

# Mental Health Advisory Committee

**Final Minutes – January 2, 2020**

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>	<b>Ex-Officio and Staff Present</b>	<b>Ex-Officio and Staff Absent</b>	<b>Guests</b>
Ziva Azhdam	Elizabeth Rathbone	Whitney Mardosa	Rebecca Garcia	Moira Cyphers
Jeannette Bjorklund	Celia Serkin	Meredith Peace		Jessica Kronstadt
K. Dietrich Curran	Amy Sutter			Don Reed
Michelle Grigsby-Hackett				Samikshya Sapkota
Jennifer Grinnell				Sidney Tan
Jamie Gu				
Helga Luest				
Garrett Mannchen				
Tami Mark				
Jennifer Jones				
Libby Nealis				
Susan Smith				

**Guest Speaker:** Moira Cyphers, Partner at Compass Government Relations

- Moira discussed the Maryland mental health legislation, specifically the bills and priorities reflecting the Behavioral Health Coalition

- The Coalition has about 100 members with 20-30 participating in meetings and sub-committees to develop priorities.
  - The Coalition's website is <https://www.keepthEDOORopenmd.org/>
- Moira first reviewed the political landscape in Annapolis:
  - In the Senate, Mike Miller stepped down and Senator Bill Fergus is now speaker. Senator Fergus has already changed key committee appointments around behavioral health. One change is Senator Will Smith appointed to judicial proceedings and may focus on crisis and response teams.
  - In the House, Delegate Adrienne Jones is the new House Speaker, but currently fewer changes. Delegate Jones comes from the budget committee.
- Moira described the proposed "carve in" bill of last year. Managed care orgs (MCOs) proposed taking back public behavioral health because of lack of parity and accessibility. The bill did not pass and the Coalition does not anticipate another one this year.
- Jeanette asked the mental health services and criminal justice sub-committees will consider shared bills to figure out crisis services.
- Moira explained the two proposed mental health parity bills:
  - Parity Compliance Reporting Bill: The bill would require insurance carriers to look at federal requirements and report whether following them. This is similar to last year's bill and will likely be supported by Delegate Sharee Sample-Hughes and Senator Malcolm Augustine.
  - Consumer Protection Bill: Reintroducing and simplifying that a consumer can see someone out of network and it is on the insurance carrier to negotiate payment. Currently, a consumer needs to get single case exception. Insurance needs to offer an in-network provider and if not available, insurances needs to reimburse in-network rate. This bill will likely be supported by Delegate Ariana Kelly.
- Moira described the "Keep the Door Open" priorities – Behavioral health providers were not originally included in the Governor's wage increase. The Governor gave \$12 Million over three years for crisis services and the Coalition is calling for a mandated provider rate increases and more in-patient psych beds.
- The Coalition is also paying attention to the Kirwan Commission– The Kirwan Commission considers how the state provides school funding, with an emphasis on attracting and retaining good teachers and keeping schools competitive. The Coalition is advocating for prioritizing access to school based mental health services, but the stated does not have the money to pay for proposals.
  - Libby asked how they were considering funding opportunities. Moira responded that Democratic leadership is working on funding package, likely with tax increases. They will likely not bring in cannabis this year even though that revenue would be \$400 mil annually. Perhaps there will be an emphasis on state corporate taxes or taxes on the service industry.
  - Libby also asked if the Coalition is looking at Medicaid in schools. Moira said she didn't know if anyone is pursuing the issue.
- Moira described the Coalitions priority of expanding access to crisis responses.
  - She mentioned that the Governor wants to create a suicide mortality review board. Jeanette asked if we know any more about this. Moira said she did not.
  - For Crisis Response Services, last year NAMI lead a crisis intervention team (CIT) technical assistance center. A new bill is being proposed to create clearinghouse for

drawdown of grants to implement CIT programs in every jurisdiction. The bill will likely be supported by Senator William Smith and Delegate Lorig Charkoudian.

- Moira reminded everyone that in the 90 days of session, the House and Senate will consider about 3000 bills. It's important for Representatives to hear from multiple people.
- Jennifer asked whether there is a telehealth bill being proposed. Moira said the bill primarily benefits rural communities and she is not sure if there are plans to expand it.
- The Coalition's Rally in Annapolis will be Thursday, Feb 27<sup>th</sup> at Noon.
  - Stephanie from Montgomery County NAMI said they are setting up meetings with individual representatives in the morning.
  - Moira's best advice is to tell a personal story.

### **Old Business**

- November minutes: Garrett approved, Tami second. Motion approved. 1 abstain.

### **Announcements/Discussion:**

- Nomination Committee for Executive Committee: We will have elections for the Executive Committee in February. Diane asked for a nomination committee of three people not interested in running for Executive Committee. Next steps will be a letter to everyone with definitions and ability to nominate self or others. The Nomination Committee will come up with nominees and the Nomination Committee will present the nominees for vote at the February meeting.
- Spring Forum Committee: The Spring Forum is happening May 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 pm. We are a co-host along with Alcohol and Other Drug Use Committee. The Spring Forum committee will meet every 2-3 weeks to discuss theme, speakers, resource tables, etc.
- February Meeting: Ellen Webber, the legislative advisor for Parity Coalition and Legal Action Center, will speak about upcoming parity bills. After Ellen speaks we will have sub-committee meetings.
- Legislative Committee: The Legislative Committee works during session to pick out bills the MHAC should support and at February/March meeting, MHAC can vote on whether or not to support bills. The Legislative Committee can decide about testifying, letters, or other means to advocate, but all of the committee needs to vote on these actions.

### **Springfield Hospital Update – Whitney Mardosa**

- The Hospital currently has 120 individuals. Lots of courts closed over holidays so slow in discharging as well.
- Whitney moved into social work staff and will be the MHAC liaison full time.
- The entire system has moved to centralized admissions office for first-come, first-serve from detention, but now the system is considering centers of excellence for state hospitals. Springfield will likely move to competency restoration. As a result, we are anticipating changes in admissions units and long-term recovery will be placed elsewhere.
  - This means a change from currently doing 40-50% admitted as incompetent to stand trial to closer to 100%.
  - The centralized system also exacerbated people being placed at Springfield from further places.
  - We recently had individuals at Springfield for 10+ years transferred to other facilities.
  - The structure will also mean changes in security and acuity of patients.

- Jeannette asked about discharge delays in Maryland Hospitals. Whitney explained that those are from community hospitals. But for state hospitals, there is an overall lack of beds. Springfield might not take the 1% of non-detention cases that it currently takes.

**Behavioral Health and Crisis Services Update:** Rebecca Garcia not in attendance

### **Subcommittee Reports**

- Suicide Prevention: Helga said the Committee met in December by phone. The priority is youth suicide prevention, but the committee also wants to explore aging citizens. Diane found the Commission on Aging is not looking at suicide prevention so the Suicide Prevention Committee might collaborate or discuss with them. The Committee also wants to focus on the immigrant population. Diane learned there is not a commission working on this issue with immigrants, given the racial equity bill at the County level, there might be some opportunity. Libby has also been looking at the Kerwan Commission and whether there is room to talk about suicide prevention on school mental health-based services.
  - Several committee members discussed wanting to hear more about the Governor's suicide mortality review board and its purpose. Diane suggested talking more to Moira or Dan Martin from the Behavioral Health Coalition.
- Mobile Crisis Team: Garrett said that in April, we will have a speaker from Baltimore County Crisis Team to talk about their model for crisis response. The committee is working with Diane to set-up a teleconference.
- Mental Health Parity: Jeannette mentioned an upcoming conference all with the Parity at 10 coalition on Tuesday. The coalition is finalizing the two parity bills. The Parity Coalition also wrote to Maryland Insurance Authority (MIA) with recommendations for being proactive and up-to-date networks. MIA is saying they don't get parity complaints, so we need more case example of failure to have parity.

### **Announcements**

- Liaison needed to the Commission on Health: If considering partners for letters to legislation, we might consider the Commission on Health. For example, school health is a priority of commission.
- School Budget: Jennifer explained that Dr. Smith released the school system budget. There is an opportunity to testify about the budget on Jan 13 + 15<sup>th</sup>. Mental health is also on the forefront of union bargaining. The Chief Financial Officer is leaving who creates staffing structure and there are also two others leaving who are at the top of the school system.
  - Tami asked about BeWell 365. Jennifer explained that she helped create elementary school curriculum, but schoolteachers are not equipped with trauma-informed teaching, community circles, etc. Teachers are also under pressure with a new overall curriculum.
  - Helga mentioned that this is a really interesting space to talk about Kirwan. She emphasized that any bill that aims to address children's mental health and school productivity should be considered.
- Social workers with crisis team: Ziva shared a recent article on social workers working with crisis teams that she found helpful. She shared this is not her experience with crisis teams.

- Michelle explained that the guest speaker in April will share more about co-responder model for crisis calls and give feedback on that model.
- Meredith explained that police are often in a hurry and we are grateful to them for safety support. A lot of the crisis calls are held and response can take therapists out of the office for multiple hours. We really need another team and people.
- Libby pointed out the Montgomery County Public Schools Behavioral Threat Assessment and Security and how they might work together.
- Tami shared that Maryland got funding with SAMSA for a psychiatric bed registry system to see where open beds are located. She mentioned that we should watch to see if it improves access to inpatient services.
- Helga mentioned the Child and Maternal Health Block grant carrying some options for performance measures that are mental health related.
- Jennifer asked about the January 30<sup>th</sup> Maryland Legislative briefing. Diane will see if there is an opportunity for someone to attend.

Tami motioned for the meeting to end. Garrett second. Approved. Adjourned at 8:46 pm.