



# COUNTY OF HUNTERDON NEW JERSEY

## HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION MENTAL HEALTH BOARD



908-788-1253  
908-788-1372  
908-806-4204 FAX

[humansvc@co.hunterdon.nj.us](mailto:humansvc@co.hunterdon.nj.us)

P.O. Box 2900  
Flemington, New Jersey 08822-2900  
(Location: 8 Gauntt Place)

### REFERENCE:

- ☐ Council
- ☒ Mental Health
- ☐ Youth
- ☐ Disability Services
- ☐ Substance Use Disorder
- ☐ Transportation

Approved September 1, 2022

### MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

#### Regular Meeting

Thursday, June 2, 2022 5:30 p.m.  
Via Webex

#### MEMBERS PRESENT

W. Dudzinski  
M. Deo  
L. Hartman

#### MEMBERS ABSENT

R. Walker  
L. Cartwright

#### EX-OFFICIO

D. Davis

#### STAFF

M. O'Reilly  
S. Nekola

#### GUESTS

Al. Bassetti  
Amy Villano

\*PAC-PACADA Liaison - M. Margulies

#### **I. CONVENE: OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT:**

"This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21. Notice of this meeting has been provided in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Courier News. A public notice announcing this meeting has also been placed in the lobbies of the Hunterdon County Department of Human Services, the first floor of the Main Street County Complex, 71 Main Street Building #1, Flemington, NJ; the first floor of the Route 12 County Complex, Building #3, 314 State Route 12, Flemington, NJ and County Clerk's Office."

#### **ROLL CALL:**

The regular public meeting was opened at 5:30 p.m. Introductions were made.

\*Due to the recent public health crisis, COVID-19, this meeting was call in and Webex ONLY\*

A. Bassetti stated he is with Hunterdon Screening.

M. O'Reilly stated she is the Human Services Administrator in Hunterdon County.

D. Davis stated she is the Program Analysts for Hunterdon County with the Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services.

L. Hartman stated she is representing NAMI Hunterdon.

M. Deo stated she works at Catholic Charities for the Children's Mobile Response Unit.

M. Margulies stated he is with Summit Oaks Hospital and the liaison for the MHB and PAC/PACADA Chair.

W. Dudzinski stated he is the Chairman of the Mental Health Board and CFO of NewBridge Services, Inc.

A. Villano stated she is the senior director for Recovery Services at Acenda Integrated Health, Inc.

S. Nekola stated she is the Division Head of Social Work Services for the county.

**II. \*A. MINUTES:** A motion was made by W. Dudzinski and seconded by L. Hartman to approve the minutes of April 7, 2022 and a motion was made by W. Dudzinski to approve the minutes of May 5, 2022. The motions carried.

**B. CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence at this time.

**III. REPORTS:**

**A. County Update:** M. O'Reilly reiterated that the county has a COVID testing site (Rapid and PCR) open at the former Pier One location, Reaville Avenue, Flemington. It is anticipated that this site will operate until the end of June. Each month, the need for this site and funding is examined.

**B. State Update:** D. Davis reported that there are some Request for Proposals (RFPs) issued by the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). This first Request for Proposal is to develop a county based mental health pilot program for justice involved defendants who are subject to the Criminal Justice Reform (CJR) Act and identified with a serious mental illness. A serious mental illness (SMI) is defined as a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder that causes serious functional impairment that has substantially interfered with or limited one or more major life activities (within the past year) of an individual 18 years old or over. Diagnoses that typically indicate SMI include Schizophrenia, major depression and bipolar disorder, but PTSD, obsessive-compulsive disorders, and panic disorder are often included when it results in a serious functional impairment. The counties targeted for this RFP are Camden, Middlesex, and Essex. The program will include collaboration with local social service organizations, the county jail, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)/Judiciary county-specific staff including judges, the pretrial services units, criminal division offices, and probation division offices, the County Prosecutor's Office, the local Public Defender's Office, and private defense attorneys. Total annualized funding is up to \$1.25M subject to State appropriations.

The purpose of this voluntary mental health diversion program is to support and connect individuals on pretrial monitoring, to critical mental health, co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder (COD) treatment, housing, medical and other essential social services. Individuals in the target population who choose to voluntarily engage with the behavioral health team described in this RFP shall receive a social determinants of health (SDOH) mental health screen.

June 16, 2022 Request for unique log-in credentials due - no later than 4:00 p.m.; June 24,

2022 Deadline for receipt of proposals - no later than 4:00 p.m.; July 27, 2022 Preliminary award announcement; August 3, 2022 Appeal deadline - no later than 4:00 p.m.; August 10, 2022 Final award announcement; and September 1, 2022 Anticipated contract start date.

Additionally, a LEAD Program; Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Program is also a pilot program to develop with the community and law enforcement to address low-level crimes for constituents suffering with mental illness and substance use. This offers a \$6M grant for two years ending by September 2024. The division is looking to identify six sites to award. Although, the sites have yet to be determined, there are specific municipalities that the division is looking to set this pilot up in. The locations are: Warren, Irvington, Elizabeth, Brick, New Brunswick, Winslow, Perth Amboy, Jersey City and Bayonne.

The EISS awardees are:

- *Catholic Charities-Burlington County*
- *Bridgeway -Union County*
- *Rutgers UBHC-Hunterdon and Somerset Counties*
- *Acenda -Cape May and Gloucester Counties*
- *Health Care Commons Inc. -Salem County*
- *St Clare's -Warren County*
- *CBH Care -Passaic County*
- *Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris -Sussex County*

She advised to continuously keep checking the website as new information may be shared.

NJMHAPP (NJ Mental Health Application for Payment Processing), the state funding reimbursement for the Fee for Service providers and programs. A Medicaid newsletter is forthcoming that will announce the billing for telehealth partial care will stop effective August 15, 2022. The division is trying to align with Medicaid, therefore the NJMHAPP Fee for Service billing will stop as of July 1, 2022 to help meet the August 15, 2022 deadline. W. Dudzinski expressed his concern of this occurrence and its affect. D. Davis stated she is unsure of the rational about the dates and the newsletter will be coming out explaining the Medicaid piece. It is specific to partial care.

Naloxone kits will be distributed to all law enforcement departments statewide and will be able to seek to replenish their supply. The division will be making the kits available to libraries and shelters as well. The IT department is developing a portal to allow and ensure authorized entities to have a way to obtain kits too. Hopefully, this will be helpful to the community as these kits can help save lives.

The 988 rollout will be in July. Stakeholders are encouraged to email any questions to email address: [www.988questions@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:www.988questions@dhs.nj.gov). Please feel free to utilize this email address for any questions.

A June Quarterly Provider Meeting will be held on June 9, 2022 at 10:00 am. The agenda had not been released yet, but it will be coming out. Alicia Meyer; 609-438-4353; [Alicia.meyer@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:Alicia.meyer@dhs.nj.gov) is the contact to register. D. Davis will put her information in the Chat Box for anyone who wanted to register.

Rutgers will host co-occurring no-cost virtual trainings coming up that are intended to help practitioners sharpen knowledge and skills related to key co-occurring topics. These trainings are open to all workers, including those who participated in the co-occurring disorder learning community. The training sessions will occur on Wednesdays throughout the month of June. June 8 will be Suicide Assessments in individuals with Co-Occurring Disorders; June 15 will be Stages of Change and Motivational Interviewing; June 22 will be Overview of Co-Occurring Disorders and on June 28 will be Screening and Assessment of Co-Occurring Disorders. All of these sessions will be held virtually from 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm. D. Davis will put the information in the Chat Box to share accordingly.

- C. **NAMI Hunterdon, Update:** L. Hartman conveyed the with the help of the county, NAMI Hunterdon had rolled out a wonderful mental health awareness challenge to all of the high schools in Hunterdon County. It is a creative, expressive arts challenge that related to mental health awareness which is offering a \$2,000.00 award. She continued that this challenge has been getting the necessary widely distribution that it deserves. If more information is required, please contact either W. Dudzinski or herself. W. Dudzinski added the county has been very helpful is communicating this challenge, as well as it was broadcasted to students through the Superintendent's Office. It is hopeful to get enough awareness and it is a perfect time as noted by the guidance counselors and teachers. In their upcoming board meeting, a presentation will be given by Alicia Stevenson regarding participation and/or what is happening with the (Crisis Intervention Training) CIT that will be in Hunterdon County. This training has law enforcement officers and other members of the community involved in the mental health training to learn how to recognize and de-escalate situations that require a different approach than what they have been training in prior. W. Dudzinski conveyed how law enforcement personnel successfully de-escalated a situation that occurred in the county the prior week that ended peacefully.

### **III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

#### **V. NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. **Amy Villiano – Acenda Integrated Behavioral Health Presentation:** Welcome! A. Villiano stated Acenda is a fairly new company. It started as a merger with Robins' Nest, Inc. which is family services, outpatient services, mental health, etc. and that followed with Newpoint Behavioral Health, Cape Counseling and Daytop New Jersey. A. Villiano stated she was a clinical director at Daytop in Mendham during the time COVID hit. That site closed May 2020. Acenda has a Morris outpatient site, Hunterdon County in Flemington, Ocean outpatient site, Cape May, Gloucester and Salem Counties.

Some of the services that are provided work well via telehealth because a wait list is prevented by having clients served by another county. Specific to the recovery services, Acenda offers treatment, outpatient and IOP. IOP is not running for adolescence at the moment, but they have outpatient for ages 13 to 17 and they are running in-person adolescence sessions for those in Hunterdon and Morris Counties. Additionally, Acenda has IOPs in Morris and Cape May and are hoping to get the IOP back up and running in Ocean County. Acenda offers early intervention and relapse prevention groups. This is for individuals who are not sure of placement and do not meet a traditional IOP and want to do an initial evaluation along with a few extended sessions; Acenda can provide the services. They do outpatient Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) with Suboxone and Vivitrol and are hoping to have for the Cape May site Sublocade which is the injectable.

Acenda offers outpatient medication management for psychiatric medication and are really happy the in-person services have been made available throughout the pandemic. A lot of clients had chosen to do virtual as it is more convenient, and they are more receptive to it.

Acenda accepts every type of reimbursement and have funding available through the state, as well as access to various grants. They want to build up the program and do have staffing issues like other agencies. Recently, new analyst and clinician had been hired in their Morris site. Most of the clinicians are dually licensed as a LSW or LPC.

Based on W. Dudzinski's inquiry, A. Villiano replied that right now in Hunterdon County the outpatient for adults and adolescence is virtual. Patients from other counties can attend virtually for these services. IOPs are operating out of two other sites located in the Human Services complex and offer in-person outpatient for adults and adolescence.

M. Deo asked if there is an APN on the site. A. Villiano replied that right now medication management services are virtual and an APN and a doctor that does MAT and there are multiple APNs who can do medication management for psychiatric patients.

Acenda does accept most of the major insurances and are working on incorporating into their network is Cigna. They accept Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Aetna, Medicaid and they do fee assessments for self-pay, as well as have a DHS grant for Hunterdon substance use adolescence. Acenda already is credentialed with the five MCOs and are working on the having it all set up.

The prescriber wait list is about four to five weeks out. Three prescribers will be starting in June 2022 and should be onboard and seeing clients in July 2022. The Hunterdon clients do not have a wait list per se but because of some recent staffing adjustments, they may have to conduct some virtual session for the clients until a staff member can be transferred to Hunterdon County. With recovery, staff members do not drag out the process for the clients and discharge by putting in another assessment; they really work on streamlining to help the clients to be seen quickly.

Acenda is working very hard to outreach to qualified candidates that can fill their open positions by attending as many of the job fairs, etc. It is very difficult to find therapists and the like to work in these positions. Discussion ensued.

## **B. Agency Updates**

1. **Mental Health Awareness Month Status** – S. Nekola reported the county sponsored an ACEs training on May 20, 2022 and was well-attended. The Hope One van was out in May in Clinton and is expected to be out for Community Day on Saturday, June 11, 2022 along with Human Services at the Fair Grounds from 11:00 am – 4:00 pm. There were some videos and Power Point slides submitted for the Stigma Free Taskforce Facebook page which included NAMI of Hunterdon, Freedom House, Catholic Charities and Anderson House. S. Becker keeps the Facebook page very well updated.

S. Nekola reported that a third town in Hunterdon County had declared themselves Stigma Free which was Flemington Borough. Flemington Borough joins

Lambertville and the Town of Clinton. There is still a push for more towns to make that declaration and are very pleased with this announcement. The Stigma Free Taskforce is planning to schedule an ice cream social with family activities this summer.

2. 988 Rollout – S. Nekola informed the group the 988 Rollout is expected to occur on July 16, 2022. As D. Childers indicated, the staff are taking questions and discussing this effort at the state level. It is important to share this information to understand how this rollout is going to work. John Verney shared the link to the presentation from Valerie Mielke at last month's meeting which is very interesting. S. Nekola encouraged anyone to check it out. L. Hartman conveyed that at several of the NAMI New Jersey and NAMI National a lot of concern had been voiced about the fact that this will increase the number of people using the service and concern that although the services the people are going to be referred to; are they being amped up to handle the increased volume. Is there discussion about this concern? A. Bassetti stated that Mental Health Emergency Services Association (MHESA), a practice group for screening centers has been discussing these concerns. They see there is potential for fragmentation. Discussion at this MHB meeting about the difficulty of hiring and keeping trained staff. The 988 rollout foresees licensed clinical staff going out with peers in the community and creating a parallel structure that will force all in this field to compete for the same group of talent rather than re-enforcing the current structures. D. Davis added the EISS expansion should help absorb some of these concerns. Discussion ensued.
  3. CCP Plan – S. Nekola explained this agenda item is the County Comprehensive Plan that is for alcohol and substance use. The next cycle is 2024 – 2027. S. Becker is actively working on updating the plan now. She may need some input and more information; therefore, this topic may need to be tabled for another meeting. M. O'Reilly stated that S. Becker added this topic to the agenda to make all aware of the possible need to reach-out for feedback on survey questions. W. Dudzinski asked for S. Becker to forward the group anything referencing the CCP Plan. S. Nekola will advise.
  4. Stigma Planning – S. Nekola reported the county has done a lot with stigma and have a lot of plans in place. The team is always looking for new members and new ideas for getting the message out. W. Dudzinski would like to be on the meeting list. S. Nekola will ensure he receives all of the information necessary.
- C. Community Day – June 11** – W. Dudzinski advised that NAMI Hunterdon will be managing a table at this event. S. Nekola stated the past community days have been held at the fair grounds from 11:00 am – 4:00 pm. Anyone who has a business or agency in the community is welcome to sign-up and acquire a table through the Chamber of Commerce. Human Services will have a table along with Hope One. Information about community resources, give aways and food would be available.

A motion was made by M. Deo and seconded by L. Hartman. All were in favor. The motion passed. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m. The next meeting will be on September 1, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.