

State of Connecticut
State Board of Mental Health and Addiction Services
September 18, 2019
Connecticut Valley Hospital

Present: J. Craig Allen, Rebecca Allen, Janice Andersen, Rev. Robyn Anderson, Sylvia Cooper, Mark Costa, Graziela Reis, Marcia DuFore, Alison Fulton, Ingrid Gillespie, Robert Painter, Brian Reignier

Excused: Sharon Castelli, Juan Hernandez, Manuel Paris, Kevin Sevarino

DMHAS Staff: Commissioner Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Yvonne Addo, Chyrell Bellamy, Cheri Bragg, Marilyn Duran, Ana Florence, Marlene Jacques, Mary Kate Mason, Carol Meredith, Diana Shaw, Hal Smith

Agenda Item 1: Call to order and introductions

The meeting was called to order at approximately 2:30 PM by Ingrid Gillespie. Ana Florence, a Post-Doctoral Associate at Yale, will be joining the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), Office of the Commissioner to help advance communication and dissemination of data and information to key stakeholders, both locally and nationally. Cheri Bragg has also joined DMHAS as the Assistant Director of Recovery Community Affairs.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes of previous meeting review and action

The minutes from the June 19, 2019 meeting was reviewed and accepted.

Agenda Item 3: Commissioner's Update

- The Block grant hearing was held and there were many legislators in attendance that asked questions. The grant application was voted on and passed. Allocation of federal Block grant funds will be based on the President's proposed budget. Funding allocation amount is unknown at this point but DMHAS anticipates funding levels similar to previous years. Stay tuned for more information.
- The Commissioner's Executive Group has started discussions on the DMHAS legislative package. After the package is completed it goes to the Governor's office for review and approval.
- DMHAS received the anticipated year two funding for the State Opioid Response (SOR) grant which will allow the continuation of several Opioids projects.
- DMHAS is exploring a model where addiction treatment could be started at the scene of an overdose. The idea would be to allow EMS Providers to offer Buprenorphine to overdosed individuals; a model that has been implemented in the State of New Jersey. The State of Rhode Island is also looking into implementing it as well. This will be a shift from the current model where First Responders administer Narcan, then give overdosed individuals an option to go to the hospital. DPH, DCP, DMHAS, EMS Chiefs and some of the Emergency Room folks are all at the table trying to figure out how CT could implement this model. Right now we are looking at a pilot project in New Haven and maybe Hartford.

Agenda Item 4: Quarterly Report – Whiting Forensic Hospital (WFH) – Hal Smith, CEO

- This is the 5th quarter that Hal is reporting on since he started. He is pleased to report that some of the key performance indicators are continuing to go in the right direction. Overall incidents are continuing to trend downwards as well as all allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation; restraints and seclusions hours continue to trend down; aggressive acts by patients toward self or others continue to trend down. Public and private psychiatric hospitals around the country report collected data in the categories listed above to the National Research Institute (NRI). Consistently, WFH has less than half of the national average in all of those indicators. Hal has data available if anyone is interested.
- In May, WFH celebrated their first year anniversary and rolled out their initiative for change named "Whiting 2020 Moving Forward". Some of changes resulting from this initiative include: 1.) A basketball tournament with patients and staff from Whiting and Dutcher buildings; 2.) WFH developed its own

mission and value statement; 3.) WFH is getting a facelift with the support from The Office of the Commissioner and 4.) Both WFH and the Dutcher buildings now have a state of the art video camera surveillance system.

- WFH has hired a number of new staff including a new Medical Director for the Dutcher building, Dr. Bentley (Ben) Strockbine, who comes from the Institute of Living.
- WFH has planted a new garden as part of “Michaela’s Garden Project.” The project was started by the Petit Family Foundation to honor Michaela, the youngest victim of the Cheshire home invasion and fire in 2007. It is designed to encourage involvement in community service. State Rep. William Petit, who lost his family, joined in planting the garden.

Agenda Item 5: Recovery Coaching in an Emergency Room (video and presentation)

- Rebecca Allen, from CCAR, shared some data on individuals seen at 13 Emergency Departments throughout CT from 03/01/2017 to 02/28/2019 and the drug of use percentage as well as the level of care and how many were female or male and what percentage were overdoses.
- CCAR has a Center for Addictions Recovery Training program which is a 2-day program around ED recovery coaching. The video was made to promote the training. It is a wonderful and powerful example of what the recovery coaches are doing in the hospitals.

Agenda Item 6: Presentation: “Imani Breakthrough” a faith-based initiative

- The Imani Breakthrough approach is a team of people with various experiences coming together to address the opioid crisis with faith-based communities and aim to promote health and healing for ourselves and our communities.
- Imani Breakthrough is a project that is funded under the SOR grant and is currently in Hartford, New Britain, Bridgeport, New Haven and Waterbury. This program model is an example of how communities can come together and heal. The Commissioner gave kudos and congratulated the team working on this project.

Agenda Item 7: Best Practices Subcommittee Update

- Bob Painter reported that the committee has been working on an approach that would allow some clients/patients/people that are never going to live in the community, a place that offers them specific treatments and services that meets their needs. He also reported that the committee worked on the opening of Valley View Café which has been approved by the Commissioner. With small increases in the prices of the meals, community members and people on CVH campus can come and have a meal. The rehab program will allow patients to get supervised work experience, which is exciting.
- Commissioner Delphin-Rittmon thanked the Best Practice committee and the State Board on all the work being done.

Agenda Item 8: General Updates and Announcements

- CCAR has a new recovery community center that is going to be opening in New Haven at 1435 Chapel Street.
- CCAR will hold their 20th anniversary Recovery Walk in Hartford, September 21, 2019.
- A survey monkey will be sent to governor appointed committee and board members to gather racial and gender information for the Governor’s office per state statute.
- The University of Bridgeport is holding a symposium on Building Bridges: Implementing Healthcare solutions to prevent opioid addiction and chronic pain in CT on Thursday, October 17, 2019, 8 A.M.
- The RBHAO for region 4 is now officially Amplify, Inc. and on September the 26th they will hold a celebration.
- The RBHAO for region 5 is changing their name to Western CT Coalition and it will be official September 19th.
- On Thursday, October 10th DMHAS, DPH, and DEEP commissioners will hold a Nature Walk at Wadsworth Falls State Park in Middletown, CT.
- National Association for Rights Protection and Advocacy (NARPA) is holding a conference in East

Hartford which starts today through September 21st.

- The LiveLOUD campaign that was launched on April 1st is moving into the next phase which introduces 3 individuals who use Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) to help them in their recovery. The idea is hope and that recovery is possible and they are living proof of this. The LiveLOUD advertisements are running online and DMHAS is working to get them on billboards and television.
- DMHAS is working with CT Realtors on the LiveLOUD efforts and they are sponsoring a concert at Mohegan Sun with Keith Urban. Rhode Island is also working on the LiveLOUD campaign. The RBHAOs are involved in the LiveLOUD Campaign by advertising and disseminating program information to the community. Commissioner Delphin-Rittmon is doing television interviews on opioids and how to get people into treatment. DMHAS has video public service announcements where individuals talk about life with opioid use disorder and living in recovery. Commissioner Delphin-Rittmon gave kudos to Diana Shaw for all her work with the program.

Agenda Item 9: Adjournment/next meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 P.M. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2019 beginning at 2:30 PM in room 217 of CVH, Page Hall.