

State of Connecticut
State Board of Mental Health and Addiction Services
October 19, 2022
Microsoft Teams Meeting

Present online: Chmn. John Hamilton, Tyler Anderson, William Brady, Sharon Castelli, Kathy Flaherty, Allison Fulton, Ingrid Gillespie, Elizabeth Kerrigan, Pamela Mautte, Margaret Middleton, Allyson Nadeau, Denise Paley, Larry Pittinger, Brian Reignier, CTN

DMHAS Staff: Commr. Nancy Navarretta, Deputy Commr. Colleen Harrington, Cheryl Arora, Marilyn Duran, Mary Mason, Chris McClure, Arthur Mongillo, Sarju Shah

Excused: Manuel Paris, Kevin Sevarino

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at approximately 2:30 PM by John Hamilton.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes of previous meeting review and action

The minutes from the September 21st meeting were reviewed and accepted.

Agenda Item 3: Commissioner's Update

- **COVID-19** — Commr. Navarretta reported DMHAS had 14 patients that were showing as positive and 6 staff who work on those units are also positive. Doctor Dike continues to be in touch with Department of Public Health keeping our protocols up to date and constantly reviewing those protocols to make sure that we are complying with best practices there.
- **Budget** – Cheryl Arora shared that DMHAS is working with OPM on the budget for the next biennium.
- **Legislation** – Chris McClure reported DMHAS has submitted proposals to the Governor's Office for review. DMHAS is trying to comply with their ideas of repealing some outdated or no longer necessary parts of the DMHAS statutes, to be more efficient in both statutes and operating procedures. Mary Kate shared that the proposal DMHAS is looking at right now is related to advisory committees and making sure that the people with lived experience are well represented on all of the facility advisory committees. Mary Kate and Chris have had a busy schedule putting together new advisory groups to make our advisory groups more efficient and make sure that the people who are most impacted have a voice on those groups. Right now DMHAS is working on taking the Whiting Hospital Advisory Committee and it is being reconstituted as an oversight board with a little bit more specific direction as far as what that oversight board will review. The other group that is being worked on is Psychiatric Security Review Board (PSRB) to look at the functioning of it. Chris and Mary Kate have been working to put together the specific stakeholder membership for the PSRB group that should be up and running relatively soon. Invitations have gone out and Dr. Norko will be chairing that group.

Agenda Item 4: Open Discussion on Homelessness Challenges

Brian Reignier started the discussion and shared his experience when he was a homeless person. He also shared that United Way is saying that they need more money or funding or they will have to cut hours. Hours that are already largely insufficient to meet the demand.

Margaret Middleton, CEO of Columbus House, which serves just under 3000 people and families experiencing homelessness in four counties in Connecticut every year. She shared that they are certainly concerned as a sector about reducing the hours of 211. It is one of many corners, of the response that we have to homelessness, as a state that is not adequate to the task. However, it does speak to the fact that as currently operated, we are unable to treat homelessness like the emergency that it is if you are being triaged into a system that is going to require multiple appointments and several days to get to the point where you can get on a waiting list to be in a shelter. We have not acknowledged that sleeping outside is an emergency and we are treating it sort of like a parking ticket. We do think that fixing the entry system and addressing the needs of 211 is important. In New Haven, we are actually going into the winter 100 shelter beds down from where we were pre COVID and we are incredibly concerned about that because the number of people who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness is rising. One of the challenges Columbus House is experiencing is case management services that are provided as part of permanent supportive housing.

They were previously funded by DMHAS and are not now funded by in the same way and that is putting people experiencing homelessness at a real disadvantage compared to other populations, including people with intellectual developmental disabilities and people aging out of the foster care system, where those services are funded by the state. Therefore, when we go to developers and offer to provide the service management, they have to come up with the service dollars out of their operating budget. Therefore, we are very concerned that we have set up a state system over here that is funding units, but we have not matched it with a state system over here that is providing the services. In addition, she hopes everybody is aware of just how incredibly effective supportive housing is at maintaining people in their homes, something like 98% of her clients who are in permanent supportive housing stay housed. It is a wildly effective model.

Sharon Castelli, CEO of Chrysalis Center, added that two of the biggest issues they have has to do a little with targeted case management around the assessment. DMHAS needs to have assessments for targeted case management and an assessment through the CAN. The two things that we look for is documentation of homelessness or chronic homelessness and documentation of disability. That issue continues to come up with targeted case management as well as through the CAN that people have to be able to get a diagnosis and prove disability. Sharon thinks if there is a way to resolve the issue we can move people through this process quicker if we can find a way to document disability.

William Brady thinks more extensive training for people that are given authorization to use and add documents to HDMI is needed

A workgroup to convene and make recommendations will be formed to get together soon and discuss further.

Agenda Item 5: RBHAO Updates

All the RBHAO's continue to host on-going QPR and Narcan Trainings and the RSAB's held a very successful statewide suicide prevention conference last month.

Region 1 – The HUB

- Continues to have recurring QPR/Narcan trainings
- Attending tomorrow's CCPG Conference
- Continue to support EMS on the Naloxone Leave Behind Program. Trumbull has been implementing it and now we were approached by Darien.
- We are hosting - Nov 2nd from 12:30-1:30 Trends and Characteristics of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths in Region-1, Connecticut. Register Here: [Trends and Characteristics of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths in Region-1 | The Hub CT](#)
- Working with CACs on legislative priorities and a hosting a legislative breakfast
- Hosting Cannabis in the Workplace on Nov 18th from 12-1. Register here: [Cannabis in the Workplace | The Hub CT](#)
- Promoting Drug Take Back Day - October 29th See this week's newsletter for local events <https://conta.cc/3SawAxo>
- Reaching out to youth serving organizations to see if they want to go through the Powered-Up training
- September Regional Suicide Awareness Campaign was a Success! We were able to build awareness around suicide and 988 at train stations and other various strategies within our region.

Region 2: Alliance for Prevention & Wellness

- Continue to host regular schedule Narcan and QPR trainings
- Staff have been trained in Teen MHFA
- Several suicide prevention month activities were held including the "Out of the Dark" walk for Greater New Haven and Fresh Check Day at QU
- Staff were trained in Powered Up Parenting
- Conducted an Overdose Response Capacity Survey with CT River Valley Comprehensive Overdose Engagement Task Force partners'
- Upcoming De-escalation training in East Hampton on 10/28/22 <http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=obp4hpdbb&oeidk=a07ejey8j4sa032f98b>
- Held CADCA workshop on Protective Factor Logic Model Training
- CSP Sgt. Gordon will be presenting to the Valley Opioid Task force on current drug trends / response in the area
- Half of the police departments in our region are participating in National Drug Take Back Day on 10/27

Region 3: SERAC

- Continue with trainings: CAP, QPR, Narcan
- LPC grants
- Resurrecting CACs
- RFW workplace hiring
- SOR renewal grants
- Received CDS grant is for community well-being coordinators
- Received STOP Grant for youth leadership

Region 4: Amplify

- We've moved into our new space on Oakwood Drive in Glastonbury – Open House to be announced!
- This was a busy month as it was Suicide Prevention Awareness Month!
- Amplify was represented at the Healthier Futures Wellness Expo in Hartford on World Suicide Prevention Day, the Community Guidance Clinic Fall Festival in Manchester, and the Stand Down event for Veterans in Rocky Hill.
- Over 1000 individuals were served in total at these events.
- Amplify supported w/ the other RSABs the first suicide prevention event with nearly 100 attendees in Wallingford with 5 speakers presenting on different populations in relation to suicide prevention.
- QPR trainings continue to be in high demand with and without Narcan Admin training attached.
- Amplify staff participated in Powered Up Parents/Gambling Awareness training.
- All 6 Catchment Area Councils met in September (they meet Sept-May) and 5 out of 6 have decided to meet in-person. Amplify has coordinated hybrid meeting options for all CACs so that there is no barrier to participating.
- 2-day Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) training is scheduled for next week.
- Quarterly Regional Local Prevention Council meeting is today.
- We are hosting a regional presentation about 988 on November 4th.

Region 5: Western CT Coalition

- Continue to host regular QPR and Narcan trainings
- October DRE presentation coordinated by Drug Free Schools Committee
- Staff being trained as trainers in Teen MHFA
- Presentations to Opioid Workgroups on EMS Naloxone Leave Behind pilot program
- Suicide Postvention Information Network meeting
- Flyer for Powered Up Parents-Gaming/Gambling Awareness
- CAC 21 is holding an In-Person Legislative Forum on Thursday in Danbury
- RFW billboard is up on Route 8 and mailers are being sent to businesses.
- Western CT Coalition's Prevention committee has formed a workgroup to support LPC Vaping Prevention efforts across the region.

Agenda Item 6: Other Workgroup Updates/General Updates/Announcements

- Commr. Navarretta announced there is new staff at OOC. Melanie Richard is the new Executive Secretary and she comes from OPM; Kevin Ahern is the new Legal Director; Janet Andrews is the new Fiscal Administrator; and Sarju Shah is the new Director of Prevention. Sarju did a presentation yesterday for the ADPC on the cannabis work group and there were some recommendations that need to be made to the Governor's office and she has led that charge with a subgroup of the Prevention Committee of the ADPC and has done great work there.

Agenda Item 7: Potential Future Topics (need for Presenters):

- Youth and Alcohol – Sarju Shah
- Coordinated Access Networks with DOH/211

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 P.M. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 16th beginning at 2:30 PM.