

Minutes

Behavioral Health Council

Date May 21, 2024

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Time 1:00 PM – 2:45 PM

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

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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 Sect., Dir. of Long-Term Care Council Kevin Hancock 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. Special Assistant to the Secretary, Cathy Hall, MPA, on behalf of 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. 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, Toni McIntyre, 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. Bureau Director, Bureau of Program Licensure, Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs, Jodi Skiles
19. Deputy Secretary for Quality Assurance, Pennsylvania Department of Health, Jeanne Parisi
20. Director of Policy, Pennsylvania Department of State, Michael McDonald

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. Lyn 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
31. Dr. Margaret Jarvis, an expert in addiction medicine and substance use disorder treatments
32. Dr. Jack Todd Wahrenberger, an expert in primary healthcare
33. 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:

34. Representative Mike Schlossberg (D) (Rachel Maurer)
35. Representative Jim Struzzi (R)
36. Senator Maria Collett (D)
37. Senator Michele Brooks (R) (Adam Gingrich)

Additional Speakers:

38. Vice President of Ambulatory and Community Behavioral Health Services, UPMC Western Behavioral Health, Dr. Noreen Frederick, DNP, RN
39. CEO, White Deer Run Allenwood, Jeffrey Thomas, MHS, LPC, CAADC

REPORTS

Secretary Hossain took roll call. Secretary Hossain gave some opening remarks and introduced the topic for the meeting, which was licensing and regulations. 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 were from the state: Jennifer Smith, Deputy Secretary, Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS); Jodi Skiles, Bureau Director from the Bureau of Program Licensure from the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs; Jeanne Parisi, Deputy Secretary for Quality Assurance from the Department of Health; and Michael McDonald, Executive Policy Director from the Department of State. To provide a provider and community perspective, the two speakers were: Dr. Noreen Frederick, DNP, RN, who is the Vice President of Ambulatory and Community Behavioral Health Services from UPMC Western Behavioral Health and Jeffrey Thomas, MHS, LPC, CAADC, who is the CEO of White Deer Run Allenwood.

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 June. The next meeting of the Council is June 18, 2024, and it will be in person.

NEXT MEETING

June 18, 2024, 1 PM, Governor's Reception Room