

Behavioral Health Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 14, 2025

Meeting Name:	<i>Behavioral Health Council</i>	Meeting Location:	<i>Virtual Conference</i>
Meeting Date:	<i>7/14/2025</i>	Minutes Recorder:	<i>Robyn Brown</i>
Meeting Time:	<i>10:00 am</i>	Minutes Reviewer:	<i>Michelle Hardy</i>

Meeting Attendees and Organizational Representation:	<i>Meredith Miller (WCBOE), Dru Vanderwende (Hope King (DSS), Jeff Merritt (Wicomico County Council), Kathy Walker (MAC Inc), Keith Richardson (Warwick Manor), Lindsay Tayman (Drug Court), Lisa Renegar (WiCHD), Michelle Hardy (LBHA), Robyn Brown (LBHA), Anthony Dickerson (Christian Shelter), Alexis Laws (TidalHealth and community member), Ann Simpers (Mid-Shore Behavioral Health), Tammy Griffin (WiCHD)</i>
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TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Welcome and Introductions	Meredith Miller welcomed everyone to the meeting and led the introductions.	
Approval of Minutes	Lisa Renegar moved to accept the May minutes as written, and Lindsay Tayman seconded the motion and agreed upon by the group.	
Prevention Program Updates - Tammy Griffin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carol Fenner who supervised has retired after 21 years. • Cindy Shifler is on an extended medical leave. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers . • Grants for FY 26 have been submitted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Still waiting on approval letters ○ New firearm prevention grant has been awarded which will focus on storage, safety and education in the community • The DART program is going strong 15-20 youth participate every month • Kaitlin Galow would like to remind everyone that we are serving everyone 18+ for tobacco cessation. There are in person and online sessions. 	
LBHA and State Updates	A. Update on Tri County SUD Residential Needs Assessment for Pregnant Women and Women with Children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beacon of Salisbury University was selected to complete the Tri-County Substance Use Disorder Residential Needs Assessment for pregnant women and women with children 	

- The report is finalized, and a recommendation has been made to reintroduce residential treatment for pregnant women and women with children, although funding is needed to implement this.
- We can then take that data that was gathered and potentially go after some grant opportunities to set up some type of program on the lower shore to address the needs for pregnant women and women with children.

B. FY 26 Budget, Conditions of Awards

- Behavioral Health Administration's new processes have significantly delayed contracts and signed conditions of awards with vendors, with only five or six out of nearly 25 signed to date, which is atypical as they are usually signed by April
- BHA has confirmed via a letter that the LBHA can move forward with our contract with Lower Shore Friends, a vendor needing upfront money. They should receive their first quarter draw soon to continue operations. Other providers who bill for reimbursement are stable.

C. Transition to Carelon ASO (Administrative Service Organization)

- Ongoing transition issues with Carelon ASO, the Medicaid provider, affecting uninsured clients' payment approvals, which has been escalated to the deputy secretary level

D. RFP - Youth Targeted Case Management.

- Wraparound Maryland was selected as the youth targeted case management service provider for FY26,
- An RFP for adult target case management will be released next year.

E. Pending LBHA Staffing Vacancy and Recruitment

- The Addiction Coordinator position, vacant since Brian Polk's retirement, is close to being filled after successful interviews.
- Brian Polk, who was one of our addiction coordinators, retired on April 1st.
- Interviews were held and we are waiting on references and reviewing the budget.

F. Overdose Prevention Team Updates/ Community Harm Reduction Vending Machines

- Julie Willis, the Overdose Prevention Coordinator, has successfully transitioned into her role and is leading efforts to deploy community harm reduction vending machines, five of which are now fully stocked in the county

G. MDH Moratorium on New Providers

- There has been a moratorium on new providers of psychiatric rehabilitation programs otherwise

	<p>known as PRPs as well as partial hospitalization programs known as PHPs and level II IOP programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This was lifted on July 1st for rural areas of the state <p>H. Seen an increase in a variety of complex individuals and provider complaints/ Has increased our workload</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● With the potential influx of new providers, we will potentially need to do more monitoring. <p>I. 4 Walls Update on Telehealth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outpatient mental health clinics (OMHC's) in order to bill for telehealth either had to have the client or the mental health provider behind the four walls of their clinic in order to provide telehealth to someone in their home or vice versa. ● The state has put in for a waiver on that requirement for CMS and it was approved. ● If a provider is still is teleworking from their home, they can do telehealth to their client that is also in their home <p>J. Outpatient MH Clinic Physician Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There is a CMS requirement for OMHC's to have a physician medical director, ideally a psychiatrist, which could financially strain clinics, particularly those in rural areas like Wicomico County that largely rely on psychiatric nurse practitioners and struggle to find psychiatrists ● In 2018 or 2019 the regulation was modified in the state that a psychiatric nurse practitioner could take the place of the physician medical director. A medical director must be on site 20 hours a week and they would be responsible for the full medical oversight. The CMS regulation never changed for billing medicaid ● The options appear to be: A program will need to hire a physician to be the clinical medical director with oversight or a program will have to let the OMHC license go and bill as a group practice provider. More guidance is forthcoming from BHA. 	
<p>Need to Add New Members to the BHC Council- looking for suggestions</p>	<p>Need to Add New Members to the BHC Council- looking for suggestions (Jeff Merritt will check if a member has to be a Wicomico County Resident)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Melissa Lahey - is no longer with the court system and Lindsay Tayman is her proxy ● Keith Richardson wishes to remain on the council but in a different capacity. He has retired ● Michelle will reach out to the Warden to see if she would like be on the Council ● Tammy Griffin will fill in for Cindy for the present time <p>Leadership and Term Limits for the Behavioral Health Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Many council members, including Meredith Miller (Chair) and Bishop Dickerson (Vice-Chair), will 	

	<p>reach their six-year term limit in 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council will need to think about nominating new leadership, though they can continue serving until successors are named if no one is found from the county school system or clergy 	
Partner Updates	<p>Meredith Miller - WCBOE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stacy Walker is the new mental health supervisor, who will oversee 42 school social workers across Wicomico County Public Schools, ensuring at least one social worker in every school, including alternative education programs Our ELT (Early Learning Transition) program is for pre-k, k and first grade students that are struggling to maintain in the classroom with severe behavioral behavior issues. They can attend for up to 45 days to try to work on regulating those emotions and behaviors. PATH, which is the same type of program but for second - fifth graders Our Fresh Start Back to School program will be held on Sunday, August 24th at the Civic Center from 1-3pm <p>Alexis Laws - TidalHealth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TidalHealth Pediatric Development and Therapy is currently up and running. There are clinic locations in Millsboro and Salisbury <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referrals have to come from the psychologist, psychiatrist, or their primary care office. The parents can call in to ask questions though <p>Kathy Walker - MAC Inc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAC Inc. will host a fundraiser called "Dine and Drink" at Brew River on August 28th, from 5 PM to 9 PM, featuring festivities on the outside patio with an indoor option in case of rain <p>Anthony Dickerson - Christian Shelter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnering with One Hope, where a mental health therapist who will work with guests at the Christian Shelter to provide support and resources, addressing the ongoing need for case management Considering housing youth at the shelter and potentially opening a few beds due to the closing of the youth shelter in December because there is a great need in the community "Conversation on the Bench," a national program to raise homelessness awareness on October 9th and 10th, which will be streamed live on Facebook, and We will be introducing the Covenant Partners program, requesting \$20 monthly donations to support the shelter <p>Dru Vanderwende - NAMI Maryland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAMI Maryland continues to hold support group meetings for family members of individuals with mental health issues every fourth Thursday of the month at 6:30 PM at the Tidal Health Crisis Center 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cross Point Church of Nazarene, through its "Heal the City" ministry, has purchased an adjacent property to establish the Nazarene Ministry Center, which will include a four-bed unit for unwed mothers, an immigration services center, and an automotive teaching garage for community employment training 	
Upcoming and Past LBHA Events	<p style="text-align: center;">Upcoming and Past LBHA Events</p> <p>A. Planning for Go-Purple/ Recovery Month/ Overdose Awareness Event August 28. Shatter the Stigma Walk September 27, Lower Shore Shorebirds Kick off Game September 6 . Glow Walk for Suicide Prevention to be held in October</p> <p>B. Annual Refresh, Renew, Relax Conference for those in recovery on June 6 at Wicomico Youth and Civic Center- Event was successful with 79 in attendance</p> <p>C. “It’s More than a Job” Training for Behavioral Health Professionals on Working with Military/ Veterans and their Families on June 4th. 46 attended. Was a great training</p> <p>D. Statewide Veteran Crisis Intercept Mapping Summit June 16 was held at the Annapolis Naval Academy- Michelle was a panel presenter</p> <p>E. MHFA Training at Wor Wic on 7/17- registration is closed</p>	
	<p>Strategic Planning Session for the BHC Council and Workgroup Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are looking to hold this in person meeting possibly in the fall 	
Upcoming Meeting Schedule	<p>Calendar Year 2025 Meeting Schedule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> September 8, 2025 November 3, 2025 	
NEXT MEETING	Monday, September 8, 2025 at 10:00 am	

ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE

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