

**Adult Behavioral Health Planning Council
Meeting Minutes**

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| Meeting Day/Date: | Thursday, February 6th, 2025 2:00 – 4:00 PM | |
| Location: | Teams | |
| Members Present: | Peter Tolisano, Laura Watson, Jennifer Abbatemarco, Allison Fulton, Kathy Flaherty, Will Erdman, Ellen Econs, Kate Bohannon, Katherine Gallo, Heidi Pettersen, Pamela Mautte, Michaela Fissel, Allyson Nadeau, Giovanna Mozzo | |
| Staff Present: | Kyle Barrette, Justin Mehl, Liz Feder, Elsa Ward, Sarju Shah, Dana Begin | |
| AGENDA ITEM: | | ACTION |
| SafeSpot Overdose Hotline: Stephen Murray, Boston Medical Center | Stephen Murray provided a presentation on the SafeSpot Overdose Hotline. The Hotline provides telephonic support to individuals at risk of overdose and provides resources and information to interested individuals. Stephen shared that the hotline is in the process of being extended to cover Connecticut, as the organization was recently approved for OSAC funding. | Stephen to share presentation slides |
| Connecticut Harm Reduction Centers: Justine Mehl, DMHAS | Justine Mehl provided an overview of Connecticut's new Harm Reduction Centers (HRC). These programs operate as drop-in centers and provide low barrier access for individuals at risk for overdose. The goals of the services are to reduce unintentional overdose fatalities, reduce disease transmission and provide wound care, and increase access to treatment and recovery support. There are currently three HRCs in CT, located in Waterbury, New London, and New Haven. | Justin to share presentation slides |
| Block Grant updates: Kyle Barrette, DMHAS | Kyle provided updates on the FFY 2025 projected budget for the Mental Health and Substance Use Block Grants. Agreement on the FFY2025 budget has not been reached and states have yet to receive confirmation of their FFY2025 award amounts. While previously proposed budgets from the house and senate included increased funding for both block grants, the new administration has made efforts to reduce funding. The federal government is currently operating under a continuing resolution that ends on March 15 th and we should know more about the potential block grant awards amounts by that time. | Kyle to share block grant award information when federal budget is passed |
| DMHAS Updates: Sarju Shah, Director, Prevention and Health Promotion | Sarju provided updates about the Regional Prioritization process that is currently taking place to evaluate the gaps, needs, and strengths of our behavioral health system. The Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations RBHAOs implement this process and are currently conducting data collection in each of their regions. One of the planning council members asked about how they could become involved with this process in their region to provide input regarding peer and recovery services. The RBHAO representatives clarified how members could receive the regional survey and join stakeholder meetings. | Sarju to follow up with member to discuss how they can share their input as part of the regional data collection process |

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| Planning Council business: Heidi Pettersen, Vice Chair | Heidi engaged members in a discussion about potential agenda items for upcoming meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michaela Fissel requested an overview of the new Peer Certification process | Kyle or Elsa will send out information regarding the new peer certification requirements as well information about upcoming town halls that will provide this information in the community |
| Next Meeting: | May 8th, 2025, 2:00-4:00pm via Microsoft Teams | |