

Adult Behavioral Health Planning Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting Day/Date:	Thursday, February 19 th , 2026 2:00 – 4:00 PM	
Location:	MS Teams	
Members Present:	Peter Tolisano, Laura Watson, Jennifer Abbatemarco, Will Erdman, Katherine Gallo, Elsa Ward, Allyson Nadeau, Allison Fulton, Kate Bohannon, Ellen Econs, Kathy Flaherty, Herb Boyd, Mark Irons, Pamela Mautte, Kate Brown, Heidi Pettersen,	
Staff Present:	Kyle Barrette, Liz Feder, Sarju Shah, Dana Begin	
AGENDA ITEM:		ACTION
Overview of Wheeler Clearinghouse Resources: Abigail Lieberman, Wheeler	Abigail provided an overview of the physical and digital resources available through the Wheeler Clearinghouse which serves as a Library and Resource Center that provides information on substance misuse, mental health, prevention, health promotion, treatment and recovery, and wellness. Physical materials within the library as well as the digital resources online are all free to the public and can be picked up or mailed to individuals or organizations. Abigail also provided an overview of the “Change the Script” campaign focused on providing education and information to help residents understand, prevent, and recover from substance use disorders.	Kyle to send out Abigails presentation slides. Individuals or organizations interested in obtaining materials from the Clearinghouse can reach out directly through the website or by emailing info@ctclearinghouse.org
Overview of 24/7 Access Line: Kelly Bergeron, Derek Paplauskas, Wheeler	Kelly and Derek provided an overview of the Connecticut 24/7 Access Line which facilitates access to Substance Use services for Connecticut residents by providing resource education and information on various available treatment options including medications for addiction and various other community programs, as well as general resource education and guidance on the recovery process. Direct connection and transport to treatment services are also made available through regional transportation providers. Community members can call anytime during the day or evening and be connected to a call specialist: 1-800-563-4086.	Kyle to share presentation slides and Derek’s contact information.
Block Grant updates: Kyle Barrette, DMHAS	Kyle provided updates on the combined block grant application and federal budget. The FFY26 combined block grant application has been approved. The FFY26 federal budget was approved in January and included marginal increases for both block grants. CT will find out its share of this increase in the coming months but it is expected to be small and likely will not support new programming. Kyle shared information about a new technical assistance (TA) grant that was released to states to help reduce justice involvement and homelessness among individuals with SMI. Kyle asked for any ideas or recommendations for these funds. No ideas were initially proposed but planning council members noted they would follow up with ideas.	Kyle to share presentation slides. Planning Council members will follow up with Kyle if they have ideas for the new TA grant.

DMHAS Updates: Elsa Ward, Sarju Shah	Elsa provided updates regarding the new Peer Support and Recovery Professional Credential, including how new and existing peer staff and recovery coaches can obtain the credential. Sarju provided updates regarding various Prevention activities, including an initiative to foster Recovery Friendly campuses and workplaces.	
Next Meeting:	May 14th, 2026, 2:00-4:00pm via Microsoft Teams	