



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
 - Disabled
 - Substance Use Disorder
 - Transportation

Approved March 17, 2022

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOL & DRUG ABUSE

Regular Meeting

Thursday, January 20, 2022, 1:00 p.m.
Via Webex

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

R. Walker	S. Lax
D. LaClair	M. Dematos
K. Bloodgood	S. Carew
J. Denlinger	M. Margulies
N. Rumore	L. Raineri

EX-OFFICIO

D. Davis

STAFF

S. Becker
S. Nekola

GUESTS

R. Hartley
J. Ege
G. King
C. Moore
P. Vitale
K. Midgley

- I. "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 provided 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."

Due to the recent public health crisis, COVID-19, this meeting was held via Webex ONLY

M. Margulies opened the meeting by reading the Open Public Meeting Statement.

M. Margulies asked the group to go around and introduce themselves. He began and introduced himself.

M. Margulies stated he is from Summit Oaks Hospital.

S. Becker stated she is the Assistant Mental Health Administrator and Drug and Alcohol Director for Hunterdon County.

C. Moore stated she is the Executive Director for Flemington Treatment Services.

K. McKown stated she is the Program Coordinator for the Open Door Recovery Center in Flemington, a division of Prevention Resources.

C. Isaac stated she is the Community Relations Representative with Princeton House Behavioral Health.

D. Pagaduan stated is the Navigator for with Pinnacle Treatment Centers at the Flemington facility, and he works with C. Moore.

D. Laclair stated she is a Case Manager for the Hunterdon County STAR team and support team for addiction recovery.

D. Davis stated she is the Program Analyst for Hunterdon County with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

H. McIntosh stated she is with Anderson House.

K. Bloodgood stated she is the Director of Admissions at New Hope Integrated Behavioral Healthcare.

M. Brown stated she works for Pinnacle Treatment Centers.

M. DeMatos stated he is with the Hunterdon Medical Center and Navigator for the Opioid Overdose Recovery Program.

S. Condas stated she is with Open Door Recovery Center in Hunterdon County.

S. Nekola stated she is the Division Head of Social Work Services for Hunterdon County.

L. Ranieri stated she is the Lead Clinical Marketing Liaison with the Hackensack Meridian Carrier Clinic.

J. Denlinger stated she is a Family Support Advocate with the Sharing the Hope Family Support Center of Prevention Resources.

J. Ege stated she is the Clinical Supervisor at Veterans Haven North in Glen Gardner.

M. O'Reilly stated she is the Human Services Administrator in Hunterdon County.

R. Delinger stated she is with Prevention Resources for the Overdose Fatality Review Team.

B. Russell stated she is with Civic Health.

P. Manzini stated he is with Hunterdon County Probation.

S. Lax stated she is the Executive Director of Hunterdon Helpline.

II. MINUTES: A Motion was made by C. Isaac and seconded by K. Bloodgood to approve the meeting minutes of November 18, 2021. All were in favor. No oppositions. The motion carried.

III. REPORTS:

A. Mental Health Board (MHB) Update: S. Becker stated the MHB is still working on finding resources for the county. A few agencies had closed so there are less resources to utilize. A presentation from the Rotary Club of New Jersey is expected to take place at the next MHB meeting. They are trying to start a targeted mental health stigma awareness committee and are looking for individuals to join. They are interested in tackling one stigma issue at a time. She will provide more details when they are available as well as see if the rotary club can join this meeting at some point.

B. Division of Mental Health Services Update: D. Davis stated the Department of Health is offering vaccine, booster clinics and information sessions for anyone interested can join individual mental health boards in the county and individual agencies. If anyone is interested in information, please contact D. Davis and she can provide the detailed contact information. Individuals will be given a presentation about the vaccines and the boosters and can set-up a site where they can administer that for staff, residents and consumers. They also can go to the actual site to administer. If anyone is interested, again, please advise D. Davis and she can share the information.

D. Davis stated a Request for Letters of Interest for Evidence-Based Practice Initiative: Opioid and Other Substance Use Disorders for substance use disorder proprietors had been released. The purposes of the Request for Letters of Interest are to improve provider agencies provision of Motivational Interviewing ("MI") and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy ("CBT") and to improve clinical, direct-care staff skills in practicing therapeutic approaches that ensure meaningful outcomes to the people they serve. This was released on January 4, 2022 and the deadline is January 24, 2022. The announcement date for when it will be awarded is February 14, 2022. On February 21, 2022, the provided technical assistance to the providers who are interested in having that level of support will be made available.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued by the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to expand regional Community Peer Recovery Centers (CPRC) to eleven (11) counties. The CPRC will be a place where individuals can access peer support, information about substance use disorder treatment, recovery support services, and information about other community resources in a supportive substance free environment. This RFP is funded through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) State Opioid Response to Grants (SOR) funding. The SOR grant funding period is through September 29, 2022, depending on federal appropriations. Total funding is \$1,100,000.00 subject to federal appropriations. DMHAS anticipates making up to eleven (11) awards in the amount of \$100,000.00 each. The CRPC will ensure that the services provided ensure diversity, inclusion, equity, and cultural and linguistic competence to the target population. The funding is limited to the following counties: Burlington, Camden (City of Camden), Cape May, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middleton, Monmouth, Ocean, Somerset, and Salem. One award is anticipated to be made in each of those counties. The deadline for receipt is February 3, 2022 and the notification date is March 4, 2022.

Another Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued by the New Jersey Department of Human

Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to provide comprehensive array of services for opioid dependent pregnant women, their infants and family. The Integrated Opioid Treatment and Substance Exposed Infants (IOT-SEI) initiative will provide opioid use disorder treatment, prenatal and postpartum medical/obstetric services, care coordination, sober living arrangements, wraparound services, intensive case management and recovery supports. The deadline for receipt is February 16, 2022 and the award announcement would be March 25, 2022.

Another Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued by the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) for creation of the Early Intervention Support Services (EISS) in the following ten (10) counties: Passaic, Sussex, Warren, Hunterdon, Union, Salem, Gloucester, Burlington, Somerset, Cape May. Total annualized funding for each of the counties is one (1) million from the \$10 million total funding amount available, which is subject to State appropriations. DMHAS anticipates making up to 10 awards to above listed counties. EISS in the context of this RFP represents community-based treatment alternatives for adults with acute psychiatric symptoms, inclusive of individuals who have co-occurring conditions. New Jersey's EISS programs function as psychiatric urgent care clinics that offer adults access to crisis intervention services without having to rely on local hospital emergency departments. EISS programs provide rapid access to short term, recovery-oriented, crisis intervention services. EISS serves persons who are 18 years of age or older, who are experiencing exacerbated symptoms of a mental illness. Services include assessment, psychiatric evaluation, pharmacologic interventions, short-term counseling and psychotherapy, psycho-education, time-limited case management, referral and linkage. EISS has routine "after-office" hours (e.g. weekends), accommodates "walk-ins" and offers quick access to staff with psychiatric prescriber privileges, when needed. There is not a residential component attached to this RFP. It is like an Outpatient with after office hours. The deadline for receipt is February 18, 2022 and the award announcement would be March 28, 2022.

There is a reimbursement opportunity through SAMHSA for COVID-related expenses. This was briefly discussed at the last meeting about substance use disorder programs and the possibility to use for mental health programs. Now, this reimbursement opportunity can be used for mental health programs to cover protective equipment, IT upgrades, testing expenses all related to the public health emergency, etc. The expenditures must have an invoice purchase date between October 15, 2021 and February 1, 2023. Each program can receive a reimbursement for up to \$20,000.00 for each of those buckets. This will help the mental health programs and be a good idea to take advantage of these opportunities.

The New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts had changed the name of "New Jersey Statewide Drug Court" to "New Jersey Statewide Recovery Court" effective January 1, 2022. It is exactly the same program with a better name and a lot less stigma.

D. Davis advised of some virtual director's meetings for acute care programs statewide. A Statewide PACT Director meeting had been held on January 6, 2022. A Short-Term Care Facility Director's Meeting was held on Friday, January 7, 2022. On January 13, 2022 at 1:00 pm, the IOC Director's Meeting took place and today, January 20, 2022 at 10:00 am, a statewide Screening Director's Meeting was held. She stated she would share any outcomes from those meetings.

The Tele-Health Law had been signed into law December 21, 2021 by Governor Murphy.

This law extends for the next two years the requirement adopted at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic that health benefits plans reimburse health care providers for telehealth and telemedicine services at the same rate as in-person services, with limited exceptions. At the same time, the legislation charges the Department of Health with conducting an in-depth study of the utilization of telehealth and telemedicine and its effects on patient outcomes, quality and satisfaction, and access to care in order to inform future decisions on payment structure for these services. This legislation will provide critical support to patients and providers while the State continues to address the challenges posed by the pandemic, and while the Department of Health evaluates how to best leverage payment and telemedicine to improve access to affordable care and maintain the highest quality of care possible. This remains in effect until December 31, 2023.

The NJ Department of Health and Vault Medical Services have partnered to offer a free, at-home COVID-19 saliva test kit that is available to every New Jerseyan who thinks they need a test – even if you do or do not have symptoms. The individual would collect the sample over tele-health; a screen with a medical provider and the sample would have to be sent in for testing. There is a little bit of a turnaround time. This is a helpful resource and can only be used by the individual who registers for the testing.

There is a Youth Mental Health First Aid Training that will occur on January 26, 2022 from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm from the Disaster and Terrorism Branch at the division. Pre-registration is required through Megan Sullivan. D. Davis will provide the details in the Chat Box.

- C. **County Update:** M. O'Reilly stated that at the January 4, 2022 Commissioner's Organization Meeting, Commissioner John Lanza had been sworn in as the Commissioner Director and Commissioner Zach Rich had been sworn in as the Deputy Director. The Commissioner liaison for Human Services will continue to be Commissioner Shaun Van Doren.

M. O'Reilly stated the Emergency Rental Assistance Program offered by the Department of Community Affairs stopped accepting applications effective December 15, 2021.

There are some short-term rental assistance programs are available in the County either through the Division of Social Work Services or through Family Promise of Hunterdon County. If this rental assistance program opens again, the information will certainly be shared.

The utility assistance programs offered through DCA are still in effect and still have funding. There is additional assistance expanded for people that owe on back utilities. To help keep them from being shut-off, DCA is offering some funding relieve.

The Point In Time Count is managed by the Tri-County Continuum of Care on an annual basis. The count will take place on the evening of January 25. Social Service agencies will be interviewing clients and completing the Point In Time survey with them. The survey is similar to the one that was used last year. People who are staying in motels possibly couch surfing, people who are literally street homeless and people who may be in the warming center will be screened and assisted with completing the survey. This is a mandatory street count this year. This count drives a lot of the funding that the CoC receives from HUD, so performance is critical for the CoC to continue to receive that funding.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None at this time.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **Presentation by Kacey McKown from the Open Door Recovery Center:** K. McKown thanked all for having her attend and present. She is a woman in long-term recovery from both substance use disorder and mental health illness. Again, she stated she is the program coordinator for the Open Door Recovery Center. She introduced S. Condas who is a recovery advocate for the center who will help present with K. McKown.

The Open Door Recovery Center is now located at 5 East Main Street in Flemington, NJ. Although they share the space, there will be dedicated days and times that are just for recovery purposes only.

Open Door is a part of Prevention Resources and they celebrated 50 years established as a non-profit last year. They are a licensed Level 1 treatment facility funded by county, state and federal grants to provide information and services on Substance Use Disorders (SUD) and how best to provide services needed for recovery from the chronic disease of addiction. They are always looking to get out into the community to help those in need.

At Open Door they use a peer base approach which means one person in recovery talking to another. All of the peer coaches are certified by the State of New Jersey and are all in recovery at some level. They will be hosting a Harm Reduction Workshop. S. Becker will forward the details out to the committee.

S. Condas stated the importance of peer support lies in that when someone is discharged, what do they do. They are taken from a world in a bubble where they get constant care and they are released back into the world to try and figure it out for themselves. Recovery cannot be sustained with support. Open Door provides services that helps work toward cultivating certain types of skills within an individual to help safeguard against recurrence., i.e. self-care, working with coaches and giving people the chance to attend support groups can help build their relationships. All of their coaches and staff can provide the linkages to outside resources. Having a recovery center where people return builds a sense of community; meet other people who are also in recovery and build a sense of belonging and invested into the community. It removes all financial barriers. A lot of times people do not receive on-going treatment because it is too expensive. All of their services are completely free.

K. McKown echoes S. Condas comments about the peer recovery coaching. The center is available for people especially when they come out of treatment or when they are in that lull where they are waiting to go into treatment. Early recovery is very, very difficult. The center offers mutual support groups, not just 12 step, but they have other meetings as well. The center does wellness planning which is based on SAMSA eight dimensions of wellness that is very different from step work. They offer sober activities partnering with community and crisis to fulfill virtually.

How do they serve the community? The center is out doing trainings with medical professionals and other county groups; just make the community aware of the dangers of substance use disorder and prevalent it really is. They run stigma-free events and campaigns. Their goal is to be stigma free in every town. K. McKown exclaimed S. Becker will forward out information. Open Door also has a Facebook page and Instagram account for details workshops and activities. Everybody is welcome for that. She thanked everyone for having her and S. Condas.

B. COVID; Agency Struggles:

GenPsych – R. Walker exclaimed GenPsych shutdown for three weeks due COVID outbreaks from staff. Upon re-opening, all staff and clients must have a COVID test before re-entering the building. She noted no one wants to come in except for the kids because of their struggles. They are eager to get back in-person to have their levels of care completed. Adults request virtual.

Princeton House Behavioral Health – C. Isaac stated all of the outpatient programs are operating virtually. They pivoted back to virtual and were operating in a hybrid model before Omicron hit for the adults and women populations, so the partial hospitalization program was offered on a limited census to stay safe with social distancing. Then when everything started picking up with the new strain, they pivoted back to completely virtual for intensive outpatient programming level of care and are still there. They are evaluating on a weekly basis when they will bring back adults and women’s populations for the programs. She is hopeful Princeton House Behavioral Health will get back sometime in February. As for the hospital, they are doing all that they can to prevent any outbreaks. Right now, they have a limited census to maintain against safety. The preference would be to have someone from voluntary outpatients to come in as a transfer from a facility to ensure the individual is coming from a contained, controlled environment that is safe. C. Isaac noted Princeton House Behavioral Health is looking for positions for therapists and admissions clinicians for the outpatient programs. Please reach out to her; she is happy to help.

Hunterdon County STAR Program – D. Laclair stated personnel are still going out in the field but are recommended to do remote and Zoom interactions as possible. Staff is required to work even if they are in quarantine. The program is seeking a vehicle to use to transport clients in Hunterdon County. This is the largest issue as transportation is challenging. At times, they can obtain a vehicle and provide that service. The STAR program opened up a website and are on social media. They are on Facebook, Instagram and have a website and continue to work with their clients regularly.

Pinnacle Treatment Centers – D. Pagaduan stated that the centers are looking to fill Peer Recovery Specialists positions at nine locations in New Jersey including Hunterdon County are hiring.

Flemington Treatment Centers – C. Moore conveyed the centers are currently operating all services on-site and plan on remaining for all clients. They do have approval with the State to allows the centers to provide emergency bottles for compromised populations. The treatment team identifies those clients and are able to provide them additional take-home bottles outside the regular phasing system which is regulated by the State. Clients do come in for their medication in-person, their individual counseling sessions and the centers do plan on rolling out their in-person IOP in February.

Prevention Resources – J. Denlinger stated the Family Support Center continues to have new family members join who have loved ones struggling with substance use disorders. She commented that two of her recent clients have teenagers who are struggling, and the center is anticipating for that to continue and grow. The center has the same challenges as many other agencies due to COVID. The agency is virtual at this point and the support center is offering a host of different kind of virtual meetings from the Family Support Group on Wednesdays, a more structured CRAFT on Mondays and some fun activities such as a book club, a spiritual

wellness group that they are doing in conjunction with the Open Door Recovery Center, recovery yoga, etc. There is a lot going on with the Family Support Center to have an alliance with the recovery center. She noted if anyone knows anyone in need of support, the center offers one-on-one support, and she stated their services are free.

Anderson House – H. McIntosh stated Anderson House did well until December during the pandemic. They were down for a whole month. Admissions began again this week. It had been rough; she has one staff member out and sadly, lost a staff member to COVID. The agency is looking to hire. She is getting a lot of resumes and it has been tough to hire especially for overnight and weekend positions because they are staffing 24/7. H. McIntosh noted personnel is working on the golf outing scheduled to take place in June.

New Hope Integrated Behavioral Health Care – K. Bloodgood stated New Hope is operating business as usual. They are still taking clients but limiting admissions to keep the agency safe. They are keeping one person to a room, testing them at the door, giving them a full PCR, and before they go to rehab, the individuals are given another PCR in case something pops-up in between. The wait times are a little bit longer for the adults and the detox is very busy for the adolescence population.

Hunterdon Healthcare Opioid Overdose Recovery Program – M. DeMatos stated the program is operating as usual. They are still seeing people in the Emergency Department. The only restriction the program enacted recently is limiting at home visits with more consumers; meeting people out for lunch, etc. The OORP is still providing transportation as trying to maintain the same level of care for consumers and doing more check ins over the phone, conducting more Zoom meetings, and maybe seeking another peer. If they are, he will keep the committee updated.

Hunterdon County Probation – P. Manzini echoed D. Davis' announcement that drug court is now recovery court. He relayed that probation officers have been instructed on cognitive techniques as opposed to each time there is interactions with their clients or the clients meet with the community providers, they are supposed to request that client be provided with cognitive behavioral therapy treatment.

Civic Health – B. Russel began by thanking S. Becker for allowing her to join as a guest. She conveyed that the membership and guests may be more familiar with Civic Health as Steps to Recovery in Levittown, Pennsylvania. She had been in the substance use industry for about 10 years and she is in New Jersey. Her big issue is they have detox residential and extended care, but a lot of people just do the detox and residential and return to New Jersey. A lot is co-occurring; personality disorders. B. Russel is seeking good intensive outpatient that are located in Hunterdon County. She is seeking good connections and put her email in the Chat Box. If anyone can help, please send her an email. She further stated the agency does not do tele-health in Levittown but does return to New Jersey to assist clients.

Carrier Clinic – L. Ranieri conveyed that COVID remains to be a barrier. All of the units at the clinic re-opened but with limited capacity the prior day.

Veteran's Haven North – J. Ege stated her agency is operating as business as usual. They are open to admissions and conduct COVID testing upon admission. Right now, there is one COVID positive veteran in the facility, but since the census is so low, they are able to isolate an entire wing. She explained if there is a homeless veteran who is looking to come in and

are COVID positive, it is not a barrier for them to admit to their program. They will still have access to all of the services offered. The facility is currently PCR every veteran in the program weekly and rapid test every veteran and staff person weekly if they are vaccinated and twice weekly if they are not vaccinated. J. Ege conveyed if there are any homeless veterans to please refer to VHN as they have plenty of beds available. She conveyed the agency has a lot of open positions in their kitchen for food services. She relayed if anyone knows of someone in need of a job in the food service industry, there are lots of vacancies. Please reach out to J. Ege directly. D. Davis inquired if VHN takes veterans from specific counties? If a veteran is located in a specific county, are they still allowed to apply to VHN? J. Ege replied VHN absolutely takes veterans from all over the country. As long as the veteran qualifies with the federal VA and can get to the facility, staff can work with them. Residency is not a requirement.

Hunterdon Helpline – S. Lax stated Hunterdon Helpline remains to operate as business as usual. The only changes she has in the main facility is people coming in to use the computers to apply for services or charge their phones, etc. require an appointment so space is not overrun with too many in the facility. All of the programs are up and running. The Next Door Center is operating as the Cold Blue Shelter for Hunterdon County, which had been busy since early November. Hunterdon Helpline is also trying to provide those clients who are not vaccinated with information.

Summit Oaks Hospital – M. Margulies conveyed inpatient is functioning as normal. There are blocked beds on all of the different units due to staffing issues. They strive to keep every level of care open, so they are not closing an entire unit. The outpatient services, partial and IOPs are all in-person; they had been in person for two years. One change that is coming is they are going back to a hybrid model. This will be a Zoom call into the in-person meeting. Summit Oaks is also experiencing staffing issues like most other agencies and facilities. He is happy to announce that Summit Oaks hired 15 new personnel.

S. Becker announced the time to vote for a Chair and Co-chair is on the horizon. M. Margulies and R. Walker have done a fantastic job for the last two years! This will be discussed at the next meeting.

S. Becker conveyed Kwenyan and Associates had ceased services in Hunterdon County. M. Margulies added the agency closed their doors throughout the State.

S. Becker announced Hunterdon Drug Awareness Program had also closed their doors and are no longer operational. This leaves a hole for IOP and outpatient services, therefore, the County will hopefully be putting something out soon. If any agency can assume any IOP or outpatient services for the County, they would be grateful. She advised to keep a look out for an RFP to be released within the next month, maybe two months.

VI. AGENCY NEWS:

There being no further business. A motion was made by R. Walker and seconded by C. Isaac. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m. The next meeting will be on Thursday, March 17, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.