

COUNTY OF MORRIS
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES
P.O. Box 900
Morristown, New Jersey 07963-0900

Board of County Commissioners

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Division Director
Amy Archer
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MENTAL HEALTH ADDICTION SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD (MHASAB)
Thursday, February 08, 2024, 5:15 PM
Meeting Minutes

I. Call to order and Attendance

Ms. Archer called to order at 5:20 PM. A quorum was established, and attendance was as follows:

Board Members:

Gregg Benson, Citizen Representative
Chris Chernick, Citizen Representative
Linda Csengeto, Citizen Representative
Victor DeVito, Citizen Representative
Julian Hill, Esq., Morris County Prosecutor's Office
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
Chelsea Whiting, Morris County Sherriff's Office

Board Liaisons:

Michelle Borden, NewBridge Services
Rose Brown, Mental Health Association
Cynthia Gatica, NJ DHS Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services

Morris County Staff:

Amy Archer, Division of Community & Behavioral Health Services

Kasey Errico, Director, Department of Human Services

Anamika Fnu, Division of Community & Behavioral Health Services

Mackensie Fosko, Division of Community & Behavioral Health Services

II. 2024 Slate of Officers – Ms. Archer

Ms. Archer stated that the nominees presented at our November meeting were Mr. Chris Chernick for Chair and Mr. Julian Hill, Esq. for Vice-Chair. No other nominees were presented to the committee. Ms. LaJuan Tucker motioned to accept Mr. Chernick as Chair and Mr. Hill as Vice-Chair, and Ms. Csengeto seconded. All were in favor, with no opposition and one abstention. Motion carried.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Mr. Chernick, Chair, requested a motion to approve the September 14, 2023, meeting minutes distributed before the meeting. Mr. Hill motioned to approve the minutes, and Ms. Csengeto seconded the motion. All were in favor, with three abstentions and no opposition. Motion carried.

B. Mr. Chernick, Chair, requested a motion to approve October 12, 2023, meeting minutes distributed before the meeting. Mr. Hill motioned to approve the minutes, and Ms. Csengeto seconded the motion. All were in favor, with one abstention and no opposition. The motion carried.

IV. Presentation – PIK/CARE, Harm Reduction – Emily Monks

Ms. Monks, Prevention is Key-CARES, gave a presentation on Harm Reduction. Harm reduction is about minimizing harm to individuals. This includes efforts to decrease overdoses, prevent deaths, and curb the transmission of infectious diseases. It's not just about the individual but also about safeguarding their families and the broader community.

Through the harm reduction program funded by the Morris County Opioid Settlement funding, vending machines are being installed in Morris County, starting with the Correctional Facility. These machines will dispense Narcan and provide resources on how to prevent overdoses.

V. Open to the public – no comment

VI. Chair Report – Mr. Chernick

A. Mr. Chernick urged Advisory members to attend the in-person meetings, if possible.

B. Mr. Chernick encouraged Advisory members to provide ideas for presentations. If you have a topic, particularly mental health or substance use, please email Ms. Archer at aarcher@co.morris.nj.us or Ms. Suarez at rosuarez@co.morris.nj.us.

C. Mr. Chernick thanked MHASAB members and said he was honored to serve alongside Mr. Hill as Vice-Chair.

VII. State Liaison Report: Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services – Ms. Gatica

A. Funding Opportunities:

i. Crisis Receiving Stabilization Center (CRSC) RFP

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued by the New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJ DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) for the creation of new CRSCs. This initiative provides services to those needing immediate in-person crisis intervention and stabilization for a behavioral health crisis. The purpose of the CRSC initiative is to create programming that utilizes best practices for interventions in behavioral health crisis intervention and produce cost savings by mitigating the use of Emergency Departments (EDs) and preventing unnecessary or inappropriate hospitalization. Furthermore, CRSC intends to reduce police engagement, arrests, incarcerations, and 911 calls.

Total funding for this CRSC initiative is up to \$37,235,284.00, including one-time start-up funds of \$2,000,000.00 and Capital Funds of \$833,330.00. DMHAS anticipates making up to five (5) awards to \$7,447,057.00 per award, including up to \$400,000.00 in one-time start-up funds and up to \$166,666.00 in Capital Funds per award. Funding for this RFP is provided by.

1. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) Community Mental Health Block Grant Crisis Set Aside.
2. COVID-19 Supplemental Funding (appropriated through the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2021, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplement Appropriations Act 2021).
3. ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act 2021) and Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA).
4. State appropriations. All funding is subject to Federal and State appropriations.
5. Proposals must be received by 4:00 PM on March 27, 2024.

B. Announcements:

i. Mobile Crisis Outreach Response Team (MCORT) Awards:

1. Legacy Treatment Services covering Burlington, Mercer, Camden, Gloucester, Salem, Cumberland, Cape May, and Atlantic Counties.
2. CSPNJ covers Monmouth, Ocean, Middlesex, and Union counties.
3. Bridgeway covering Morris, Sussex, Hunterdon, Somerset, and Warren counties.
4. Care Plus covers Bergen and Passaic counties.

- ii.** On January 25, 2024, Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman announced that New Jersey counties can now apply for grants to promote communication and language access for deaf, hard-of-hearing, and deaf-blind residents of all ages. The \$600,000 program will be funded through the Human Services Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Award amounts will vary, but counties can receive a maximum award of \$70,000.

iii. Counties may use the funding to implement the following initiatives:

1. [Installation of hearing induction loops](#) that improve hearing and communication for individuals with hearing aids.
2. [Installation](#) of public videophones to help individuals using sign language communicate and associated connectivity costs.
3. [Expanding access to sign language interpreter services](#);
4. [Increasing access to captioning services](#), which helps improve access to content for those who have hearing loss and
5. Development of community, educational, or healthcare-related programming or services accessible in American Sign Language.

Interested applicants must be from a county government agency in New Jersey. Only counties **not** awarded funding in the [first round](#) are eligible to apply. Applications can be submitted on behalf of the county human service director, county executive, county commissioner, or other relevant positions. Applications must contain a proposed estimated budget, project description, and implementation timeline.

For more information and eligibility requirements, please visit [here](#).

Completed applications must be sent to melissa.spirito@dhs.nj.gov no later than 5 PM on February 23rd, 2024.

iv. NJ Health Department Unveils New Overdose Mortality Dashboard—

TRENTON— The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) is further targeting resources to communities that need them most with the release of a new Overdose Mortality Data Explorer, which allows the public to explore demographic disparities in fatal overdoses by county.

The Data Explorer dashboard displays drug overdose data from New Jersey's State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System (SUDORS). SUDORS provides comprehensive data on unintentional drug overdose deaths collected from death certificates and medical examiner reports with detailed toxicology findings. This new resource allows users to explore demographic disparities by county, continuing our efforts to bring data into the hands of community stakeholders who can take action to prevent and respond to overdoses. The data accounts for all overdose deaths from 2012 through 2022 currently.

With this grant, New Jersey will be able to respond more quickly, effectively, and equitably to residents' needs, using data to drive action to reduce overdose deaths and related harms. This funding will enable:

1. Collecting, analyzing, and disseminating high-quality overdose morbidity and mortality data, including greater identification of health disparities in fatal and nonfatal overdoses
2. Continuing successful DOH programs, such as our Overdose Fatality Review Teams

3. Supporting innovative and evidence-informed programs, including academic detailing for health systems, Emergency Department Peer Navigator programs, and community-EMS overdose co-response teams
 4. Supporting an array of harm reduction tools and resources, including email-based naloxone, distribution of fentanyl test strips, outreach and education in overdose hotspots, and harm reduction peer navigation and outreach services.
<https://www.nj.gov/health/news/2024/approved/20240129b.shtml>
- v. **Upcoming Meetings:**
1. **Statewide Early Intervention Support Services (EISS) Directors Meeting**-Thursday, February 1st, 2024, 10:00 AM. This meeting will be virtual.
 2. **Statewide PACT Directors Meeting**-Friday, February 2nd, 2024, 10:00 AM. This meeting will be virtual.

VIII. Staff Reports

A. Municipal Alliance Coordinator – Ms. Fosko

- i. Ms. Fosko is organizing the upcoming Countywide Alliance Meeting, which is scheduled for next Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at 5:00 PM in the Human Services Conference Room.
- ii. Additionally, she is actively involved in developing the FY24 Plan using the Municipal Alliance Grant System (MAGS) platform, where Municipal Alliances can submit all forms and documents related to grants.

B. Addiction Services Coordinator – Ms. Archer, on behalf of Ms. Suarez

- i. 669 pharmacies participating in the Narcan distribution program in New Jersey and have handed out 67,300 kits.
- ii. At the State Alcohol and Drug Directors meeting, the Transportation, Reimbursement, & Invoicing Program (TRIP) was discussed. The program was launched on November 27, 2023, through a BLOCK grant, and the intent was to eliminate transportation barriers. Providers can request reimbursement for transportation costs for individuals to prevent, treat, and for recovery support services. The expenses for January were only \$800.00, which was surprising since transportation has always been a big barrier. Providers are encouraged to utilize this program if appropriate.
- iii. The 2017-2023 Substance Use Overview dashboard is live on the DMHAS website
www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhas/publications/dashboard. The 2023 data will be added soon.

C. Mental Health Administrator – Ms. Archer

- i. At the State meeting for Mental Health Administrators there was discussion on the new initiatives like MCORT, Arrive Together, 988, mental health diversion, etc. Mental Health Administrators have recognized the challenge of selecting appropriate programs for various situations. As a response, they plan to hold a closed session meeting this

month to address this issue. The goal is to develop a flow chart to guide providers on the appropriate use of each program to educate the consumers and the public.

- ii. The State thanked all Mental Health Advisory Boards for their work reviewing the 988 RFPs. Although local recommendations were not chosen in all areas, they recognize the time and effort each Board put into the review process. Participation is valued and critical to the selection process.

IX. Subcommittee Reports

A. Planning - no report

B. Legislative/Advocacy – no report

C. County Alliance Steering Committee (CASS) – Ms. Fosko

- i. During the CASS meeting on February 6th, 2024, they explored potential Countywide programs for the 2024 Supplemental funding. One initiative they have been researching is a Realtor Training program offered by Prevention is Key. This program educates realtors on ensuring safety during open houses, particularly by securing any medications in the homes they showcase.
- ii. They are considering sponsoring First Night Morris, an annual substance-free and family-friendly event on New Year’s Eve in Morristown.

X. Joint PAC Report – Ms. Borden

A. Our last meeting was on Friday, February 2nd, 2024.

Ms. Brown and Ms. Borden were once again chosen as Co-chairs.

There was a presentation about the NJ4S program. This new school initiative focuses on prevention, evaluations, and brief interventions related to mental health and education for faculty and parents.

B. DCF Stats for Morris East Office

- i. 91-Child Protection Calls
- ii. 16-Child Welfare Calls
- iii. 01-Child on Child Sex Abuse Calls
- iv. 30-Domestic Violence calls
- v. 27-SUD (substance use disorder) Calls

C. DCF Stats for Morris West Office

- i. 113-Child Protection Calls
- ii. 23-Child Welfare Calls
- iii. 02-Child on Child Sex Abuse Calls
- iv. 49- Domestic Violence Calls
- v. 26- SUD (substance use disorder) Calls

D. On January 26th, 2024, the Mental Health Association held the Project Homeless Connect event at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Morris County. 103 participants accessed resources from all hospital systems and 38 providers. Over 50 volunteers helped; despite a tight venue, its central location was accessible to the homeless.

Transportation was provided, and the event showcased Morris County's unity in aiding those in need.

- E. Ms. Borden and Ms. Brown discussed the need for diverse housing options for those not ready for independent living, including group homes, supportive housing, and temporary housing. A continuum of care allows individuals to transition from group homes to supportive housing and eventually to independent living.
- F. The latest news from the PAC is that a 'Game of Life' event is being organized at Madison High School. It has been confirmed that 29 providers will be participating, and they are expecting a student turnout of 900. These providers will engage the students with different scenarios and provide them with resources to help them navigate real-life situations. These resources could cover a wide range of topics, from financial planning and cost of living to dealing with serious issues like mental health or addiction.

XI. HSAC Report - Ms. Hess – The written report was submitted before the meeting.

- A. The last HSAC meeting was on January 6, 2024, via Webex, as our conference room underwent technology upgrades.
 - i. Our slate of officers. Ms. Rebecca Sherrod will stay on as our Chair. Ms. Joann Bjornson will be the Vice Chair.
 - ii. The HSAC Orientation was presented, and HSAC welcomed the newly appointed member, Ms. Donna Boyce. Ms. Boyce is also the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Women and will be our new liaison between the two groups.
- B. NJDCF launched a new webpage for our "Family Connects NJ" (home visiting program for parents of newborns). The website is [Family Connects NJ](#). This starts in five counties: Essex, Middlesex, Mercer, Gloucester, and Cumberland. (For the counties that are not yet active, there is still a link that will get the parent to the "Connecting NJ Hub," which does provide resources for all counties.) On the Family Connects NJ webpage, in addition to the links at the top, there are five informational topics in the *scrolling banner*. These are: "Birth Families" (the benefits of participating in the program, including a Q&A and Fact Sheet), "Adoptive Parents and Resource Families" (the programmatic benefits for these parents, including a Q&A), "Bereaved Families" (Stillborn or recent death of newborn I including a Q&A), "Doctors/Clinicians" (includes a fact sheet for medical practitioners and a Q&A), "Registered Nurses" (includes a fact sheet and a Q&A). **NOTE: Morris County will be eligible in January 2027.**
- C. Ms. Hess attended the Project Homeless Connect event on Friday, January 26, 2024, at St. Peter's Episcopal Church.

XII. Old Business- no comment

XIII. New Business-

- A. Mr. Benson mentioned that GCADA was established in 1989 to primarily focus on preventing drug abuse. However, significant changes were introduced on November 20, 2023, with the enactment of Bill 5096. The council was rebranded as the "Governor's Council on Substance Use Disorder," and the Municipal

Alliances shifted their focus towards preventing substance use disorder. This terminology change aims to reduce the stigma associated with these conditions.

- B.** Ms. Erico discussed the NJ 211 website, which will help raise awareness of existing resources. It allows providers to update information in real-time, ensuring the most up-to-date and accurate information. Users can access local data and search for specific resources. The state has invested in making the site accessible and user-friendly. Providers should keep their information current to assist consumers who are directed to this resource.
- XIV.** Mr. Chernick adjourned the meeting at 6:51 PM.

Respectfully Submitted.
Anamika, Administrative Professional