

State of Connecticut
State Board of Mental Health and Addiction Services
September 21, 2022
Microsoft Teams Meeting

Present online: Chmn. John Hamilton, Rebecca Allen, Tyler Anderson, Jane Ferrall, Kathy Flaherty, Allison Fulton, Jennifer Henry, Pamela Mautte, Giovanna Mozzo, Allyson Nadeau, Denise Paley, Manuel Paris, Larry Pittinger, Brian Reignier, Kevin Sevarino

DMHAS Staff: Commr. Nancy Navarretta, Deputy Commr. Colleen Harrington, Jose Crego, Marilyn Duran, Colleen Harrington, Mary Mason, Chris McClure, Arthur Mongillo

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 June 15th meeting were reviewed and accepted.

Agenda Item 3: Commissioner's Update

- **COVID-19** — Commr. Navarretta reported there has been a slight uptick in COVID cases. We are still doing rather well. Based on the last report looked at this week, we had only 10 inpatients or folks that are utilizing our hospital level of care that were positive and 16 staff that are working on those units tested positive and there are 4 units on quarantine.
- **Budget** – Commr. Navarretta reported that in terms of budget, the 5.41% COLA for this fiscal year 2023 are well underway and they are going out as contract amendments or signed and returned by providers. It is too early in the state biennial budget process to report out anything regarding that. In terms of the ARPA dollars 10 million for facility improvements, letters to providers should go out by the end of the month with the amount they are eligible to receive. Then we are going to give more time for people to submit proposals back. We want the money to be used and we want it to be used in compliance with the COVID or ARPA guidelines. Other ARPA projects that are moving are the enhanced mobile crisis dollars, supportive housing services, a public awareness campaign about treatment resources, and an initiative on stigma with Shatterproof. DMHAS has very targeted dollars through the federal ARPA dollars.
- **Legislation** – Chris McClure stated nothing has happened new in terms of legislation, as they are out of session, but we are on the cusp of a new session starting up. Chris wanted to remind everybody that a few weeks ago a memo was sent out from him to ask for legislative ideas from the group. A handful of you have responded and sent in items, but we are not out of time yet. We only have about a week left, so if you have something that is top of mind, something you think is reasonable and practical, we would love to hear from you.

Mary Kate Mason added that the Public Health Committee had a forum regarding overdose prevention sites and that will be a conversation that is ongoing during this year's session along with the others. Mary and Chris have been working very hard at implementing some of the legislation that passed last year, which includes working on the PSRB Task Force, reconstituting the Whiting Forensic Hospital Advisory Board; and you will be hearing more about making changes to the State Board membership to comply with the new legislation.

Agenda Item 4: Quarterly Report – Whiting Forensic Hospital

Jose Crego provided a WFH COVID report for the last quarter, WFH has really just been through spurts of COVID positive cases and we have done quite a few changes in the hospital to help contain those even further. We were able to bring in some air scrubbers which are some high quality filters that we actually bring on to the unit where we have patients that are positive on the units to try and contain it and reduce the amount of spread. We currently have five patients that are positive, one staff member and only one unit is impacted. Overall, throughout COVID, our medical team and our infection prevention staff have done a great job of keeping in

front of this ever-moving target with COVID and implementing all of the various precautions that we can to ensure that our patients are safe as possible.

Regarding the risk management data, which is available publicly, this period we had eight critical incidents for the entire quarter. We had 21 restraints hospital wide; 56% of those restraints were four points, which is down from 73% of them being four point restraints last time around; 9% were secured guided escorts and the others were just more of a verbal de-escalation. Physical aggression towards others remains at 39 this time. Physical aggressions towards self we had 28 over the previous quarter and many of those were from one patient that was an outlier with us and was really struggling for a period. We saw an uptick in particular because of that one patient that has since gotten much better elopements and we had no elopements in the last quarter. With special observations, our monthly average was 16.33. Visits to the emergency room were 45 over the past quarter. As COVID continues to get better in the community, we see the same thing here; more of our community trips are running. We are happy to see that we had patients take the opportunity, in the summer, to go to the beach and have picnics and things of that nature. Patients have really been able to enjoy our Temporary Leave Service; which allows patients to actually start to work towards their discharge plan and progress by spending time out in the communities in which they will be discharged to.

We are in full swing towards Joint Commission accreditation. Our plan is to apply for the accreditation by the end of this calendar year and actually sit through our full survey sometime next year. We are looking at the middle of next year for our accreditation survey. We are doing a lot of work right now going through policies, looking through the environment and ensuring that we are meeting all of the Joint Commission standards.

Staffing has been an area of discussion for a while and we continue to work very diligently with HR. There has been many changes throughout the HR process and DAS and a lot of that has to do with the input from the commissioner's office and getting that work moving forward. We are starting to see more positions posted and more folks coming through the door, which really brings some relief to our staff.

Lastly, we have fully now expanded to multi-unit programming in our activity centers and we are looking now at the possibility of bringing in our own Chaplain to provide some chaplaincy services at WFH. We are also looking at having some spiritually based programming for those patients that might be interested in that type of programming, intermixing recovery or the aspects of spirituality with recovery.

Last week we had Field Day in Dutcher, which went very well. Today, it is here in WFH and all the patients and staff are in the courtyard, enjoying hot dogs, hamburgers, and time together. It is always great to see when patients and staff get together and are able to spend that time having a good time by all.

Agenda Item 5: RBHAO Report Out – Rotation

One RBHAO will take the lead on doing announcements for the other RHOHO to in an effort to be efficient at the Board meetings. Pamela Mautte took the lead for this meeting to report. All the RBHAO Regional Suicide Advisory Boards are co-hosting the Suicide Prevention Month activity. They have a statewide conference tomorrow, on 9/22, happening in Wallingford.

Amplify: They are excited to share that they are moving into their new location in Glastonbury this week and they are experiencing high demand for Suicide Prevention and Narcan Administrations trainings. They are also offering an upcoming two-day Assist Training in October and Assist as a Suicide Prevention Training. You can visit their Facebook page and subscribe to their newsletter to stay up to dates on Amplify happenings.

SERAC: They had a leadership change so Angela Rae Duhaine is now on the acting executive director. You could visit their website at <http://www.secracct.org> for any upcoming trainings and events.

Alliance for Prevention and Wellness: You could visit their website at <http://www.apw-ct.org> for upcoming training such as our QPR Narcan. They have a de-escalation training Friday happening in Middletown. They have an upcoming workshop to develop your logic models based on protective factors for our prevention coalitions and local prevention council. They have trained more than 120 people in mental health first aid and half of

them were law enforcement through our impact grant. They have participated in two International Overdose Awareness Day events in our communities and have held a Veterans and Suicide Workshop.

Western Connecticut Coalition: They had an International Overdose Awareness banners from their own quote from Western Connecticut, as well as with their OPC, hung up throughout all of the towns. They just had their annual meeting. They have OPC leadership meeting with recovery supports for youth and young adults. They have had a drug free schools forum focusing on the LGBTQ IA sensitivity training for school faculty and staff, which is a high risk for suicide and mental health issues. They had four expert trainings at Western Connecticut State University with community mental health students and graduate program students. CAC 21 is hosting a legislative forum in October and they had a Drug Recognition Expert Training for school staff.

The Hub: They trained 1300 people on suicide in QPR this past month through the Darien public schools, community and fire departments in their region. They also can provide CEUs to EMS for attending QPR Naloxone training. It is written into their protocol from Department of Public Health and six agencies in the Hub's region have become recovery friendly workplace certified.

Commissioner Navarretta thanked all the RBHAOs for doing fabulous work and it is nice to see that they are not all focused on the same thing. They are tuned into their geographic regions and meeting the needs of the communities that they cover.

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

- **Marijuana Workgroup:** Kevin Sevarino reported that as the commissioner has been involved the Governor now has Ct.gov/cannabis, which is information on safety of storage, how to recognize child intoxication and responsible use sanctions. In the fall, there will be a multimedia public campaign with fact sheets and brochures which the subcommittee on cannabis for the ADPC was involved with in advising the Department of Consumer Protection. The next step is going to be any final recommendations in terms of focuses for policy recommendations and change.
- **CCAR:** Rebecca Allen reported that CCAR is having their 21st Recovery Walk this Saturday at Bushnell Park from 11 to 4pm. Everybody is welcome and it is a celebration of recovery. There will be a live band and have some food trucks and some activities for the kids. They have probably about 40 people signed up to have a vendor table. CCAR also signed a lease for a space in Waterbury. They will be doing a soft opening probably in October.
- **SUD Waiver:** Deputy Commissioner Harrington reported that DMHAS state partners continue to meet with providers. With the launch of the 1115 its transformational process means that there are challenges. DMHAS is working very hard with providers, with the administrative services organization Beacon to meet the needs of those requesting service and supporting providers as best as possible; given the workforce challenges that exist as well as the new expectations based on the Connecticut standards for substance use residential care. In addition to all Medicaid coverage groups having eligibility, DMHAS has a small grant portion to many providers to support those who are uninsured or underinsured as well.

There is something called the American Society for Addiction Medicine and they have very specific standards and their third edition for SUD residential care at different levels of care. Connecticut has taken the ACM 3rd edition and created standards for Connecticut providers at each level of care, all the providers involved in the process right now have received a pre certification.

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

- Alcohol Awareness
- Coordinated Access Networks with DOH/211
- Ketamine for Depression – Dr. Charles Dike

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 P.M. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 19th beginning at 2:30 PM.