Department of Human Services; the first floor on the Main Street County Complex, 71 Main Street, Flemington, NJ; the Route 12 County Complex, Building #3, 314 State Route 12, Flemington, NJ; and the 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.

PURPOSE:

The Hunterdon County Human Services Advisory Council (HSAC) is a county-based planning, advisory, and advocacy organization dedicated to helping the community meet its human service

needs. The HSAC seeks to facilitate, coordinate, and enhance the delivery of human services through collaborative relationships within the county, and between the counties and private and State agencies.

II. ***APPROVAL OF MINUTES**: A motion was made by L. Case and S. Elliot seconded to approve the meeting minutes of June 28, 2023. All members were in favor, no abstentions and no one opposed. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

III. **PRESENTATION**:

A. **Introducing NJ4S**: M. Deo introduced herself as the Supervisor for Prevention Consultants.

L. Vendome introduced herself as the Assistant Director of the HUB.

- NJ4S is here to add another layer of protection, another layer of firewall, to the existing services for the students in New Jersey through the Center for Family Services in the Tri-County Area.
- Center For Family Services is a leading non-profit social services provider offering a strong and innovative continuum of care with comprehensive and evidence-based services.
- Statewide Student Support Services Network will expand New Jerseys School Linked Services to increase its reach far beyond the 2% of current NJ students served by the current programs.
- Ensure continuity of supports by engaging youth, families, and community with regional programming.
- Will be integrated with other major youth-serving systems throughout the state and maximize resources using a statewide hub and spoke model.
- These reforms are expected to be fully operational for the 2023-2024 school year.
- The approach is going to be **Three-Tiered** depending on the needs sought out by teachers, coaches, etc.
- Tiered services will be delivered using methods as determined by the advisory group and community engagement.
- Services will include programming in school buildings, remote services, or programming in the community locations, such as Family Success Centers, or other partnered locations that are accessible to the community.
- **Tier 1 Services** are available for every student from kindergarten through grade 12. These services include universal prevention interventions that benefit all students through services delivery through district-wide programming, workshops, and evidence-based interventions.
 - Focus areas for interventions include mental health well-being, social connections, job readiness and more.
 - Examples of evidence-based interventions include Peers Making Peace, Teen Outreach Program (TOP), Good Behavior Game, Sources of Strength, Mental Health First Aid, Signs of Suicide, Botvin/Life Skills Training, Success for Kids and Project KINID.
 - No Application is Required.
- **Tier 2 Services** include early identification and focused prevention interventions.
 - Services can be delivered through small group interventions, brief individualized early intervention services and mentoring.
 - Services also include linkages to existing programming and/or community resources.

- An application is Required.
- **“A La Carte” Menu of Services has been developed by DCF and the main categories are:**
 - Substance Use Prevention
 - Sexual Health and Pregnancy Prevention
 - Suicide Prevention
 - Anti-Bullying
 - Violence Prevention
 - There are several other examples that happen monthly which can change at any time whenever a youth needs assistance in any category.
- **Tri-County Needs Rankings**
 - We are Vicinage 13 which covers Somerset, Hunterdon, and Warren Counties.
 - The Total number of students in the Vicinage is 85,160.
 - The Total number of students in the High Need Districts/Municipalities is 42,890.
 - The Total School Districts are 71.
 - The Total High Needs School Districts are 27.
 - M. Deo conveyed a need to collaborate with as many existing services and providers that are out there so that all of us, together, can provide accurate support and prevention services so that no problem arises in the first place with young individuals, but if it does, we can guide them in a responsible manner.
 - **The referral process through the Website for the NJ4S Portal is still a work in progress.**
 - DCF and Families will work with each district to determine their “Point of Contacts.”
 - There will be a dedicated phone line for the program once it is established.
 - These contacts will create a profile on the New Jersey Statewide Student Support Services Portal and submit a request for services.
 - Based on the request, HUB staff will work with school personnel to determine the best service options.
- **Reason for Presentation – Getting People Involved**
 - **There are several ways to become involved in NJ4S.**
 - **The Advisory Board:**
 - Be part of the Board and help make decisions on what prevention program services are offered in your school district.
 - **Community Resource:**
 - Do you offer prevention services? Mental Health, Substance use or any other services that could benefit a student? If your agency connects with NJ4S, you can receive direct referrals.
 - **Advocate for NJ4S:**
 - If you hear from a student in need, there are services to help them. The NJ4S Portal can provide the contact information in their school district.
 - **Requests from an Advisory Board Group Member:**
 - Each NJ4S hub will be required to establish and maintain an advisory group comprised of students, caregivers, school personnel, social service agencies, businesses, faith-based organizations, and other

- community leaders.
- Advisory groups will meet monthly.
- Topics that will be delivered to local school districts are chosen by the local Advisory Board.
- **Topics for service delivery include:**
 - Substance Use Prevention, Sexual Health and Pregnancy Prevention, Suicide Prevention, Anti-Bullying, Violence Prevention, and any other focused areas of need.
- **How to get involved with NJ4S:**
 - Email Contacts:
 - NJ4SVicinity13@centerffs.org
 - Danette.Robinson@centerffs.org
 - Linda.Vendome@centerffs.org
 - Use the **QR Code** in the presentation to join the advisory board.
 -

J. Cassano asked if school districts need to OPT in to NJ4S or does NJ4S outreach to each school district in the fall. M. Deo responded that they are outreaching to every school district, they are contacting and outreaching to every superintendent and requesting them to identify a point of contact. L. Vendome advised they will be presenting to all the superintendents in Hunterdon County at the end of August 2023. They have a large percentage of Hunterdon County School Districts that have already identified their point of contact. The goal is to have every school district become a part of the program and find out their point of contacts to ensure a seamless partnership with them.

J. Cassano asked when did this program start? L. Vendome responded they were awarded in June and have been in a lot of meetings with DCF, and their team is expanding. Staff are learning about the processes and the portal, and their team has been running for almost a month now.

- B. Abilities of Northwest Jersey:** C. Wildermuth introduced herself as the CEO of Abilities of Northwest Jersey. Abilities is an organization that is dedicated towards inspiring people with disabilities to achieve their life goals. They provide individual supports for intellectual and developmental disabilities, the age range for services provided is 14 and older. They provide services in the community, various centers, and job sites. They are one of the premier organizations in the Northwest Region of the State in Transition Services and ensuring students and adults achieve their current goals. They have been providing services since 1974, next year will be their 50th anniversary. Cindy has been with the organization for 23 years and CEO for 10 years. They have a team of approximately 145 staff members, and we serve 360 individuals throughout the region. They provide intensive behavioral support and medical supports. They are based out of Warren County, and have historically served Sussex, Morris, Hunterdon and now Somerset counties. They expanded one of their social enterprises, they offer training opportunities for people with disabilities and one of them is Possibilities Thrift Boutiques. They have moved earlier this year from a small location on Church Street in Flemington to the Hunterdon Shopping Centre to the right of Planet Fitness.

In the Phillipsburg area they have been providing services since the early 2000's, since then expanded on south main street, then decided to help the people in Hunterdon County as well. There was a great need, especially through the pandemic, for the community members for thrift items. It is working out for communities in need, and it is also an opportunity for the

individuals they serve to learn retail, customer skills as well as anything that's involved in retail. They are always looking for donations and volunteers that are interested in obtaining services and working or learning at the thrift shop.

Cindy shared a second flyer that describes two services that they are approved to offer. The first service is called Center for Adult Transition, (CAT) Program, and it is funded through the New Jersey Office of Secretary of Higher Education, and it is a transition program on the Warren County Community College Campus. This is open to students that are looking for campus-based transition services focused on success and life all avenues of transition.

The second service that they offer is Project Search, which is another student-based program which started at Newton Memorial Medical Center and expanded to Hackettstown Medical Center. This service is another type of internship transition program which offers the students an opportunity to learn many different areas at the hospital.

S. Elliot advised Project Search is a phenomenal program but something that has always frustrated him about that is that it has never come down to Hunterdon County. S. Elliot asked if there is any kind of movement in making some relationships with Hunterdon Medical Center or some other type of facilities in Hunterdon County to develop that out here.

C. Wildermuth responded that they can pursue that, however the decision making is up to the hospital administrators. Discussion ensued.

IV. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Planning and Integration Updates – Human Services Priorities: B. Renkens reported having met with M. O'Reilly last week to go over the priorities of the county based on the needs assessment that was recently distributed. The number one need identified by respondents was food, the second was housing, preventing people from losing the housing they are in and the third need was transportation. These priorities tie into the County Human Services RFP that comes out in the fall. Brooke reported that she discussed the possibility for agencies to expand their services to include food distribution or transportation services. It was also suggested that agencies could collaborate with one another to provide these ancillary services. The collaboration would show that agencies obtaining this funding are working together to wrap around the residents of the county.

Another idea discussed was utilizing UBER or Lyft. B. Renkens explained that they have an UBER account at Catholic Charities. An idea would be to write into your grants the ability to obtain some funding that would reimburse Uber Transportation to make sure families get to appointments if the agency cannot drive them, and the Link is not an option.

M. Deo advised NJ4S has funding for transportation for young students and they are also talking about including parents in a separate program for prevention so there is money allocated. Discussion Ensued.

V. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. State HSAC Updates: L. Piazza-Long reported from M. O'Reilly that the last State HSAC meeting was held on July 7, 2023. The statewide directory project with 211 is progressing however DCF did not have any additional updates to provide. They hope to provide more information at the next State HSAC meeting. N. Troche reported they have been working on

the State HSAC regulations. With everything being virtual and adaptations made the State HSAC committee, DHS and DCF want to reflect these practices in the regulations, the State DHS legal department is looking into the suggested changes and should be getting it back to the committee at some point.

- B. Housing Social Worker:** K. Burghardt reported that the job is posted and advised he has received a few applications and will be making callbacks to the candidates.

VI. REPORTS:

- A. County Department of Human Services (CDHS):** L. Piazza-Long reported for M. O'Reilly that the Social Worker for Housing vacancy has been posted and K. Burghardt will be reaching out to set up interviews. L. Piazza-Long also advised that Housing received the MOU back from DCF for the Foster Youth Initiative Vouchers and will have a kickoff meeting soon with the local DCP&P office. Housing will be inviting agencies to refer youth soon after the kickoff meeting, so please watch for communications regarding this process. The RFP Service priorities are Basic Needs, Mental Health, Youth, Families, Disabilities and Substance Use Disorder. RFP updates were made based on the recent CCP plan and YSC plan updates may be adding additional categories. The YSC plan is still in process as we are awaiting direction from the state. The CCP Plan was submitted to the state and approved.

- B. NJ Department of Human Services (DHS):** No report.

- C. NJ Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P):** M. Scherer reported that their computer system is currently down, so he does not have much of a report. The Hunterdon Local Office as of June 2023, was working with 202 youth with 10 youth in placement.

- D. HSAC Committee Reports:** No reports.

VII. GOALS & ACTION:

J. Gorman advised F. Leddy has offered to take over as Chair of Outreach and Communications Committee.

R. Horoshack suggested a representative from the Hospital to be a member of the HSAC Committee. J. Cassano advised M. LaQuaglia is a member from the Hospital, she runs the CEED program, the cancer early detection program. Kim Blanda is always available to us if we ever need her to come on and she is the first point of contact from the Hospital or Foundation.

K. Burghardt reported the lottery for the waiting list was run and has 500 new people on the waiting list. They will start pulling people in October from the 2023 housing choice voucher waiting list. There were 304 people who were eligible for local preference and if you have more questions feel free to email him. Notification letters were sent out to applicants. Notification was by portal or mail.

- 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:** There being no further business S. Elliot made a motion to adjourn

the meeting of July 26, 2023. R. Horoshack seconded the motion. All members were in favor, the motion carried. The next meeting will be held September 27, 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 at 908-788-1253.