

NEW JERSEY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PLANNING COUNCIL

Minutes

March 12, 2025, 10:00 am

This meeting was conducted exclusively through MS Teams video teleconference & conference call

Microsoft Teams meeting

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Dial-in Number: +1 609-300-7196, PIN: 306216820#

Notices of the meeting were sent to the Asbury Park Press, The Times (Trenton), Bergen Record, The Press (Pleasantville), and the Courier-Post (Cherry Hill).

Participants:

Donna Miglorino	Darlema Bey (Chair)	Connie Greene (Vice-Chair)	Francis Walker
Heather Simms	Julia Barugel	Jennifer Rutberg	Maurice Ingram
Winifred Chain	Elisabeth Marchese	Michael Ippoliti	Tatyana Brown
Beverly Nelson (alt)	Joe Gutstein	Kurt Baker	Gena Ansell-Lande
Tom Pyle	Regina Sessoms		

DMHAS, CSOC, DDD, DMAHS, DoAS & DoH Staff:

Clarence Pearson	Jonathan Sabin	Nicholas Pecht	Irina Stuchinsky
Brielle Easton	Brittany Thorne	Shenal Pugh	Nancy Edouard
Helen Staton	Jessica Han	Yunqing Li	Betsy Weiss
Mark Kruszczyński			

Guests:

Nina Smuklawsky	Morgan Thompson (voted as a member in today's meeting)		
Sadinka Laha	Tiffany Wilson	Joseph Pfieffer	Mike Santillo
Alejandra Batista	Diane Litterer	Rachel Morgan	Serna Zapardo
Angela Calzone			

I. Administrative Issues/Correspondence (Darlema Bey)

- A. Attendance, 20/34, 58% attendance, quorum exceeded.
- B. Minutes of February 12, 2024 General Meeting Approved with minor revisions.
- C. Membership Committee
 1. Recommendation to submit the nomination of Morgan Thompson to the Assistant Commissioner of DMHAS for consideration for membership of the NJ BHPC was approved unanimously. It will be submitted to the Assistant Commissioner of DMHAS by the State Mental Health Planner.
 2. The Recommendation of the Committee to remove the following members from the list of voting and active members of the Council has been approved unanimously for removal from the list of active, voting members of the Council, effective immediately.
 - a. James Fowler (Consumer SA).

- b. Joanne Oppelt (Consumer SA).
 - c. Scott Kelsey (Consumer MH).
- 3. The Committee Accepted the resignation of S. Robin Wright, MH Consumer from the southern region of NJ (Camden/Gloucester)
- 4. The next meeting of the BHPC Membership Committee will be on March 18, 2025 at 2:00 pm.
- 5. We will be reaching out to a representative from HMFA
- 6. We will be at the COMCHO Conference (4/15/25), and the NAMI Conference.
- D. Update from DMHAS (DMM)
 - 1. Two-year block grant application is under production
 - a. New Internal DMHAS SharePoint Site
 - b. Internal deadlines have been set—in advance of the deadline.
 - 2. SAMSHA Monitoring Visit results reported to DMHAS
 - a. Generally, very favorable
 - b. Remaining need to have a BHPC Member who is the parent of a child with SED.
 - 3. Recruitment Question (JG) about getting more involvement from individuals currently receiving mental health services to participate in the Council.

II. **ARRIVE Together (and beyond): The Intersection of Public Safety and Public Health,**

Tiffany Wilson, Director, Office of Alternative & Community Responses, NJ Office of the Attorney General

- A. One of the newest offices within the AG's office.
- B. Ms. Wilson was an assistant prosecutor in Union County for 27 years, working in: MH, SUD, diversion and public safety.
- C. See PowerPoint shared with BHPC via mail 3/11/25.

B. Q&A & Comments

- 1. Q: Next steps about expansion of the ARRIVE Together Program?
 A: Funding and resources are available to County Prosecutors Offices. The program works with Counties and their existing plans.
- 2. Q: Anything for consumers with Cognitive Loss issues (especially among consumers with younger onset of symptoms)?
 A: On the teams, the behavioral health professional takes the lead on responses (unless conditions warrant otherwise). The teams have different specialties: SMI, SED, cognitive issues.

3. Q: Are peers involved?
A: Yes, if the behavioral health partner uses peers then the ARRIVE Together Team uses peers.
4. Q: Is MCORTS involved?
A: Yes, ARRIVE Together works closely with DMHAS on MCORTS
5. Q: A consumer used PESS in South Jersey/Kimball, and had generally good experience, but there is concern about occasional lack of respect by some officers. Also concern about SWAT teams being dispatched to consumers with MH issues.
A: The decision to use SWAT teams are typically based on individuals barricading themselves and/or others (and at risk for harming themselves or others). SWAT Teams are required to have an embedded mental health professional partner.
6. Q: Is the program working with consumers and caregivers and how/does this connect on the ground? Can people request ARRIVE Together?
A: The Dispatchers Office will make the determination based on the situation at hand. The #1 referral source for ARRIVE Together are Law Enforcement Officers—this makes a positive difference. A one day 911 CIT Dispatcher Class is available to police dispatchers.
7. PESS is often the main partner in the ARRIVE Program response teams.
8. The program expects the program to make the connection, ARRIVE will not expect the consumer/family member to know “the right number” to contact.
9. Most County Prosecutors’ offices have a mental health diversion program that are run by each County. The OAG’s Office of Alternative & Community Responses simply helps to facilitate communication among all the county offices.
10. Darlema Bey-- as a family member, recommends that family members get in touch with their local police chiefs about the ARRIVE Program
11. When ARRIVE Together arrives in a situation with youth/adolescent, they stay with the individual, and will help the individual and their family navigate the children’s system.
12. “Blue Envelope” Programs being rolled out to help situations involving consumers with special needs, cognitive issues when they interact with law enforcement.

13. Rachel Morgan -- there will also be a response team program being developed specifically for those with I/DD needs called the START Model. See:
<https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/news/pressreleases/2024/approved/20240304.shtml>

III. [Substance Use Disorder] Prevention in New Jersey.

Diane Litterer, CEO, NJ Prevention Network

- A. Presentation rescheduled for April 9, 2025

IV. System Partner Updates (Darlema Bey)

- A. Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (Donna Migliorino, DMHAS).
 1. See above .
- B. Children's Systems of Care (Nick Pecht, DCF CSOC).
 1. CSOC satisfaction survey response rate is not and has never been high enough to ensure that the results obtained are statistically significant.
 2. CSOC convened a Youth and Family Satisfaction Survey Workgroup from September of 2022 to May of 2023. Members were selected from the Care Management Organizations (CMO), Mobile Response Stabilization Services (MRSS), Family Support Organizations (FSO), Intensive In-Community (IIC), Out-of-Home (OOH) providers, the Department of Children and Families, and CSOC's Contracted Systems Administrator, PerformCare.
 3. The initial stage of the workgroup focused on understanding the best practices for survey design and delivery and a review of the design, delivery, and use of satisfaction surveys by organizations that comprise the CSOC service array.
 4. This included receiving a series of presentations from our partners at the Rutgers' School of Social Work / Center for Prevention Science and the creation and implementation of our own survey – a survey on surveys – that garnered information from across all service lines at the Children's System of Care.
 5. The information obtained was then outlined in recommendations, which the Children's System of Care has been using to improve our survey delivery processes, which we hope will increase our response rate for the current fiscal year.
 6. We have improved the language of the e-mail that delivers our survey. It was re-written to be at a 6th grade reading level, making it as accessible as possible to the parent/caregivers who receive it.
 7. We also changed the subject line, content, and valediction to align with best practices.
 8. CSOC is currently exploring ways to introduce automated e-mail reminders to the process, with the hope to implement that as soon as possible.

9. CSOC believes that these small, incremental changes, will result in big, impactful improvements.

C. Division of Developmental Disabilities (Jonathan Sabin)

1. March 28 is National Choking Awareness Day. The Division is dedicating the month of March to raising awareness about this important issue. During March, our DDD Resource Team is providing two in-person workshops for agency staff and self-directed employees, and virtual webinars open to anyone. Visit the DDD Health and Safety web page for more information ([Division of Developmental Disabilities | Health and Safety Information for Individuals, Families, and Providers](#)).
2. During March/2025, DDD will email NCI State of the Workforce Survey invitations to eligible provider agencies that employ Direct Support Professionals (DSPs). Invitations will be sent to the email address on file in iRecord and will include a survey link and instructions. Surveys must be completed by June 30, 2025. To learn more, visit National Core Indicators ([nci-workforce-survey-overview.pdf](#)).
3. During March/2025, DDD will mail letters to family members of individuals who receive at least one DDD-funded service in addition to Support Coordination services. The letter will include a personal link and instructions for the family member to complete the Family Survey online. All Family Surveys must be completed by June 30, 2025. To learn more, visit National Core Indicators (NCI) or review the DDD NCI Family Survey Overview ([nci-workforce-survey-overview.pdf](#) or [NCI Survey Overview-Spanish](#)).
4. DDD and The Boggs Center are offering the first Peer EDUcation Series webinar for adults with disabilities. This inaugural webinar will discuss the Peer EDUcation Series and include insights from adults with disabilities who use their experiences to guide and support others through their work as peer educators. It will also discuss the Personal Preference Program (PPP) and explore how it can be a helpful resource for people with disabilities in New Jersey. Webinar Date: Thursday, March 20, 2025 from 2 – 3 p.m. Register here [Registration](#)
5. As announced in a February 21 press release, the NJ Department of Human Services, in partnership with the Motor Vehicle Commission and the Office of the Attorney General, has launched the driver's license/non-driver State ID designation for individuals with autism spectrum disorder and/or a communication disorder, as well as law enforcement guidance. Please visit [NJ MVC | Autism Spectrum and/or Communication Disorder Designation](#) for more information.

D. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (Tatyana Brown)

1. No presentation provided

- E. Division of Aging (Jennifer Rutberg)
 - 1. Nothing to report this month.
- F. Justice Commission, NJ Dept. of Law & Public Safety: (Francis Walker)
 - 1. Nothing to report this month.
- G. Department of Education (Maurice Ingram):
 - 1. Nothing to report this month.
- H. Department of Corrections (K. Connelly, absent, excused):
- I. NJ Div. of Medical Assistance and Health Services (NJ Family Care/State Medicaid) (Irina B. Stuchinsky).
 - 1. The Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services has issued a notice to BH providers and stakeholders notifying them that the State has extended the duration of the current transition period which was going to end on March 31 and will now be extended to June 30th, 2025. This is to ensure there is adequate time for MCOs and providers to fully work through the outstanding issues like deferred payments, credentialing, and prior authorizations
 - 2. BH Integration Stakeholder Webpage.
<https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhas/information/stakeholder/index.html>
 - 3. Prior Authorization refresher training today 3/12/25 between 2:00 and 4:00 pm.
<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/X2PVKOzIRsCR8fJvyBtAYw#/registration>
- J. Department of Health: (Beverly Nelson):
 - 1. There was the Community Provider Fair that occurred at Ancora Psychiatric Hospital on January 29th and that 50 providers attended. It was the first provider fair where providers were invited to share information – this opened up door for the approach of ‘ we come you , you come to us’ and it was very successful.
 - 2. On February 7th an Open House was held at Trenton Psychiatric Hospital, open to the community and to providers, where 50 providers also attended.
 - 3. On February 18th, a team from Ancora including Social Workers, Psychiatrists and Administrators went to visit three Bright Harbor Healthcare locations in New Jersey. The agency has multiple mental health settings including partial care, outpatient services and residential support. The purpose of the visit was to physically see what they had to offer, and

on the tour the team was shown residential settings and where patients go for treatment. For more information contact Annmarie.flory@doh.nj.gov

- K. Division of Family Development (Marie Snyder): Not present
- L. Supported Housing Association (Kate Kelly): Not present.
- M. NJ County Mental Health Administrators Association (Elisabeth Marchese)
 - 1. Through SAMHSA Block Grant provides up to \$10k for trainings (events for community members, provider members, as long as it pertains to consumers with SMI). They will be working with CGDADs
- N. NJ Hospital Association (Deena Tampi), Not Present.

IV. Open Public Comment and Announcements:

- A. Comments/questions:
 - 1. 988
 - a. <https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/988/partner-toolkit>
 - b. <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhas/initiatives/988/>
 - c. <https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/ebp/advising-people-using-988-versus-911-practical-approaches-healthcare-providers>
- B. Announcements:
 - 1. NAMI Conference 3/22/25, 8:30 to 4:30 at the DoubleTree Hilton in Monroe Township NJ
 - 2. COMCHO Conference, 4/15/25, at Pines Manor in Edison. Contact hsimms@cspnj.org

V. Adjournment: Darlema Bey 11:57 am

- A. Next meeting: 4/9/25 10:00 am –noon.
Microsoft Teams meeting
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Or call in (audio only): +1 609-300-7196, PIN: 306216820#
- C. Future Agenda Items/
Additional Items for Meetings in 2025
 - a. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP): (Connie Greene)
 - b. NJ DoE Threat Assessment Protocols
 - c. Overview of CSS (Harry Reyes, DMHAS)
 - d. Pretrial Services in Camden County
 - e. JJC Discussion (Filomena DiNuzzo)
 - f. DVR (John Tkacz)

- g. Presentation on SUD prevention efforts at County Jails?
- h. Family Member Perspectives
- i. Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) (Suzanne B.)
- j. AIR , Youth Suicide Prevention (kurt@air.ngo)
- k. SUD and the JJC (Francis Walker, JJC)
- l. Experiences of Consumers in SUD Crisis
- m. State Mental Hospitals (Department of Health, annmarie.flory@doh.nj.gov (Service Questions, Appropriateness of Services, Outcomes.)
- n. NJ Prevention Network: Services across New Jersey (April 9, 2025, confirmed)
- o. DMHAS Fiscal Presentation: August 2025. Confirmed

D. April 9, 2025 Subcommittee Meetings: None