

Minutes

Behavioral Health Council

Date July 16, 2024

Time 1:00 PM – 2:45 PM

Meeting called to order by Akbar Hossain, Secretary of Policy and Planning

IN ATTENDANCE

Commonwealth Representatives:

1. Secretary of Policy and Planning, Akbar Hossain
2. Secretary of the Department of Human Services, Dr. Valerie Arkoosh
3. Secretary of the Department of Health, Dr. Debra Bogen
4. Commissioner of Pennsylvania Insurance Department, Michael Humphreys
5. Secretary of the Department of Aging, Jason Kavulich
6. Deputy Secretary Kelly Primus on behalf of Secretary of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs, Dr. Latika Davis-Jones
7. Special Assistant to the Secretary, Cathy Hall, MPA, Secretary of the Department of Education, Dr. Khalid Mumin
8. Spec. Asst. to Adj. Gen. Richard Hamp on behalf of Adjutant General of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Maj. Gen. Mark J. Schindler
9. Policy and Legislative Affairs Office Director, Major Patrick Beaver on behalf of Commissioner of Pennsylvania State Police, Colonel Christopher Paris
10. Regional Licensed Psychologist Manager, Corrections, Dr. Elicia Stein on behalf of Secretary of the Department of Corrections, Dr. Laurel Harry
11. Secretary of the Department of State, Al Schmidt
12. Exec. Dir. Rural Dev. Council, Western Reg. Dir. PA Dept. of Agriculture, Mr. Mark Critz, on behalf of the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Russell Redding
13. Director, Office of Justice Programs, Sally Barry on behalf of Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, Michael Pennington
14. Bureau Director, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, PA Dept. of Labor and Industry, Denise Verchimak, on behalf of Secretary of Department of Labor and Industry, Nancy Walker
15. Digital Services Director at the Governor's Office, Sadie Smiles, on behalf of Director of Digital Strategy at the Governor's Office, Annie Newman
16. Pennsylvania Attorney General's Safe2Say Program Director, Brittney Kline
17. Deputy Secretary, Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Jennifer Smith
18. Special Advisor, Office of the Secretary, Department of Human Services, Sara Goulet
19. Deputy Secretary for Health Resources and Services, Department of Health, Muneeza Iqbal, MPH
20. Executive Director, Child Advocate, Office of Advocacy and Reform, Dr. Maryann McEvoy

Representatives with lived or living experiences and family members:

21. Robert Hamilton, MPPM - Westmoreland DHS Dir.; Formerly homeless veteran & person in long-term recovery
22. Kate Favata - Community Engagement Manager, Crossroads, Treatment Advocate
23. Jennifer Wilt - Parent of a loved one with mental illness, President NAMI of Cumberland, and Perry Counties

County Representatives:

24. Tina Clymer, County Mental Health Office representing Carbon, Monroe, and Pike counties
25. Dr. Tamra Williams, County Mental Health Office from Montgomery County

26. Ryan Hogan, Single County Authority from Luzerne County
27. Kristin Varner, Single County Authority from Dauphin County
28. Lynn Deardorff, Area Agency on Aging from Adams County
29. Dr. Shannah Gillam, Area Agency on Aging from Allegheny County

Clinical Representatives:

30. Dr. Amy Kim, an expert in child and family behavioral healthcare
29. Dr. Margaret Jarvis, an expert in addiction medicine and substance use disorder treatments
30. Dr. Jack Todd Wahrenberger, an expert in primary healthcare
31. Dr. Wendy Ross, an expert in treating individuals with co-occurring intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism with mental illness

Legislative Representatives from the General Assembly:

32. Representative Mike Schlossberg (D) (Rachel Maurer)
33. Representative Jim Struzzi (R) (Emily Lewis)
34. Senator Maria Collett (D)
35. Senator Michele Brooks (R) (Adam Gingrich)

REPORTS

Secretary Hossain took roll call. Secretary Hossain gave some opening remarks and introduced the topic for the meeting, which was early intervention and prevention strategies. He mentioned that there will first be some presentations to help our understanding of the topic, then a discussion with Council members led by Dr. Finello.

The five speakers were from the state: Jennifer Smith, Deputy Secretary, Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS); Kelly Primus, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs; Sara Goulet, Special Advisor in the Office of the Secretary at the Department of Human Services; Muneeza Iqbal, MPH, Deputy Secretary for Health Resources and Services in the Department of Health, and Dr. Maryann McAvoy, Executive Director and Child Advocate from the Office of Advocacy and Reform. To provide a community perspective on early intervention and prevention, the speaker was: Dr. Matthew Wintersteen, the Director of the David Farber ASPIRE Center at Thomas Jefferson University.

After the presentations, Dr. Finello led a facilitated discussion with questions that were given to Council members prior to the meeting. The results of the discussion will be used as part of the Statewide Action Plan.

Dr. Finello ended the meeting with some closing remarks and thanked the Council members for their time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Behavioral Health Council Meetings will take place on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 1:00 PM. Quarterly meetings will be in person. The next in-person meeting is in September. The next meeting of the Council is August 20, 2024, and it will be virtual.

NEXT MEETING

August 20, 2024, 1 PM, Virtual via Microsoft Teams