

CONNECTICUT VALLEY HOSPITAL
ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

Mental Health and Addiction Services



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Connecticut Valley Hospital
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date: September 12, 2025

Time: 8:02 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

Location: Page Hall, AV Room, 365

Attendees

- **Larry McHugh**, Chairperson
- **Lakisha Hyatt**, Chief Executive Officer, Connecticut Valley Hospital
- **Nancy Navarretta**, Commissioner, DMHAS
- **Dr. Kichul Pak**, Chief Medical Officer, Connecticut Valley Hospital
- **Justin Sleeper**, Chief Quality Officer, Connecticut Valley Hospital
- **Paul Schoening**, Director of Plant Facilities, Connecticut Valley Hospital
- **Sarah Gadsby**, Chief Executive Officer, River Valley Services
- **Richard Davis**, Deputy Chief of Police, Middletown, CT
- **Gene Nocera**, Mayor, City of Middletown, CT
- **Kevin Elak**, Director of Health, City of Middletown, CT
- **Harry Burr**, Community Member
- **Cynthia Clegg**, Community Member

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at **8:02 a.m.** by **Chair Larry McHugh**. The Chair welcomed members and guests in attendance.

2. Commissioner's Report

Nancy Navarretta, Commissioner, provided an update including the following highlights:

- The legislative session concluded with passage of the **biennial state budget**.
- The proposal to centralize IT services at DMHAS was **not approved**.

- Changes to eligibility criteria for grant funding remain under **ongoing legal review**.
- **Dr. Dike** was appointed as Chief Executive Officer of CMHC.
- **Dr. Carvalho** was named Interim Medical Director for DMHAS.
- Additional funding was allocated for **discharge planning resources** and **panic button installations**.
- Caseload growth continues; overtime expenditures have been reduced to approximately **\$3 million**.
- A facility improvement campaign is underway in **Bridgeport**.
- DMHAS launched a **Mentor and Substance Abuse Advocacy Campaign**.
- The **Fall Grant Cycle** has concluded.

3. Chief Medical Officer Report

Dr. Pak, Chief Medical Officer, reported the following:

- Aggressive acts have decreased by approximately **34%**.
- **Restraint and seclusion rates remain below national averages** for 2025.
- Increased use of beds as an alternative to restraint chairs.
- Reduction in **Workers' Compensation claims** attributed to decreased hands-on interventions.
- Continued prioritization of treatment engagement and **community integration**.
- Expansion of **Dual Recovery Groups** and increased implementation of **Integrated Dual Disorder Treatment (IDDT)**.

4. Campus Use Report

Paul Schoening provided an overview of campus utilization, noting that the Connecticut Valley Hospital campus consists of **81 buildings**. Key updates included:

- **Beers Hall:** Occupied by the Office of the Commissioner (Safety Education Services) and the Connecticut Legal Rights Project.
- **Dutcher Hall:** Houses six inpatient units, including one Competency Restoration Unit.
- **Woodward Hall:** TBI/ABI unit with ongoing painting, furniture upgrades, and planned elevator modernization.
- **Battell Hall:** Six General Psychiatric units; kitchen renovation completed; patient dormitory sprinkler renovations pending State Fire Marshal approval.
- **Merritt Hall:** Addiction Services and Young Adult units; enhanced negative airflow, new generator providing full backup power, air purification completed, and elevator modernization underway.
- **Greenhouse:** Replacement structure and garage installed in collaboration with DEEP.
- **Haviland Hall:** Home to Ambulatory Care Services, Employee Clinic, DMHAS Training, and Fiscal Services.

- **Cottages:** Conversion from residential to office use completed.
- **Valley View Café:** Reopened for in-person dining and operating as a positive net revenue site.
- **Page Hall:** Continues to support patient activities, including the Boutique, Hair Salon, BESB collaboration, Physical Therapy Center, Community Bank, and training spaces.

5. Chief Executive Officer Report

Lakisha Hyatt, Chief Executive Officer, provided the following updates:

- Welcomed Mayor Nocera as a new member of the Advisory Board.
- Reported continued progress on Electronic Health Record implementation and expanded technology training.
- Noted ongoing challenges related to community placement and discharge coordination.
- Participated in two public podcasts highlighting CVH operations and services.
- Provided updates on Withdrawal Management (ASD) services and referral development; acknowledged Ms. Laporto, ASD Division Director, for effective community engagement.
- Reaffirmed commitment to patient-centered care, with discharge planning initiated at admission.
- Emphasized coordination across facilities to improve discharge tracking.
- Announced the official opening of the Greenhouse Program on September 19th.
- Discussed planning for a continuing care presentation anticipated in December or March.
- Confirmed continued availability of beds in Withdrawal Management.
- Reported completion of a Barrins mock survey; surveyors commended staff preparedness and quality of care.
- Chair McHugh recognized staff and leadership for the successful mock survey.

6. Adjournment

Chair McHugh thanked all members for their participation and service.

The meeting was adjourned at **8:45 a.m.**

Motion: Larry McHugh

Second: Mayor Nocera

Minutes Prepared By:

Denise Botti

Administrative Assistant

Date Prepared: 2025

Next Scheduled Meeting: December 12, 2025