

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
TRENTON PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of Trenton Psychiatric Hospital was held on **Thursday, March 20, 2025**, pursuant to notice duly given of the meeting to Department of Health, Division of Behavioral Health Services, Office of the Commissioner.

<u>Present:</u>	<u>Excused:</u>
***Ms. Carolyn Torre - RN, MA, APN, FAANP ***Dr. Maureen Lebel – MSW, PhD., Vice-Chairperson ***Mr. Thomas H. Pyle – MBA, MS, CPRP, Chairperson ***Mr. Neil Weisfeld, Esq.	***Dr. Mark Rosenberg – DO, MBA, CEP, FAAHPM

TPH Staff Attendance:

Dr. Maria Christensen, CEO
Dr. Intikhab Ahmad, M.D., Clinical Director;
Ms. Faith Johnson, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Clinical
Mr. James Hollen, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Operations
Ms. Karen Magarelli, Chief Nursing Officer
Ms. Mary Lou Graves, Quality Improvement Director
Ms. Towana Wilkins, Business Manager/General Support
Ms. Michelle Senni – Executive Assistant to the CEO

Guests:

Ms. Angela Wairimu, Program Analyst, Office of Community Services, DMHAS

Public Guest:

Dr. Laxman Kanduri, PhD.

Excused:

Ms. Sheila Kwoka, Secretarial Assistant to the CEO and Secretary to the Board of Trustees (for jury duty)

ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER/MINUTES APPROVAL:

The meeting was called to order at 9:37 a.m. The minutes from the February 20, 2025, meeting was approved upon the motion of Dr. Lebel and second of Ms. Torre.

Discussion Highlights about the CEO's December Monthly Report:

- The proposed Board of Trustees By-Laws revisions with our board's comments are still with Central Office for review.
- Dr. Lebel attended two Open Houses regarding available treatment options.
- The Board noted that the Average Daily Census is up again slightly to 329, its highest level since June 2024.
- Assaults decreased 35% from an abnormal high January to February. Medication changes made in January may have had an impact. The February discharge of a particular repeating patient may have also been a factor.
- Restraints decreased 15%. Time in restraints also reduced.
- Wellness Activities: Board was pleased with the programs.
- The Sex Offender Program has about 6 patients on average.
- The Board was happy to hear TPH has a band and choir. There are 8 patients participating in the choir and 10 patients in the band.
- Ms. Karen Magarelli, TPH's newly hired Chief Nursing Officer, was introduced to the Board, and Amber Fernandez was also introduced as the Assistant Director of Nursing of Education.
- The February delinquency rate increased.
- Twenty-two (22) new employees started in February.
- Revenue increased due to low expenses.
- The Board asked if we have any outcome data on Sexual Offenders.
- Ms. Johnson reported on discharge destinations, e.g.:
 - Skills Nursing Facility: 3
 - Jail: 4
 - DDD: 1
 - Family: 3
 - Group Home: 1
 - Supportive: 3
- Age and Gender Charts are not currently available due to issues with the Oracle software configuration. The IT Department is working to resolve the matter
- The Board commended the music therapies.
- The Board favorably noted the String Quartet performance of "A Candlelight Ceremony" in the Lincoln Gym. The performers were impressed with the level of patient's attentiveness.
- The Board noted favorably the Skill Up supported employment program in which warehouse skills are taught online.
- The Board noted the falling revenues of the Trading Post. Mr. Hollen reported that the Trading Post was shut down for multiple days due to insufficient availability of cooks to prepare hot food. The Trading Post normally operates six days a week with two dedicated cooks. TPH also does all the cooking for the Ann Klein Forensic Center. Sometimes when shortages occur in TPH's regular cooking detail, including for Ann Klein's requirement, the Trading Posts cooks must be called over to help out.

AUXILIARY REPORT:

- There was a meeting scheduled on April 7th for the Board Chairman to meet the Auxiliary members and learn about their activities. [The meeting was postponed and is to be rescheduled.]

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **Incident Committee – Dr. Maureen Lebel**
 - No Report this month
- **Legislative Committee – Mr. Neil Weisfeld**
 - No Report this month.
- **Schulley Trading Post – Dr. Rosenberg:**
 - No report this month
- **Therapeutic Environment – Mr. Pyle:**
 - No Report this month
- **Welfare Fund – Ms. Torre:**
 - Mr. Hollen presented the gross income/net income chart. The lack of ability to receive credit card payments is a hindrance to revenue. Mr. Hollen noted a need to research the credit card/ATM use/Apple Pay options.

REPORT OF OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES, DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION SERVICES (DMHAS):

See attached report from Ms. Angela Wairimu, Program Analyst.

COMMUNICATIONS:

There were no communications this month.

OLD BUSINESS:

None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

None at this time.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Dr. Kanduri, reported that his own personal experience with the hospital had been “pleasant”. He was pleased to hear of all the hospital’s activities as reported in the meeting. He suggested that TPH publish a newsletter of its activities as a useful communication for family members. Reports of safety by the occurrence of fights on the units, some patients have forensic backgrounds. Dr. Ahmad acknowledged that several patients were indeed forensic-related. Dr. Ahmad invited Dr. Kanduri to let him know personally right away if he has any other such concerns. Dr. Kanduri also mentioned concern regarding dietary restrictions and nutritional consultation. Dr. Ahmad said that he will arrange for Ms. Katie Ziegerbalg, Director of Nutrition, to reach out to the involved party. Dr. Kanduri also suggested that families would find helpful a flow chart outlining what happens once a patient is admitted. Ms. Faith Johnson will ensure Dr. Kanduri has a Family handbook and Social Worker information.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 am, after a motion from Ms. Torre and second from Mr. Weisfeld. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 9:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,	
Sheila Kwoka	Thomas H. Pyle – MBA, MS, CPRP
Assistant Secretarial 3 to the CEO Secretary to the Board of Trustees	Chairperson

TP/sk

Report from Ms. Angela Wairimu, Program Analyst Office of Community Services, Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS)

1. The next Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services' Quarterly Provider Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, **March 13th** at 10am. Register in advance for this webinar:

https://dhs-nj.gov.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_ksfdbR4iSTq-mUnDh-In7g

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

2. Behavioral Health Integration: Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS).

To help address inquiries, DMAHS has compiled a [Phase 1 Implementation FAQ document](#), gathering the most frequently asked questions from trainings, office hours, and other communications.

If providers cannot reach a resolution after visiting the website or outreaching the Managed Care Organizations (MCO)s, providers can contact:

Issues related to contracting & credentialing, claims & reimbursement, or prior authorizations, you may contact dmahs.providerinquiries@dhs.nj.gov

Issues related to policies & guidelines, access to services, or general questions, please reach out to the at dmahs.behavioralhealth@dhs.nj.gov

When you reach out to request further assistance, please include all relevant and specific details about your issue.

Training: **Mar 12, 2-3:30PM Prior Authorization Refresher** ([register](#)) Review processes and requirements for prior authorization of BH services, including which services require prior authorization, required fields, and submission and approval processes/

Transition period requirements have been extended to **June 30, 2025**. Managed Care Organizations (MCO) are required:

- To make payment of valid claims at the FFS floor to all out-of-network providers.
- Auto-approve off all prior authorizations for all phase 1 BH services.

3. Mobile Crisis Outreach Support Team (MCORT)

Go Live' expected very soon. MCORT will be available to respond to non-emergent mental health/substance use crises, initially, between the hours of 7am-3pm (Mon-Friday).

MCORT includes a 2-person team: Bachelor's level professional and a Peer Support Specialist dispatching in the field, with remote access to a clinical supervisor. Teams will arrive on-scene within an hour of dispatch, if possible (e.g. depending on weather/traffic conditions and/or engagement in another outreach), to provide necessary services at a person's home; Follow-up services within a 72-hour window of initial dispatch.



Trenton Psychiatric
Hospital Annual Rep