

**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 21, 2024**, pursuant to notice duly given. In conformance with the Public Open Meetings Law, notice of the meeting has been sent to The Trenton Times, The Trentonian, Newark Star-Ledger and the Secretary of State and a notice placed on the bulletin board of Trenton Psychiatric Hospital.

<u>Present:</u>	<u>Excused:</u>
***Carolyn Torre - RN, MA, APN, FAANP, Chairperson ***Neil Weisfeld, Esq. ***Maureen Lebel – MSW, PhD. ***Dr. Mark Rosenberg – DO, MBA, FACEP, FAAHPM ***Timothy Gallagher – Director of HSP Law Enforcement ***Thomas Pyle – MBA, MS	

TPH Staff Attendance:

Maria Christensen, CEO; Faith Johnson – Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Clinical); Julie Van Houten, Chief Nursing Officer; Intikhab Ahmad, M.D. Clinical Director; Mary Lou Graves – AHA, QI Director; Dr. Hesham Soliman – Chief of Medicine; Towana Wilkins – Business Manager/General Support

Guest:

Angela Wairimu Program Analyst – Middlesex County; Joe Suppers – Public Guest; Margaret VanMater, QAC/QI Department

Excused:

Sheila Kwoka – Secretary to the Board of Trustees; Michelle Senni – Executive Assistant to the CEO; James Hollen, Deputy Chief Executive Officer -Operations; (DCEO)

ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER/MINUTES APPROVAL:

Roll call was conducted in-person. The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m. Minutes from the February 15, 2024, were approved.

March Monthly Report:

- Ms. Torre was very pleased with the enrollment of 9 patients in the New Employability Skills Training program.
- Mr. Weisfeld noted that there were only 64 assaults in February-lower than in any month last year. Dr. Ahmad says this is a result of teamwork and that both medication and increased programming, especially in the evening have contributed. Dr. Ahmad noted that the Restoration Competency Unit for forensic patients was opened on March 1, 2024, and that increased treatment of substance abuse disorders, as well as the transfer of several high risk to Ann Klein Forensic Center (AKFC), may also be reflected in the lower assault rate.
- Mr. Weisfeld noted that the Restraint use is also low for the Month of February.
- Mr. Weisfeld noted the new computer roll out is at 89%. Very pleased.
- Mr. Weisfeld asked if the three instances of attempted self-harm with a ligature on 3 consecutive days in February all involved the same patient; Answer: Yes.
- Dr. Rosenberg would like to see 6 months of data on Assaults and Restraints in the monthly report so there is a basis for comparison; all board members agreed.
- Dr. Rosenberg: Keep Average Duration/Restraint time at an average, not a total of averages; Ms. Torre agreed.
- Mr. Pyle would like to visit Pastoral Services; told that was possible with an appointment.
- Mr. Pyle pleased that 5 new computers are in the Vocational Rehab. Department, The Lincoln Treatment Mal, and pleased to hear that there are now 35-45 patients enrolled in various vocational training programs.
- Mr. Pyle asked about a female patient's report of rape by her female roommate. Dr. Ahmad explained that the reporting patient is very delusional.
- Mr. Pyle asked about the ph. # of PSCU to make anonymous complaints; Ms. Johnson will send it by email.
- Dr. Lebel asked the meaning of Readiness Check-in. Ms. Johnson replied: evaluation of patient to assess readiness to participate in group programming.
- Dr. Lebel asked if Yoga classes are offered anywhere except Drake: not at present;

AUXILIARY REPORT:

- No Report at this time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **Incident Committee – Dr. Maureen Lebel**

- There was no meeting in March. She will present a report for the April Board of Trustees meeting.

- **Legislative Committee – Mr. Neil Weisfeld**

I. BILLS AFFECTING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:

The Committee is monitoring the following bills involving mental health services. All of these pending bills were introduced in the Legislature that convened in January. Any legislative committee action appears in boldface **(thus)**.

Of the 24 bills listed here, 11 are sponsored by members of both major political parties. The 24 bills have been variously referred to 17 legislative committees.

A276/S2549:

Establishes "Student Mental Health Task Force"

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Michele Matsikoudis (R); Senator James Beach (D)

Referred to Assembly Education Committee and Senate Education Committee

A642/S285:

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Sean T. Kean (R); Senators Brian P. Stack (D), Anthony M. Bucco (R)

Allows for state employee retirement system (PERS) accidental injury benefits for employees of state psychiatric hospitals and correctional facilities injured on the job dating back to 2003.

Referred to Assembly Labor Committee and Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism and Historic Preservation Committee

A1143/S1032:

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Carol A. Murphy (D); Senators Linda R. Greenstein (D), Joseph F. Vitale (D), Vin Gopal (D)

Establishes annual cost-of-living adjustment for programs for mental health, substance use disorder, and developmental disability programs.

Referred to Assembly Aging and Human Services Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee

A1326/S952:

Requires health insurance coverage of annual mental health screenings.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Christopher P. DePhillips (R), Nancy F. Munoz (R); Senators Kristin M. Corrado (R), Holly T. Schepisi (R)

Referred to Assembly Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee and Senate Commerce Committee.

A1536/S322:

Enhances suicide prevention services.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Victoria A. Flynn (R); Senators Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr., (D), Linda R. Greenstein (D).

Referred to Assembly Health Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A1560/S797:

Requires suicide prevention training for mental health practitioners.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Victoria A. Flynn (R); Senators Anthony M. Bucco (R), Vin Gopal (D).

Referred to Assembly Health Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A1655/S2406:

Requires health plans to maintain an adequate network of mental health practitioners.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Pamela R. Lampitt (D), Ellen J. Park (D); Senator James Beach (D).

Referred to Assembly Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee and Senate Commerce Committee.

A1673/S1067:

Improves access to mental health services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Sponsors: Pamela R. Lampitt (D), Carol A. Murphy (D), Heather Simmons (D); Senators Linda R. Greenstein (D), M. Teresa Ruiz (D).

Referred to Assembly Aging and Human Services Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A2151/S813:

Establishes public awareness campaign for services for frontline workers and families involving COVID-19.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. William F. Moen, Jr. (D); Senator Anthony M. Bucco (R).

Referred to Assembly Health Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A2310/S2020:

Requires health plans to cover mental health services for victims of domestic violence.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Lisa Swain (D); Senators Vin Gopal (D), M. Teresa Ruiz (D).

Referred to Assembly Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A2383/S1059:

Creates a \$3-million grant program for mental health services for law enforcement personnel.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. William W. Spearman (D), Reginald W. Atkins (D), Linda S. Carter (D); Senators Linda R. Greenstein (D), Nilsa I. Cruz-Perez (D).

Referred to Assembly Community Development and Women's Affairs Committee and Senate Law and Public Safety Committee.

A2795/S1271:

Creates pilot program of coordinated benefits for emergency department behavioral health patients.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Louis D. Greenwald (D); Senator James Beach (D).

Referred to Assembly Aging and Human Services Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A2831/S2248:

Creates pilot program of mental health assistance for students in selected school districts.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Anthony S. Verrrelli (D), Robert J. Karabinchak (D); Senators M. Teresa Ruiz (D), Nilsa I. Cruz-Perez (D).

Referred to Assembly Education Committee and Senate Education Committee.

A2837/S897:

Permits early match with residency or clinical programs for mental health professions students.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Anthony S. Verrelli (D); Senator Kristin M. Corrado (R).

Referred to Assembly Higher Education Committee and Senate Higher Education Committee.

A2864/S644:

Creates five-year pilot program of systemic, therapeutic, assessment, resource, and treatment (START) services to adults with both a developmental disability and mental illness.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Anthony S. Verrelli (D); Senator Latham Tiver (R).

Referred to Assembly Aging and Human Services Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A2877/S1702:

Requires courts to refer certain criminal defendants for mental health and substance abuse evaluation.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Anthony S. Verrelli (D), Sterley S. Stanley (D); Senator Declan J. O'Scanlon, Jr. (R).

Referred to Assembly Judiciary Committee and Senate Judiciary Committee.

A2971/S2878:

Establishes four new recovery community centers under the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Tennille R. McCoy (D); Senator Linda R. Greenstein (D). Referred to Assembly Health Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A3176/S1068:

Appropriates \$2 million for mental health services for veterans.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Cleopatra G. Tucker (D), Wayne P. DeAngelo (D), Herb Conaway, Jr. (D); Senators Linda R. Greenstein (D), Joseph A. Lagana (D).

Approved by Assembly Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee 6-0 and referred to Assembly Appropriations Committee March 4. Referred to Senate Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee.

A3195/S853:

Creates mental health awareness pilot program in Department of Education.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Aura K. Dunn (R), Carol A. Murphy (D), Anthony S. Verrelli (D); Senator Anthony M. Bucco (R).

Referred to Assembly Education Committee and Senate Education Committee.

A3352/S2936:

Creates tuition reimbursement program for advanced practice nurses who provide mental health services in underserved areas.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Nancy F. Munoz (R); Senator James Beach (D).

Referred to Assembly Higher Education Committee and Senate Higher Education Committee.

A3515/S1088:

Creates mental health illness hotline through Department of Human Services.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Shanique Speight (D); Senator Britnee N. Timberlake (D).

Referred to Assembly Aging and Human Services Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A3770/S2606:

Requires Medicaid reimbursement of mental health rehabilitation services through the clubhouse program.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Margie Donlon (D), Luanne M. Peterpaul (D); Senators Vin Gopal (D), Declan J. O'Scanlon, Jr. (R).

Referred to Assembly Aging and Human Services Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A3937/S2504:

Requires Medicaid reimbursement for primary care and mental health care to match Medicare rates.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Shanique Speight (D), Yvonne Lopez (D), Eliana Pinto Marin (D), Senators M. Teresa Ruiz (D), Joseph F. Vitale (D).

Referred to Assembly Aging and Human Services Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

AJR62/SJR57:

Designates first week of May each year as Children's Mental Health Awareness Week.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Ellen J. Park (D); Senator Angela V. McKnight (D).

Referred to Assembly Health Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

II. BILLS AFFECTING HEALTH PROFESSIONS:

The Committee also is monitoring the following bills involving health professions. Any legislative committee action appears in boldface **(thus)**.

A542/S2542:

Requires Board of Medical Examiners to act on physician licensure applications within an average of 51 days.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Sterley S. Stanley (D), Herb Conaway, Jr. (D); Senator Paul D. Moriarty (D).

Referred to Assembly Regulated Professions Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A944/S1983:

Expands independent scope of practice of advanced nurse practitioners.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Nancy F. Munoz (R), William W. Spearman (D), Annette Quijano (D); Senators Joseph F. Vitale (D), Troy Singleton (D).

Referred to Assembly Health Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A1390/S1597:

Allows health professionals outside the state to deliver telehealth services to people in New Jersey.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Shama A. Haider (D); Senator Andrew Zwicker (D).

Referred to Assembly Health Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A1560/S797:

Requires suicide prevention training for mental health practitioners.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Victoria A. Flynn (R); Senators Anthony M. Bucco (R), Vin Gopal (D).

Referred to Assembly Health Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A1859/S1554:

Appropriates \$1 million as a scholarship fund to establish a pathway for health care workers to become nurses.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Herb Conaway, Jr. (D); Senators Shirley K. Turner (D), James Beach (D).

Referred to Assembly Higher Education Committee and Senate Higher Education Committee.

A3353/S2941:

Allows county colleges to offer nursing baccalaureate degree programs.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Nancy F. Munoz (R), Cody D. Miller (D); Senator James Beach (D).

Referred to Assembly Higher Education Committee and Senate Higher Education Committee.

A3583/S781:

Establishes registered nurse license plates.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Shama A. Haider (D), Annette Quijano (D), Tennille R. McCoy; Senators Gordon M. Johnson (D), Nilsa I. Cruz-Perez (D).

Referred to Assembly Transportation and Independent Authorities Committee.

Approved by Senate Transportation Committee 5-0 and referred to Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee January 25.

A3701/S1798:

Requires implicit bias training for physicians.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Shanique Speight (D), Tennille R. McCoy (D); Senator Angela V. McKnight (D).

Referred to Assembly Aging and Human Services Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A3786/S2445:

Authorizes study of health care workforce within Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Tennille R. McCoy (D); Senator Anthony M. Bucco (R).

Referred to Assembly Labor Committee and Senate Labor Committee.

III. BILLS AFFECTING DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE:

The Committee also is monitoring the following bills involving treatment for substance use disorder.

A911/S2803:

Requires colleges and universities to maintain naloxone hydrochloride for use in opioid emergencies.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Verlina Reynolds-Jackson (D), Aura K. Dunn (R), Benjie E. Wimberly (D), Clinton Calabrese (D), William W. Spearman (D), Anthony S. Verrelli (D); Senator Shirley K. Turner (D).

Referred to Assembly Higher Education Committee and Senate Higher Education Committee.

A1861/S2017:

Establishes state Antidote Coordinator position.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Herb Conaway, Jr. (D), Anthony S. Verrelli (D); Senator VinGopal (D).

Referred to Assembly Health Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A3030/S1215:

Allows patients to indicate they should not be prescribed controlled substances.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Clinton Calabrese (D); Senator James Beach (D).

Referred to Assembly Health Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

A3336/S1322:

Expands support team addiction recovery programs with nearly \$2 million from the opioid fund.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Benjie E. Wimberly (D), Verlina Reynolds-Jackson (D), Shavonda E. Sumter (D); Senators Nellie Pou (D), M. Teresa Ruiz (D).

Referred to Assembly Aging and Human Services Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

AJR19/SJR83:

Designates October of each year as Opioid Abuse Prevention Month.

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Sterley S. Stanley (D); Senator Angela V. McKnight (D).

Referred to Assembly Aging and Human Services Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

IV. NOTE ON LEGISLATION AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

Herb Conaway, Jr., continues to chair the Assembly Health Committee, while Joseph F. Vitale continues to chair the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.

Governor Murphy delivered his State of the State address to the Legislature on January 9. Among other proposals in the speech, the Governor called for legislation to expand medical debt relief and promoted the concept of an Artificial Intelligence "Moonshot" in the state. In general, the speech did not include many new initiatives.

On February 27 the Governor presented his proposed fiscal year 2025 budget to the Legislature. The \$55.9-billion package includes \$95 million in disbursements of opioid settlement funds. Key features of the budget are large increases in K-12 and pre-K education funding, a corporate tax to support NJ Transit, increased funding for affordable housing, and continued property tax relief, especially for seniors. The budget reduces the size of the state surplus. It would increase state spending by three percent over the current year's budget.

- **Schulley Trading Post – Mr. Rosenberg:**
 - Schulley Trading Post continues to profit through February. Year to date income is nearly \$22,000.
 - Fluctuations are sometimes due to payment of Phone Cards every other month (\$4,000.00).
 - Mr. Weisfeld expressed concern about current cash payment system by a visitor to STP; he believes it is a system ripe for theft. (Dr. C. explains that patients do not pay by cash). Mr. Hollen is currently exploring a Credit Card payment system through the state.
- **Therapeutic Environment Committee – Mr. Pyle:**
 - No Report at this time.
- **Welfare Fund – Ms. Torre**
 - The Board approved a \$60,000.00 dollar budget in February. The staff's Wish List will be submitted at the April Board Meeting by Mr. Hollen

**Report from Ms. Angela Wairimu, Program Analyst
Office of Community Services, Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS)
(March 21, 2024)**

1. NJ Human Services Awarded Contracts to Offer Outpatient Services for Older Adults with Serious Mental Illness

- a. With wait times being a major barrier to older adults receiving proper treatment for SMI, DHS focused on improving outpatient services in regions who identified as having the longest wait times for outpatient counseling and prescriber services.
- b. The agencies that were awarded were: Legacy Treatment Services in Burlington County and Bridgeway Behavioral Health Services for Sussex and Union counties. Each agency was awarded a max funding amount of \$213,812.
- c. Services will be either in-person or tele-services dependent on the need of the individual.

2. Governor Murphy Announces Allocation of \$95 Million from New Jersey's Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund

- a. DHS, DOH AND DCF will administer these initiatives.
- b. The funding will support critical programs tackling opioid crisis, connect New Jerseyans with the tools needed to reduce overdoses and other harms of substance abuse, and supporting the treatment and recovery of residents struggling with substance use disorders.
- c. Funding will be invested to bolster services and address the needs of those who been impacted by the opioid crisis.
- d. Initiatives that are to receive funding are for the expansion of harm reduction and drug user health services, the expansion of operations at New Jersey's 22 Community Peer Recovery Centers, the replacement and addition of mobile units providing MAT in the community, strengthen the supported housing continuum which includes emergency shelter beds for immediate needs, short-term rental subsidies, transitional housing beds and permanent housing assistance and lastly to expand New Jersey Keeping Families Together program that supports parents with opioid use disorder through housing vouchers and rental subsidies, case management, linkage to community services and therapeutic supports.

3. Notice of Funding Availability: Substance Use Disorder Peer Recovery Specialists for Residential Treatment

This RFP is to hire Peer Recovery Specialists (PRS) to provide non-clinical assistance and recovery supports to services to individuals in SUD residential treatment. Total annualized funding is \$1,425,000. DMHAS anticipates making 19 awards of up to \$75,00 each annually to support the hiring of PRS. Deadline to apply is March 28, 2024. More info here [NOFA Peer Recovery Specialist RFP Reissue 022624.pdf \(nj.gov\)](#)

COMMUNICATIONS: –

There were no communications this month.

OLD BUSINESS:

No report currently

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mr. Gallagher proposes that Human Service Police and Trenton Psychiatric Hospital work together to assess assaults to determine trends as well as outliers. Dr. A. says this is already occurring in the Violence Prevention Committee meetings.
 - a. Number of Peer to Peer, Patient to Staff, and repeat Offenders.
 - b. Look at HSP/TPH/AKFC patterns/trends re-assaults/contraband.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

- Mr. Suppers enjoys coming to the Board Meetings.
- Mr. Suppers has had two fundamental concerns: Adequacy of funding and limitations on visitation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 18, 2024, at 9:30 a.m., on Microsoft Teams.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Kwoka
Assistant Secretarial 3 to the CEO
Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Carolyn Torre RN, MA, APN, FAANP
Chairperson

CT/sk



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Trenton Psychiatric
Hospital Annual Rep

From Faith Johnson