

Behavioral Health Sub-Committee

Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission
Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division
Connecticut Office of Policy and Management

September 5, 2024

9:30 am – 11:00 am

(Russell Hall, CVH, Room 217-A; and TEAMS)

Minutes

1. Introductions/Roll call

Present: Michael Aiello, Thomas Burr, William O'Connor, Patricia O'Rourke, Judy Dowd, Chris Burke, Reena Kapoor

Apologies from: Kevin Lawlor, Alex Tsarkov, Kirk Lowry

2. Approval of minutes of meeting on May 9, 2024 → approved without corrections.

3. Legislative matters

- a. Follow-up from 2024 session: Reena Kapoor gave an update on outpatient restoration in response to PA 24-137. Thomas Burr reported that the first peer-run respite program with capacity for four individuals opened in New Britain in July.
- b. Plans for 2025 long session: NAMI hopes to expand respite capacity in CT. The Sentencing Commission is working with a study on Intellectual Disability with Disability Rights CT, which will hopefully be presented to the legislature in Jan 2026. Other agencies are working on their legislative priorities for the upcoming session.

4. Competency to stand trial updates

Reena Kapoor reported that there have been no admission delays for competency restoration at Whiting since earlier this summer. DMHAS continues to plan for outpatient restoration cases that may stem from PA 24-137, including speaking with all CEOs of LMHAs and revising the outpatient restoration manual for clinicians.

5. Psychiatric Security Review Board updates

Reena Kapoor reported that the PSRB work group continues to meet, hoping to complete a report by the upcoming legislative session. There may be legislative proposals that stem from this work group. Bill O'Connor reported that the PSRB

recently approved the Conditional Release of an acquittee immediately after his initial evaluation at Whiting—a rare, if not unprecedented, event.

6. Agency updates

CSSD: Mike Aiello reported that funding from the 1115 SUD waiver was used to purchase REACH apartment for individuals on probation with MH/SUD. There are now five two-bed apartments in New London and Norwich. CSSD has also expanded a rapid re-housing program (i.e., rent subsidies for 1-2 years) to Waterbury, New Britain, and New London.

NAMI: Thomas Burr reported that NAMI's annual conference will be held on Oct 26 in Southbury. There will also be a meeting on Sept 6 with stakeholders and legislators to talk about improving mental health treatment in DOC. DeVaughn Ward was recently appointed as interim Corrections Ombuds, which is progress.

Sentencing Commission: Patricia O'Rourke reported that the full Commission will meet on Sept 26, where there will be a presentation on the ID study. The mental health subcommittee will meet on Sept 17 and will include a presentation from the Judges & Psychiatrists' Leadership Initiative. The Yale SEICHE Center study on DOC reentry is ongoing, with the quantitative portion stuck because of challenges with data access. The Competency to Stand Trial report is moving along, will be sent back to DMHAS for review soon. The annual Sentencing Commission symposium on Nov 21 will focus on pre-trial justice, including bail reform and mental health.

OPM: Judy Dowd had no updates.

Public Defender: Bill O'Connor reported on the Psychiatric Defense Unit's presentation at the International Association of Law and Mental Health (IALMH) Congress this summer. The unit was also successful in fighting four PSRB recommitment cases over the summer, including a case from 1985 where commitment had been extended indefinitely. In addition, Bill O'Connor reported that CLRP is involved with a "Jane Doe" misdemeanor competency restoration case where decisions about inpatient restoration and involuntary medication are being appealed. The case may now be moot because the patient has been discharged from Whiting, but the issues presented are very interesting.

DMHAS: In addition to the CST and PSRB issues above, Chris Burke reported that 400 more clients were diverted in FY24 when compared to FY23. In addition, the Pretrial Intervention Program (PTIP) completed 500 more evaluations than in the previous year, perhaps in response to increased concern in CT about drunk driving. The Enhanced Forensic Respite Bed program remains active, with numerous referrals since the statewide expansion.

7. CJPAC: Next meeting TBD
8. BHS Scheduled Meetings: 9:30am – 11:00am [Russell Hall, CVH, Room 217-A and Teams for those unable to attend in person]
 - a. November 14, 2024
 - b. January 9, 2025