

CONNECTICUT VALLEY HOSPITAL
ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

Mental Health and Addiction Services



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Connecticut Valley Hospital
Draft Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date: June 12, 2026

Time: 8:00–9:00 am

Location: Page Hall, AV Room, 365

Attendees

- **Mr. Larry McHugh**, Chairperson
- **Mr. Kevin Elak**, Director of Health, City of Middletown, Health Department
- **Ms. Sarah Gadsby**, Chief Executive Officer, River Valley Services
- **Mr. Joe Crego**, Chief Executive Officer, WHF
- **Ms. Lakisha Hyatt**, Chief Executive Officer, Connecticut Valley Hospital
- **Ms. Maria Laporto**, Division Director, Addiction Services Division – CVH
- **Ms. Nancy Navarretta**, Commissioner, DMHAS
- **Dr. Kichul Pak**, Chief Medical Officer, Connecticut Valley Hospital
- **Dr. Edwin Renaud**, General Psychiatric Division Director – CVH
- **Mr. Phillip Pessina**, Community Member (virtual attendee)
- **Mr. Justin Sleeper**, Chief Quality Officer, Connecticut Valley Hospital
- **Mr. James Trzaski**, Community Member, Middletown South District Fire Chief
- **Mr. Jonathan Gwara**, Behavioral Health Program Manager– CVH
- **Mr. Steven Kovach**, Chief of Staff, City of Middletown
- **Mr. Harry Burr**, Community Member

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at **8:05 a.m.** by **Chair Larry McHugh**. The Chair welcomed members and guests in attendance.

2. Review of meeting minutes– Minutes met quorum and accepted unanimously.

3. Commissioner's Report

Ms. Nancy Navarretta, Commissioner

The commissioner provided an overview of the department's accomplishments for the past quarter including legislative advances and May Mental Health Awareness activities. Advisory Council members celebrated the work of the department under the Commissioner's leadership.

4. Chief Executive Report

Dr. Lakisha Hyatt, Chief Executive Officer, provided the following updates on the health status of the organization.

- Discussion on ongoing efforts to evaluate service delivery and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Dr. Hyatt reviewed key areas for quality improvement and performance enhancement.

- Recognition of positive accomplishments and organizational successes through quality improvement initiatives
- Quality assurance findings from inpatient units.
- Monitoring of key performance indicators including overtime utilization and operational efficiency measures
- Continued work to defined and strengthen organizational culture ongoing quality improvement initiatives
- Announcement regarding Dr. Kichul Pak's, CMO departure and transition planning for a new hospital CMO
- Updates on community engagement activities, external partnership and collaborations, and continued efforts in outreach and community engagement.

5. 2026 ACS Discharge Report Presentation- Ms. Maria Laporto

- The report documented discharge placement outcomes since monitoring began in 1997 with trends remaining stable and positive. The report identified less than 0.3% of discharges to local areas who weren't originally from this geographical area. All discharges were clinically justified and supported individualized treatments recovery goals.
- Each case confirmed that placement was based on recovery, family and sober living conditions versus convenience or inadequate discharge planning. Overall, the findings demonstrated continued adherence to CVH's commitment to patient centered, recovery oriented and discharge planning practices. Members discussed placements, sober housing arrangements, controls, duration of stay in sober houses within Middletown and education about the many alternative placement strategies outside of Middletown used by CVH.
- Chief Trazski encouraged shared information availability to enhance education and visibility initiatives and a general discussion on the role of sober homes in rehabilitation attempts. Ms. Hyatt commented on continued community collaborations in these regards such as partnerships with coalitions and businesses (Middletown Chamber of Commerce) for stigma awareness campaign initiatives.

6. Other Business

- Mr. McHugh announced his retirement as chairperson and thanked the Council for the opportunity to serve in this capacity. Mr. McHugh will act as Chair until position filled. Members accepted his resignation and wished him well. Mr. McHugh thanked all members for their participation and service.

The meeting was adjourned at **9:10 a.m.**

Minutes Prepared By: Mary Ollennu

Date Prepared: June 18, 2026

Next Scheduled Meeting: September 11, 2026