

COUNTY OF MORRIS
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES
P.O. Box 900
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Board of County Commissioners

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MENTAL HEALTH ADDICTION SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD (MHASAB)
Thursday, January 13, 2022, 5:15 p.m. via Webex Meetings
Meeting Minutes

I. Call to order and attendance

Mr. Chris Chernick, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:19 p.m. A quorum was established, and attendance was as follows:

Board Members:

Caroline Bailey, Morris County Prevention is Key
Freddie Bicknese, Citizen Representative
Chris Chernick, Citizen Representative – Chair
Linda Csengeto, Citizen Representative
Cheryl Garodnick, Therapy Resources of Morris County – Vice-Chair
Meg Rodriguez, Morris County Prosecutor’s Office
LaJuan Tucker, Esq., Morris County Prosecutor’s Office
Erica Valvano, Morris County Sherriff’s Office
Amy Villano, Acenda Integrated Health
Barbara Ward, Citizen Representative

Board Liaisons:

Eileen Alexander, NJ DHS Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Carmine Deo, Community Hope
Michelle Borden, NewBridge Services
Rose Brown, Mental Health Association

Morris County Staff:

Amy Archer, Morris County Human Services
Kasey Errico, Morris County Director of Human Services
Anna Marie Hess, Morris County Human Services
Stephen Nebesni, Morris County Juvenile Detention Center
Rosalyn Suarez, Morris County Human Services

Others in Attendance:

Meg Fisher, M.D., New Jersey Department of Health – COVID-19 Vaccine Update

II. Approval of October 14 & November 18, 2021, Minutes

Mr. Chernick, Chair, asked for a motion to approve the October 14 and November 18, 2021 minutes distributed before the meeting. Ms. Ward made the motion to approve the minutes, Ms. Csengeto seconded the motion. All were in favor, with no opposition and two abstentions. Motion carried.

III. Presentations

Ms. Meg Fisher, MD, New Jersey Department of Health COVID-19 Vaccine Update

- Disclaimer
 - Information about COVID-19 and SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes the illness, evolves daily. Recommendations change frequently, trusted sources of up-to-date information
 - NJ Department of Health – www.nj.gov/health/
 - Centers for Disease Control & Prevention – www.cdc.gov
 - American Academy of Pediatrics – www.njaap.org/, www.aap.org, and www.healthychildren.org
- COVID-19 Basics
 - The disease varies from asymptomatic to mild upper respiratory illness to pneumonia to multiorgan involvement and death
 - To date, 840,286 deaths in the US, 29,494 in NJ
 - Disease in children is usually either asymptomatic or mild but not always
 - 1090 deaths in the US, 10 in NJ
 - Multisystem inflammatory syndrome – Children (MIS-C) is a rare post-infectious complication
 - As of January 3, 2022, 6,431 cases 55 deaths were reported to CDC: as of January 13, 2021, 157 in NJ, one death
- COVID-19 Vaccines
 - Children ages 5-17 Primary Series
 - Pfizer only, two doses, three weeks apart
 - Moderna, two doses, four weeks apart
 - J & J, one dose
 - Third dose for immunocompromised
 - Pfizer or Moderna, same dose as primary series, one month later
 - Boosters: mixing and matching allowed for all
 - Pfizer, five months after the second dose, most people, the same dose
 - Moderna, five months after the second dose, most people, half dose
 - J & J, two months, all people
 - Strongly recommended for everyone 12 and older
 - Adults can mix and match for a booster dose

- Natural Versus Vaccine Immunity
 - More unknowns than known
 - Natural immunity seems solid for several months
 - Vaccine immunity seems solid as well
 - Trials with all three vaccines show waning over time
 - Immunity Against the known variants is solid
 - Both natural and vaccine immunity vary by age and other factors
 - Vaccines will boost natural immunity
 - www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/answering-questions.html
- Preventing Transmission
 - Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth
 - Stay at least 6 feet from others
 - Avoid crowds and sick people
 - Wash your hands often
 - Get vaccinated
 - www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/need-to-know.html
- Vaccination Clinics for businesses, providers, and non-profits can be set up via NJDOH by contacting dana.johnson@doh.nj.gov, rebecca.werbel@doh.nj.gov or margaret.fisher@doh.nj.gov

Dr. Rose Brown, Mental Health Association of Essex, and Morris

Dr. Brown announced that they have rebranded and are known as Mental Health Association (MHA). Dr. Brown provided an overview of some of the programs funded by the County.

- Mental Health First Aid funding under the Chapter 51 grant.
 - Early intervention public education program. It teaches adults how to recognize the signs and symptoms that suggest a potential mental health challenge, listen nonjudgmentally, reassure a person experiencing a mental health challenge, and refer to appropriate professional support and services.
 - The course is designed to teach people how to approach, assess, and assist a person in the early stages of developing a mental health challenge or in a mental health crisis. It covers common signs and symptoms of mental illness and substance abuse, how to interact with a person in trouble, and how to connect with help.
- Hope One Van funding under the Chapter 51 grant
 - A clinician is on Hope One daily, providing mental health referrals, support, and linkages to individuals struggling with mental health and substance use issues in the community.
- Community Case Manager
 - The outreach program emphasizes assessment, advocacy, empowerment, referral, linkage, and supportive counseling. Services are designed to assist adults in their recovery based on individual needs and interests and help them gain access to medical, social, educational, housing, and other available services and resources.

- Services include but are not limited to Community/In-home outreach, Systems Advocacy, Coordination and monitoring of service delivery, Medication and illness education to individuals and their families, and Service planning with an emphasis on personal wellness
- Edna’s Haven Drop-in Center
 - A partnership between Trinity Lutheran Church and the MHA offers a sense of community, belonging, and temporary relief from the pressures of poverty. Through case management, Edna’s Haven provides connections to various resources within the community:
 - Health
 - Housing
 - Mental Health
 - Job Search/Interviewing Skills
 - English as a Second Language tutoring
 - Services as a mailing address for those searching for employment
- Peer-To-Peer Support Line
 - Manned by peers who have made significant progress with their wellness and recovery and understand the challenges you may be facing. It also serves as a vocational opportunity for consumers looking to return to the workplace.
 - Peer-Peer Support can be reached by calling 877.760.4987, 866.445.3902, or 800.381.2059. Available 365 days a year from 5:00 pm – 10:00 pm. To provide additional support to help you relax and cope due to COVID-19; 877.760.4987, Monday-Friday from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm.
- Suicide Prevention Services
 - The Suicide Prevention team aims to spread awareness on suicide prevention by offering educational presentations designed for schools, communities, and specialized groups such as law enforcement officers and first responders.

Ms. Archer asked, “with servicing so many counties, how do you keep track of the different funding from those counties?” Ms. Brown stated, “each service is entered into our electronic health record system, and the reports are built from there and then billed to the proper county program.”

IV. Nominating Committee – Ms. Barbara Ward

Ms. Ward and Mr. Benson met and discussed options for Chair and Vice-Chair. Since we could not get beyond the two existing officers, we asked Mr. Chernick and Ms. Garodnick to accept another year as Chair and Vice-Chair. Both have accepted their nominations for 2022. Ms. Ward made the motion to approve the slate of nominees and Ms. Csengeto seconded the motion. All were in favor with no opposition and no abstentions. Motion carried.

V. Chair Report – Mr. Chris Chernick

Welcome and congratulations on being appointed to our 2022 MHASAB.

February will be our orientation meeting for those newly appointed and those returning. We will be going over the protocols and responsibilities of the Board and its members.

VI. State Liaison Report:

Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services – Ms. Eileen Alexander

Request For Proposals Updates:

1. January 14th will be the notification date for the Cultural Competency Training and Practice to Opioid Treatment Providers
2. January 13th will be the notification date for the Community Support Services Request for Proposal for Gloucester, Cape May, and Salem Counties
3. Request for Letters of Interest for Evidence-Based Initiative and opioid and other substance use disorders for SUD providers; there are two purposes for this RLI:
 - To Improve provider agencies' provision of Motivational Interviewing and Cognitive Behavioral therapy
 - To improve clinical, direct care staff skills in practicing therapeutic approaches that ensure meaningful outcomes

The release of the RLI was January 4th, the deadline for responses is Jan 24th, February 14 is the announcement day, and February 21st is the start date for the technical assistance start date.

4. Request for Proposals issued by the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to expand regional Community Peer Recovery Centers (CPRC) to eleven (11) counties. The CPRC will be a place where individuals can access peer support, information about substance use disorder treatment, recovery support services, and information about other community resources in a supportive, substance-free environment. This RFP is funded through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) State Opioid Response to Grants (SOR) funding. The SOR grant funding period is through September 29, 2022, depending on federal appropriations. Total funding is \$1,100,000 subject to federal appropriations. DMHAS anticipates making up to eleven (11) \$100,000 awards each.

The funding is limited to the following counties: Burlington, Camden (Camden City), Cape May, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middleton, Monmouth, Ocean, Somerset, and Salem. No more than one award will be awarded in any counties above.

Effective January 6, 2022, the Request for Proposal (RFP) is available at

<https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/providers/grants/>.

Submission Deadline: Proposals must be received by 4:00 p.m. on February 3, 2022.

5. Intensive Opioid Treatment and Substance Exposed Infants, this Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued by the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to provide a comprehensive array of services for opioid-dependent pregnant women, their infants and family. The Integrated Opioid Treatment and Substance Exposed Infants (IOT-SEI) initiative will provide opioid use disorder treatment, prenatal and postpartum medical/obstetric services, care coordination, sober living arrangements, wraparound services, intensive case management, and recovery supports.

The following summarizes the RFP schedule:

January 11, 2022 Notice of Funding Availability

February 16, 2022 Deadline for receiving proposals - no later than 4:00 p.m.

March 11, 2022, Preliminary award announcement

March 18, 2022 Appeal deadline

6. **Notice of Availability of Grant Funds - Early Intervention Support Services (EISS)**

Take notice that, in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52:14-34.4 and 34.6, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) at this moment announces the availability of the following grant program funds:

Early Intervention Support Services (EISS)

Purpose:

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued by the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) for the creation of the Early Intervention Support Services (EISS) in the following ten (10) counties: Passaic, Sussex, Warren, Hunterdon, Union, Salem, Gloucester, Burlington, Somerset, Cape May.

Amount of funding available:

Total annualized funding for each county is one (1) million from the \$10 Million total funding amount available, subject to State appropriations. DMHAS anticipates making up to 10 awards to above-listed counties.

Procedure to apply:

Effective January 12, 2022, the RFP is available at

<https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/providers/grants/> and

<https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhas/provider/funding/>

Division/Title	Title of Request for Proposal (RFP)	Mandatory Conference Date	Notify Date
DMHAS	Early Intervention Support Services (EISS)	Mandatory Bidders Virtual Meeting January 21, 2022, at 10am	March 28, 2022

7. Notice of Funds Available (NOFA) File Name: Early Intervention Support Services (EISS) NOFA

Division/Office	Funds Available for...	Due Date	Notify Date
DMHAS	Early Intervention Support Services (EISS)	No Later than 4:00 pm on February 18, 2022.	March 28, 2022

General Notifications:

Per the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts (NJ AOC), Drug Court will be renaming their program Recovery Courts for NJ. The program is precisely the same; only the name will change.

1. January 6th at 11 am will be the Statewide PACT Directors meeting
2. January 7th at 11 am will be the Statewide STCF Directors meeting
3. January 13th at 1 pm will be the Statewide IOC Directors meeting
4. January 20th at 10 am will be the Statewide Screening Directors meeting
5. S2559, a telehealth law, was signed into law on December 21st, 2021, by Governor Murphy, extending for the next two years the requirement adopted at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic that health benefits plans reimburse health care providers for telehealth and telemedicine services at the same rate as in-person services, with limited exceptions. At the same time, the legislation charges the Department of Health with conducting an in-depth study of the utilization of telehealth and telemedicine and its effects on patient outcomes, quality and satisfaction, and access to care to inform future decisions on payment structure for these services. This legislation will provide critical support to patients and providers. At the same time, the State continues to address the challenges posed by the pandemic. The Department of Health evaluates how to best leverage payment and telemedicine to improve access to affordable care and maintain the highest quality of care possible. This law remains in effect until 12/31/23.
6. The NJ Department of Health has now made it possible to get free, at-home test kits for NJ residents. For more information, please see the following

link: <https://learn.vaulthealth.com/nj/>. Please share with anyone you feel would be interested and/or could benefit

7. The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) is pleased to announce a reimbursement opportunity, made available with funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)- Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), for eligible COVID19 related expenses.

The objective of this program is to provide non-profit, contracted Mental Health (MH) providers reimbursement for expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, DMHAS will reimburse providers for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), specific Information Technology (IT) Infrastructure costs, COVID testing, and related expenses; designed to help meet challenges related to providing direct service to the public health emergency. Eligible expenditures must have an invoice/purchase date between October 15, 2021, and February 1, 2023.

VII. Staff Reports:

Municipal Alliance Coordinator – Mr. Steve Nebesni

The Fiscal Year 2021 is closed out. Waiting on one more payment to be made.

The Fiscal Year 2022 has started.

The Fiscal Year 2023 applications are out; it is a renewal year, so the same amounts. The due date for the applications to be returned is February 4, 2022. Hopefully, we will have them back for our February 10, 2022, meeting to vote on the funding recommendation.

Addictions Services Coordinator – Ms. Rosalyn Suarez

Morris County received all the signed subgrants back for Grant in Aid and Chapter 51. We are still waiting on the executed award letter from the State for Chapter 51 and should receive that in a few weeks. Subgrant packages are expected to go in February.

Currently, we are preparing to write the 2024 – 2027 County Comprehensive Plan (CCP) that is due at the end of this calendar year on December 31, 2022. More information to follow.

The cut-off date to submit 4th Quarter vouchers are due by January 21, 2022.

On January 10th, the Syringe Access bill passed the NJ Senate and Assembly. This bill will expand access to essential syringe access programs (SAP) throughout the state to provide a safe community base for individuals who are struggling with substance use disorder (SUD) as well as education about preventing overdoses and a safer drug-use.

Mental Health Administrator – Ms. Amy Archer

Virtual Mental Health Awareness Training flyer was circulated and posted on our website. The following trainings are open to the public and are available to anyone interested in the State of New Jersey. Organizations may also request activities specifically scheduled for their employees and volunteers. Question, Persuade, Refer

(QPR) on January 19, 2022, from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm via Zoom. Youth Mental Health First Aid January 26, 2022, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm via Zoom.

Grant in Aid Subgrant packages are in the final execution steps and will go electronically.

During our State Contract Reviews, providers have expressed the need for Youth Psychiatric Services. Currently, the County is discussing ways to possibly address this issue.

VIII. Subcommittee Reports

Funding – moved to the end of the meeting for Closed Session.

Planning – no report

Legislative/Advocacy – no report

County Alliance Steering Subcommittee – no report

IX. Joint PAC Report – Mr. Carmine Deo

January meeting canceled due to weather.

February meeting will have the Co-Chair Elections.

Workforce Work Group has been meeting and Ms. Jennifer Carpinteri chairs it from Atlantic Health. A virtual job fair is in the planning stages.

X. HSAC Report – Ms. Linda Csengeto

Chair's Report – Ms. McEniry reported that a letter is being prepared to support the Homeless Trust Fund and sent to the Commissioners.

County Human Services Director, Ms. Kasey Errico reported that \$13.6 million had been dispersed in rental assistance funds during COVID.

Code Blue Presentation by Maria Fodali, OTA shared reporting from 2018 to 2019. Years 2019 to 2020 stats are ready to be distributed. Years 2020 to 2021 stats are being finalized now. Code Blue is when homeless individuals must be provided with shelter. This is when the temperature is 32 degrees or below, or the wind chill is 0 or less for two hours or more.

There is a well-established workgroup to prepare for Code Blue.

There are currently fewer warming stations due to COVID. Out of County shelters have been used.

Ms. Shelia Carter reported that 2022 funding letters were sent out.

CoC application has been submitted to HUD.

The 2022 Point in Time count will take place on the 4th Tuesday in January. Planning is beginning. This is the day that agencies count the homeless population. There will be no Project Homeless Connect this year.

Childcare – Ms. Rebecca Sherrod reported that there are many incentives for people to take these jobs when responding to the huge shortage of childcare workers.

Workforce Development Board – Ms. Armstrong reported that Career Services are available through the One-Stop Career Center and Employment Training Services.

Morris Sussex and Warren HIV Advisory – Mr. Armstrong reported that World Aids Day is December 1st with activities in Dover. Mr. Armstrong also reported that the goal is to end Aids by 2025.

Advisory Committee on Women – Their concentration has been on Housing and Healthcare. They are always looking for new members.

Council on Aging, Disabilities & Veterans – Ms. Bailey reported they are currently working with Atlantic Health on COVID booster shots for the homebound.

She reported a Pilot Program for services through Uber or Lyft for ambulatory individuals.

The Veteran Service Office hosted the first Fall Fire Pit talk in October 2021. It was a discussion for Veterans about their time in service and navigating life after service.

XI. Old Business

Ms. Errico, as of the end of 2021, we have been able to expend over \$15.2 million from the Emergency Rental Assistance Fund to 1,569 Morris County households. Although the application process is closed, the state is still reviewing those applications submitted prior to the deadline.

XII. New Business

Ms. Ward announced that the Morris County Drug Court had changed its name to Morris County Recovery Court.

XIII. Open to the Public – no comment

XIV. Funding Closed Session (moved to the end of the meeting) – State Contract Funding Review Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Chernick asked that anyone in conflict with State Contract Funding and anyone from the public leave the call. Ms. Eileen Alexander, Ms. Rose Brown, Mr. Carmine Deo, and Ms. Meg Fischer left the call. Motion made by Ms. Rodriguez and seconded by Ms.

Ward to begin the closed session of the meeting. There were no abstentions and no opposition. Motion Carried.

The board closed the open portion of the meeting pursuant to P.L. 1975 Ch. 231 of the Open Public Meetings Act at 5:56 p.m.

Return to Meeting

The meeting reopened at 6:21 p.m. No one reentered the call.

Actions Resulting from Closed Session

Mr. Chernick stated the State Funding Review Committee met, reviewed, and provided a letter of recommendation to the DMHAS. Let the record reflect that in closed session the board voted to approve the letter of recommendations as presented. We need a motion in open session of the same.

Ms. Csengeto made a motion to approve the recommendation letter as discussed in the closed session. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. All were in favor with two abstentions and no opposition. Motion carried.

- XV.** Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Csengeto. Ms. Rodriguez seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Marie Hess
Clerk II