

	<h1 style="margin: 0;">Mental Health Advisory Committee</h1> <p style="margin: 0; color: red;">Draft Minutes – February 3, 2022</p>
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Members Present	Members Absent	Ex-Officio and Staff Present	Ex-Officio and Staff Absent	Guests
Jennifer Grinnell	Michelle Grigsby-Hackett	Michael Chindbloom		Laura Mitchell
Susan Kerin	Jamie Gu	Regina Morales		Elysse Grossman
Garrett Mannchen	Stephanie Joseph	Meredith Peace		Samikshya Sapkota
Tami Mark	Helga Luest	Kyle Potter		
Libby Nealis		Rolando Santiago		
Saher Rizvi		Michael Maher		
Celia Serkin				
Susan Smith				

- I. **Welcome** - The meeting came to order at 7:04 p.m. Susan Kerin chaired the meeting. There was a quorum of committee members.
- II. **Speaker** – Elysse Grossman is a public health lawyer and policy consultant, specializing in substance abuse disorders. She is also a member of AODACC. She shared demographic information about Montgomery County as well as the County’s budget process and legislative activity. She then spoke about Maryland’s General Assembly, notably about the process; tracking legislation; and how

individuals/organizations can submit written and oral testimony. This session, the protocols have been modified due to COVID and work is being done virtually.

For their legislative priorities, AODAAC is supporting a bill that would allow pharmacists to provide and dispense tobacco cessation products and also a bill that supports a Commission focused on student mental health. A copy of the slides was requested.

**III. Minutes** – Minutes from January were reviewed and approved by unanimous consent.

**IV. Legislative Subcommittee Update** – Garrett Mannchen shared that the committee has drafted four testimonies on the following pieces of legislation:

- a. [SB94](#) which establishes a Maryland Suicide Fatality Review Committee.
- b. [HB56](#) to provide for a Commission on Student Behavioral Health and Mental Health Treatment. This will be cosigned with AODAAC.
- c. [HB118](#) which would end the practice of students with excused absences related to mental health being required to meet with a school medical provider.
- d. [SB241](#) which provides a trust fund to pay for the new 988 program.

The Subcommittee have additional advocacy letters for other bills in the pipeline, most notably the Modernization bill. Dr. Santiago shared that he will be providing testimony for the 988 trust fund bill. Tami Mark shared information about a [new report on Parity](#).

**V. New Business**

- a. Spring Forum – The first planning meeting will be next week. The Spring Forum is typically held on the third Thursday in May. It will be virtual again but they will record speakers this year.
- b. March MHAC Meeting – A panel presentation has been developed focused on climate change, mental health and resiliency. Four panel members have already been identified.

**VI. BHCS Report** – Dr. Santiago shared that BHCS has contracted with White Bird Clinic, the originator of the CAHOOTS mobile crisis program, to conduct staff trainings and to also help develop a protocol for triaging and dispatching mobile units. The work has included discussions with the Montgomery County Police Department and MCGEO (union). The mobile units will include a peer specialist. There is also work to ensure that call centers are coordinated and there are warm-handoffs among them and the mobile units.

The Crisis Center is being renovated to incorporate a stabilization room which will have four recliners. BHCS is in the process of hiring clinical staff for it. BHCS is reviewing and providing input on a number of pieces of legislation/policy reviews including the 988 trust fund and SRO school safety.

Dr. Santiago also mentioned the chronic workforce shortages, particularly with social workers, noting that it is a regional problem. MHAC members commented that it may be a topic for deeper discussion (e.g., consideration for the Spring Forum).

- VII. Springfield Hospital Report** – Michael Mayer reported that the Hospital has a new CEO but still faces workforce shortages (e.g., social workers). The Maryland Health Department's network has been hit with ransomware which has impacted a lot of activities. They have also had to deal with a number of COVID cases though now there is only one active case. On February 10<sup>th</sup>, the hospital will open an assisted living unit that will serve 20 residents.

**VIII. Subcommittee Reports**

- a. Mobile Crisis Subcommittee – There are no updates to report. There will be a subcommittee meeting later this month.
- b. Environmental Impacts on Mental Health and Resilience Subcommittee – This subcommittee has been working on the March panel discussion on climate change, mental health, and resiliency.

**IX. Comments or questions from the Public or Commissioners**

- a. Laura Mitchell with the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Advisory Council (AODAAC) shared that AODAAC held a legislative retreat to discuss priorities. They have 5 new appointees and have been working on revising their charter to remove language that may create stigma. In the coming year, AODAAC will be tracking youth deaths attributable to suicide and overdose. In March they have invited [Shatterproof](#) and Ben Stevenson with North Carolina to help in developing a "stigma index" for the county.

- X. Meeting Adjourned** – The meeting ended at 8:44 pm.