

Minutes

Behavioral Health Council

Date January 16, 2024

Time 1:00 PM – 2:45 PM

Meeting called to order by Akbar Hossain, Secretary of Policy and Planning

IN ATTENDANCE

Commonwealth Representatives:

1. Secretary of Policy and Planning, Akbar Hossain
2. Secretary of the Department of Human Services, Dr. Valerie Arkoosh
3. Secretary of the Department of Health, Dr. Debra Bogen
4. Commissioner of Pennsylvania Insurance Department, Michael Humphreys
5. Kevin Hancock, Spec. Asst. to Sect., Dir. of Long-Term Care Council on behalf of Secretary of the Department of Aging, Jason Kavulich
6. Secretary of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs, Dr. Latika Davis-Jones
7. Secretary of the Department of Education, Dr. Khalid Mumin
8. Richard Hamp, Spec. Asst. to Adj. Gen. on behalf of Adjutant General of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Maj. Gen. Mark J. Schindler
9. Commissioner of Pennsylvania State Police, Colonel Christopher Paris
10. Major Patrick Beaver, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs Office, Pennsylvania State Police
11. Secretary of the Department of Corrections, Dr. Laurel Harry
12. Secretary of the Department of State, Al Schmidt
13. Mark Critz, Exec. Dir. Rural Dev. Council, Western Reg. Dir. PA Dept. of Agriculture on behalf of the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Russell Redding
14. Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, Michael Pennington
15. Toni McIntyre, Digital Services Director at the Governor's Office on behalf of Director of Digital Strategy at the Governor's Office, Annie Newman
16. Brittney Kline, Safe2Say Program Director, Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General
17. Dr. Janene Holter, Law Enforcement Treatment Initiative, Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General
18. Jennifer Smith, Deputy Secretary, Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
19. Kelly Primus, Deputy Secretary, Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs

Representatives with lived or living experiences and family members:

20. Robert Hamilton, MPPM - Westmoreland DHS Dir.; Formerly homeless veteran & person in long-term recovery
21. Kate Favata - Community Engagement Manager, Crossroads, Treatment Advocate
22. Jennifer Wilt - Parent of a loved one with mental illness, President NAMI of Cumberland, and Perry Counties

County Representatives:

23. Tina Clymer, County Mental Health Office representing Carbon, Monroe, and Pike counties
24. Dr. Tamra Williams, County Mental Health Office from Montgomery County
25. Ryan Hogan, Single County Authority from Luzerne County
26. Kristin Varner, Single County Authority from Dauphin County
27. Laurie Greco, Area Agency on Aging from Northampton County
28. Dr. Shannah Gillam, Area Agency on Aging from Allegheny County

Clinical Representatives:

29. Dr. Margaret Jarvis, an expert in addiction medicine and substance use disorder treatments
30. Dr. Jack Todd Wahrenberger, an expert in primary healthcare
31. Dr. Wendy Ross, an expert in treating individuals with co-occurring intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism with mental illness

Legislative Representatives from the General Assembly:

32. Representative Mike Schlossberg (D)
33. Representative Jim Struzzi (R)
34. Senator Maria Collett (D)
35. Senator Michele Brooks (R)

REPORTS

Secretary Hossain, Chair of the Council, took roll call. He gave some opening remarks and introduced the topic for the meeting, which was the current continuum of care in Pennsylvania for behavioral health. He explained there would be some presentations to help guide our understanding.

The speakers were Jennifer Smith, Deputy Secretary, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS), Dr. Debra Bogen, Acting Secretary for the Department of Health, and Dr. Latika Davis-Jones, Secretary of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.

After the overview from our speakers, Dr. Finello led a facilitated discussion with questions that were given to Council members prior to the meeting. The results of the discussion will help to inform the Statewide Action Plan that the Council has been tasked with producing.

Dr. Finello ended the meeting with some closing remarks and thanked the Council members for their time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Behavioral Health Council Meetings will take place on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 1:00 PM. Quarterly meetings will be in person. The next in-person meeting is in March. The next meeting of the Council is February 20, 2024, and it will be virtual.

NEXT MEETING

February 20, 2024, 1 PM, Virtual via Microsoft Teams