

Minutes

Behavioral Health Council

Date June 18, 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. Acting Secretary of the Department of Health, Dr. Debra Bogen
4. Commissioner of Pennsylvania Insurance Department, Michael Humphreys
5. Spec. Asst. to Secretary Gabrielle Szymanski on behalf of Secretary of the Department of Aging, Jason Kavulich
6. Deputy Secretary, Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs Kelly Primus on behalf of Secretary of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs, Dr. Latika Davis-Jones
7. Secretary of the Department of Education, Dr. Khalid Mumin
8. Program Director, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Joel Mutschler 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. 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

Representatives with lived or living experiences and family members:

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

County Representatives:

21. Tina Clymer, County Mental Health Office representing Carbon, Monroe, and Pike counties
22. Dr. Tamra Williams, County Mental Health Office from Montgomery County
23. Ryan Hogan, Single County Authority from Luzerne County
24. Kristin Varner, Single County Authority from Dauphin County
25. Lynn Deardorff, Area Agency on Aging from Adams County
26. Dr. Shannah Gillam, Area Agency on Aging from Allegheny County

Clinical Representatives:

27. Dr. Amy Kim, an expert in child and family behavioral healthcare
28. Dr. Margaret Jarvis, an expert in addiction medicine and substance use disorder treatments
29. Dr. Jack Todd Wahrenberger, an expert in primary healthcare
30. 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:

31. Representative Mike Schlossberg (D)
32. Representative Jim Struzzi (R)
33. Senator Maria Collett (D)
34. Senator Michele Brooks (R) (Adam Gingrich)

Additional Speakers:

35. Director, Crisis Co-Response Services, Delaware County, Lisa Noe, LSW
36. Clinical Director, Delaware County Mobile Crisis, Kimberly Jones, MSW
37. Chief Medical Officer, Pittsburgh Mercy Health System, Dr. Jack Todd Wahrenberger
38. Vice President, Practice Improvement & Medical Director, Strategy & Growth Office, National Council for Mental Wellbeing, Dr. Joe Parks

REPORTS

Secretary Hossain took roll call. Secretary Hossain gave some opening remarks and introduced the topic for the meeting, which was our crisis system. 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 speakers from the state was: Jennifer Smith, Deputy Secretary, Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS). To provide a county perspective on the crisis system, the three speakers were: Lisa Noe, LSW who is the Director, Crisis Co-Response Services, Delaware County; Kimberly Jones, MSW who is the Clinical Director of Delaware County Mobile Crisis; and Tina Clymer who is the Administrator of Carbon-Monroe-Pike Mental Health & Developmental Services. Finally, to provide the national perspective on the crisis system, the two speakers were: Dr. Jack Todd Wahrenberger who is the Chief Medical Officer at Pittsburgh Mercy Health System and Dr. Joe Parks who is the Vice President of Practice Improvement & Medical Director from the Strategy & Growth Office at the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.

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 July 16, 2024, and it will be virtual.

NEXT MEETING

July 16, 2024, 1 PM, Virtual via Microsoft Teams