

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

April 26, 2023

10:00 a.m.

Region V Systems, 1645 N Street

MEMBERS PRESENT: Renee Duffek, Corrie Kielty, Jill Kuzelka, Sarah McEntarffer, Rachel Mulcahy, Laura Osborne, Gale Pohlmann, Michele Vana, Evette Watts

MEMBERS ABSENT: Greg Janak, Stephanie Knight, Rebecca Meinders, Kelsey Schwab, Kim Schroeder

OTHERS PRESENT: Barb Forsman, Theresa Henning, Patrick Kreifels, Sandy Morrissey, Erin Rourke, Amanda Tyerman-Harper, Marti Rabe, Region V Systems

HOUSEKEEPING / ANNOUNCEMENTS / INTRODUCTIONS

Osborne called the meeting to order at 10:01. a.m. followed by announcements, introductions, and rollcall. A quorum was present.

OPEN MEETING ACT INFORMATION

Osborne noted that Open Meeting Act information is posted at Region V Systems as required by the Open Meetings Act. Notification of this meeting and information regarding availability of the agenda was provided through a legal notice in the Lincoln Journal Star, published April 12, 2023.

ADDITIONS / CHANGES TO AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mulcahy made a motion, seconded by Kuzelka, to approve the Consent Agenda (Minutes – March 29, 2023, FY 22-23 Compliance Management Report, RGB Report) as presented. There was no discussion. Voting aye were: Duffek, Kielty, Kuzelka, McEntarffer, Mulcahy, Osborne, Pohlmann, Vana, and Watts; nays none.

ACTION / PRIORITY ITEMS

April Contract Shifts: Tyerman-Harper presented contract shift requests from two providers.

- Blue Valley Behavioral Health (BVBH): BVBH submitted two shifts. One request would allow a shift of \$10,000 from Outpatient Mental Health (MH) youth to Outpatient MH adult services. The other request would shift \$24,000 from Assessment Adult to Intensive Outpatient Substance Use Disorder (SUD).
- Houses of Hope – TASC: TASC is requesting a shift of \$89,894 from Crisis Response SUD to Crisis Response MH; \$61,769 from Intensive Community Services SUD to Crisis Response MH; and \$50,000 from Intensive Community Services SUD to Intensive Community Services MH.

Kreifels commented that these shifts will allow providers to use their allocated funds most effectively. Mulcahy made a motion, seconded by Duffek, to recommend the Board approve the provider contract shifts as presented. Voting aye were: Duffek, Kielty, Kuzelka, McEntarffer, Mulcahy, Osborne, Pohlmann, Vana, and Watts; nays none.

ARPA Collaborative Project – Voluntary Crisis Response Center:

- Tyerman-Harper reiterated that two organizations had submitted Letters of Interest for this proposal, and subsequently submitted Requests for Proposals (RFP) for this collaborative project. The Review Committee evaluated and scored the RFPs and selected The Bridge Behavioral Health (BBH) as the recipient for this project

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pending any additional reviews or approvals required by the State. BBH was the entity with the highest score, though committee members indicated that it was a somewhat difficult decision with the scoring being close. The other entity applying was Integrated Behavioral Health Services (IBHS).

- The project will provide voluntary crisis stabilization and an expansion of mental health respite beds. There will be four beds available for crisis stabilization and twelve beds for mental health respite. Lancaster County ARPA funds will be used to renovate the first floor of the current BBH building. One of the deciding factors in this decision was the proposed design of the facility.

Pohlmann made a motion, seconded by Vana, to recommend the Board approve awarding this project to Bridge Behavioral Health pending reviews or approvals required by the State. Voting aye were: Duffek, Kielty, Kuzelka, McEntarffer, Mulcahy, Osborne, Pohlmann, Vana, and Watts; nays none.

FY 23-24 Strategic Plan (Draft):

- Kreifels explained that it had been his intention to develop a more comprehensive Strategic Plan for FY 23-24 based on a thorough analysis of where we want to go rather than what we are doing to maintain our business activities. Given his short time in the role as Regional Administrator, he has decided to allow himself grace and time to gather input using a SWOT analysis. That would entail analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) using input from network providers, BHAC, Board and other stakeholders and hopefully move in a new direction concerning this Plan.
- Anyone wishing to provide input before the plan goes to the Governing Board Executive Committee meeting on May 8 is asked to address that information to the Region before Friday, May 5.

Kielty made a motion, seconded by Mulcahy, to move the Plan forward to the Board, recognizing that changes will be forthcoming. Voting aye were: Duffek, Kielty, Kuzelka, McEntarffer, Mulcahy, Osborne, Pohlmann, Vana, and Watts; nays none.

2023 Network Provider Survey Results: Kreifels explained that this information was provided for your information and was reviewed with Network Providers at the April 17 Network Provider meeting. Areas Kreifels commented on were:

- Question 6: Have you experienced consistent messages / direction from Region V staff? One respondent had answered “no” to this question. Kreifels asked that it be brought to his attention if there are situations where messages are not clear and commented on the many meetings / opportunities available where information is shared. He asked that anyone who feels this way about any topic reach out to him as it is a goal of the Region to provide consistent messaging.
- Question 7: Are you involved in decision-making processes concerning the Regional System of Care? Three respondents answered “no.” Kreifels commented that the Region values the providers’ input and listed examples of various initiatives that were driven by provider input.
- Question 10: Please rate the information / materials provided as communicated in between meetings when necessary. A respondent recommended that meeting agenda materials be provided 3-5 business days before the meeting. Kreifels commented that a strategy is being developed to be more proactive regarding agenda preparation.
- Question 16: Does the Regional Administrator get involved with stakeholders to make improvements for Region V’s service area? Kreifels stressed his availability to attend any meeting where his attendance might be helpful and asked providers to reach out with any questions / concerns in this regard. Additionally, there is a team of knowledgeable and talented staff who can also be responsive to any needs.
- Question 22: A respondent commented that a Likert scale be used to rate the RA’s performance. Kreifels explained that he likes the yes / no format because it requires a clear response. Consideration will be given to modifying responses to a Likert scale for the FY 23-24 survey.
- Osborne pointed out some positive remarks concerning Kreifels. Kreifels commented that the transition to his current role was not an easy one, but he has had a lot of support which has helped to make it a positive experience. His priority is the behavioral health system, and he was concerned that there be no interference with the system as he transitioned into his role.

Kuzelka made a motion, seconded by Mulcahy, to recommend the Board accept and approve the survey results as presented. Voting aye were: Duffek, Kielty, Kuzelka, McEntarffer, Mulcahy, Osborne, Pohlmann, Vana, and Watts; nays none.

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2023 BHAC Survey Results: Kreifels thanked BHAC members for filling out the survey and reviewed several of the comments.

- Page 3: Do you have a clear understanding of your role? It was suggested that follow up with new members might be helpful as there is a significant learning curve when serving on the BHAC. Establishing a mentorship was discussed and new members indicated they would appreciate that. The Region will work to institute that measure.
- Page 9: Does the BHAC receive feedback and follow up from the ideas and recommendations carried forward to the RGB? The Governing Board Report, part of the consent agenda, was instituted to help close the loop and provide the BHAC with information regarding how the Board reacted to BHAC recommendations. In addition, full Board minutes are posted on the Region V website within 10 days of the Board meeting.
- Page 11: Are BHAC meetings an effective use of your time? There was a comment that hybrid meetings were a nice option. Kreifels explained that, per the Open Meetings Act, entities such as the Region are allowed to hold one half of their scheduled meeting as a hybrid. Because the BHAC meets seven times a year, that allows for three meetings to be held as hybrid per year.
- Page 13: Are you well informed about BHAC by-laws and meeting procedures? BHAC bylaws are provided during orientation, but not otherwise. It was suggested that the Region send the by-laws out this summer, identifying any changes.
- Page 14: Are you well informed about the services Region V Systems contracts for? It was suggested that providers offer a brief overview of their agency / services for BHAC members. This will be a topic for the Network Provider meeting in May.

Vana made a motion, seconded by McEntarffer, to recommend the Board accept the BHAC Survey Results as presented. Voting aye were: Duffek, Kielty, Kuzelka, McEntarffer, Mulcahy, Osborne, Pohlmann, Vana, and Watts; nays none.

FY 22-23 Site Visit Report Summaries: Tyerman-Harper presented site visit reports for the following providers:

- Associates in Counseling and Treatment (ACT): ACT provides SUD assessments. A two percent sample was reviewed and 100% of the units were verified. No program fidelity was required this fiscal year, and the agency is in substantial compliance with minimum standards and contractual requirements.
- CenterPointe: CenterPointe provides a number of services. A two percent sample was reviewed for all services with the exception of psychiatric residential services (PRR). All services scored 100 percent of the units verified with the exception of PPR. The exception involved one unit billed for a client who was Medicaid eligible at the time of services. A corrective action plan and payback was required. No program fidelity was required this fiscal year, and the agency is in substantial compliance with minimum standards and contractual requirements.

Kielty made a motion, seconded by Vana, to recommend the Board accept Site Visit Report Summaries for ACT and CenterPointe. Voting aye were: Duffek, Kielty, Kuzelka, McEntarffer, Mulcahy, Osborne, Pohlmann, Vana, and Watts; nays none.

OTHER UPDATES/INFORMATION:

Behavioral Health/Legislative Updates: Kreifels discussed the following topics:

- Appropriations Committee: The Appropriations Committee has recommended a five percent increase for providers. The increase would take place in increments with a three percent increase in the first year of the biennium and a two percent increase in the second year. It is unknown at this time whether or not funding to support the increase will be included in the budget.
- 10.3 Million: Following the Governor's removal of the 10.3 million dollars from the statewide Regional budgets there has been a lot of discussion with Senators. A number of BHAC and Board members have reached out, and / or testified about the impact this loss of funding will have on the behavioral health system. Senators Wishart and Dorn will do a presentation regarding the budget on May 1 and Kreifels will send links so individuals can register to attend the Budget Bills Briefing. The Legislature will submit its budget May 2. Mixed messages have been received regarding whether or not the 10.3 million has been added back into the budget.
- LB433: This bill, submitted by Senator Jacobson, will not make it out of committee this year; however, Kreifels feels that there has been a positive impact on the Regions' relationship with DHHS. The State-to-Region

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contract for FY 24 provides for greater autonomy and allows for monthly contract shifts rather than quarterly shifts and greater flexibility for flex funds.

- Other Bills: Kreifels provided copies relating to several other bills (LB727, LB227, and LB191) that have an impact on behavioral health in some way. These types of bills have been referred to as “Christmas tree” bills as they include a number of bills that are related in some way and are non-controversial.

Reinvestment Funds / ARPA Funds:

- Family Resource Center: There has been positive movement as the service definition and the initial draft of the the Request for Proposals (RFP) for this project are being finalized with the intent to release the RPF by June 1. Lancaster County has dedicated six million dollars toward providing a facility for this project. Available services will include crisis response, up to five therapy sessions, ninety days to six months of Emergency Community Support, and Mental Health Respite. Services will be funded by Region V and will be offered in an alternate location until the facility is available.
- Kreifels commented that he appreciated DHHS Director Smith’s recent efforts to prioritize this project and noted that she has been responsive to the ongoing dialogue regarding challenges the Region has experienced in getting responses to proposals submitted to DHHS.
- Discussion continues about the concept of establishing a political subdivision to provide management and oversight of this project due to the diverse stakeholders involved.
- Halfway House – St. Monica’s: This project continues to experience delays and now anticipates a June 1 start date.

Emergency System:

- Lincoln Regional Center (LRC): Dialogue continues with LRC regarding flowthrough and lack of access to LRC beds. Multiple solution-focused strategies are being discussed and include ways to expedite discharges. A peer support specialist, “bridget,” who would be able to assist a discharged individual to find supports in the community, is one such strategy.
- Meetings continue with LPD and Bryan Health regarding individuals in need of hospitalization, who may need to be transported out of the Region.
- At a recent BETA training for law enforcement, it was revealed that there are a lot of people who are unfamiliar with 988. BHAC members were urged to talk to people to spread the information and educate them on the differences between 911 and 988. 988 is staffed to handle up to 200 calls a day and is currently receiving 50-55 calls. A PowerPoint slide deck was provided to the Network Providers and will be forwarded to BHAC members.

Regional Prevention Coordination: Morrissey relayed the following information:

- The Garrett Lee Smith grant, which is focused on suicide prevention, is in its last year.
- The State intends to apply for a continuation of the Zero Suicide initiative.
- A significant number of various types of suicide prevention trainings are taking place.
- Morrissey commented that it appears that a decrease in stigma related to mental health is becoming evident as more people are open to talking about personal experiences.
- Approximately 70 youth attended the Red / White Tailgate on April 22. Youth are excited about June Jam though it has been difficult to recruit adult sponsors.
- Regional Prevention Coordination (RPC) may apply for a Partnership for Success Grant in collaboration with several Region V counties where data indicates a need.

FY 21-22 Annual Report – Revised Funding & Expenditures Page: The Regional CPA audit was presented at the April Governing Board meeting and the Funding and Expenditures Page was revised to reflect those final figures. The Governing Board approved the final Report.

BHAC Membership / Attendance: One BHAC member’s attendance will make her ineligible to continue as a BHAC member unless she appeals to the Board for reinstatement.

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Opioid Settlement Funds: To date the Region has not directly received any funds from the Opioid Settlement. It is anticipated that approximately ten million dollars will be available to the Regions over a period of eighteen years. The funds are currently with DHHS. Initial decisions by the Statewide Opioid Committee were challenged due to failure to follow the Open Meetings Act rules. The group is scheduled to reconvene on May 15.

FY 23-24 Meeting Schedule (Draft): Attached for informational purposes.

FY 23-24 Site Visit Schedule (Draft): Attached for informational purposes.

Network Continuous Quality Improvement: Rourke provided qualitative data regarding implementation of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and shared several examples of individuals showing significant decreases in hospitalizations and self-harming behaviors. Qualitative data is being aggregated and will be shared at a future meeting. Early indications are that DBT has helped generate greater attendance in groups, a decrease in seclusion and restraint, and better medication compliance. All these behaviors serve to facilitate discharge.

FY 22-23 Capacity Utilization Summaries: These reports were emailed to BHAC members. Lack of drawdown of funding reflects the COVID driven increase in individuals who were eligible for Medicaid. It is anticipated that as Medicaid begins to “unwind” the Region will begin to see more individuals returning to Region funding.

Wellbeing Initiative Quarterly Report Q3:

- The Region contracts with Wellbeing Initiative, a peer-run entity that initiates and provides a number of projects. In the last quarter 30 Peer Support Specialists were trained and certified. These individuals have lived experience with mental health challenges and have proven to be a very useful component for the continuum of care as they are able to relate with persons served in a unique way.
- Thirteen WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) facilitators were trained. WRAP planning has been expanding into the Mental Health Crisis Center, schools, county jails, and other venues. A WRAP plans helps individuals plan ahead for a mental health crisis by learning to recognize triggers and establishing a list of coping skills / resources.

FY 22-23 Training Plan: Attached for informational purposes.

Other Business:

- Tyerman-Harper briefly commented on a situation regarding a local youth who had ingested Benadryl and had experienced hallucinations and an elevated heartbeat as a result.
- Tyerman-Harper was commended for the admirable job she did facilitating the last BHAC meeting in Kreifels’ absence.

ADJOURN

- There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

Important Dates

- May 8 – 10:30 a.m. – RGB Meeting at Region V Services
- May 11 – 9:00 a.m. – Regional Prevention Coalition
- May 15 – Network Provider Meeting / Teams
- May 31 – 10:00 a.m. – BHAC Meeting