

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

February 28, 2024

10:00 a.m.

Region V Systems, 1645 N Street

Hybrid – Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT: Renee Duffek, Greg Janak, Corrie Kielty, Stephanie Knight, Jill Kuzelka, Sarah McEntarffer, Rebecca Meinders, Rachel Mulcahy, Laura Osborne, Gale Pohlmann, Michele Vana, Evette Watts

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kim Schroeder, Kelsey Schwab

OTHERS PRESENT: Topher Hanson, CenterPointe; Wendy Baumeister, Tami DeShon, Renee' Dozier, Trina Janis, Patrick Kreifels, Kim Michael, Erin Rourke, Marti Rabe, Region V Systems

HOUSEKEEPING / ANNOUNCEMENTS / INTRODUCTIONS

Kuzelka called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. followed by announcements and rollcall. A quorum was present.

OPEN MEETING ACT INFORMATION

Kuzelka 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 February 14, 2024.

ADDITIONS / CHANGES TO AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

NETWORK PROVIDER PRESENTATION – TOPHER HANSEN, PRESIDENT/CEO, CENTERPOINTE

- Hansen provided an overview of activities taking place at CenterPointe where the focus has shifted to a whole health approach. Persons served at CenterPointe are assessed across bio/psycho/social spheres and CenterPointe addresses all aspects as applicable. Individuals are also assessed for suicide risk and trauma as there is understanding that trauma underlies mental health and substance use disorders.
- CenterPointe uses evidence-based practices, data driven decision making, person-centered language, focuses on harm reduction, provides individualized treatment planning, is strength based, and provides hope that recovery is possible.
- Hansen briefly discussed several of the services provided by CenterPointe including significant efforts with the unsheltered and collaborations with law enforcement. CenterPointe offers a full continuum of care.

PRESENTATION – WENDY BAUMEISTER, CRIMINAL JUSTICE BH INITIATIVE MANAGER, REGION V SYSTEMS

- Baumeister briefly discussed her background and then focused on the Stepping Up Initiative which was approved for implementation by Lancaster County in November. Saunders and Otoe County have signed agreements to implement the initiative, and Gage and Seward Counties have expressed interest. The focus population for this initiative is individuals living with serious and persistent mental illness challenges who are justice involved.
- The four measures the initiative seeks to address are: 1) reduce the number of individuals with mental health challenges who are booked into jail; 2) increase connections to treatment; 3) reduce the length of time individuals stay in jail; and 4) reduce recidivism.
- Baumeister has been focused on gathering data and meeting with various stakeholders to identify gaps and needs and discussed grant opportunities where Region V may collaborate with County Corrections. Funding for this initiative is braided with collaboration among Region V, DHHS and the County.
- There was discussion regarding problem solving courts and the push to expand that concept in Nebraska. It was acknowledged that working with the various entities involved in this process is a complicated one.

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CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- Osborne made a motion, seconded by Janak, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. (Minutes – January 31, 2024, FY 23-24 Compliance Management Report, RGB Report). There was no further discussion. Voting aye were: Duffek, Janak, Kielty, Knight, Kuzelka, McEntarffer, Meinders, Mulcahy, Osborne, Pohlmann, Vana, and Watts; nays none, absent Schwab, Schroeder; Motion carried.

ACTION / PRIORITY ITEMS

Opioid Remediation Settlement Funds Update:

- Blueprint (draft): Janis presented the Blueprint noting that it is in draft form and pointed out the areas of the report that will be revised. The Tool (page 11) is being revised and will be used during the upcoming Summit to determine priorities. Priorities will be either for direct care or outreach efforts. Pohlmann and Kreifels both expressed appreciation for Janis' strong efforts in the work she has been doing over the last seven months. Kreifels pointed out that, in contrast, DHHS received Opioid Settlement funds two and half years ago, but to date there have been no expenditures. Pohlmann made a motion, seconded by Mulcahy, to recommend the Board approve the draft Blueprint as presented. Voting aye were: Duffek, Janak, Kielty, Knight, Kuzelka, McEntarffer, Meinders, Mulcahy, Osborne, Pohlmann, Vana, and Watts; nays none, absent Schwab, Schroeder; Motion carried.
- Obvious Expenditures: Janis provided justification for these projects citing evidence for the need for strategies to increase access to Narcan. The pilot project would purchase two indoor vending machines in Lincoln and also provide Narcan throughout the catchment area of Region V in strategically identified locations. Another obvious expenditure, should LB307 pass, would be the provision of Fentanyl testing strips. Janak made a motion, seconded by Mulcahy, to recommend the Board approve the Obvious Expenditures as presented. Voting aye were: Duffek, Janak, Kielty, Knight, Kuzelka, McEntarffer, Meinders, Mulcahy, Osborne, Pohlmann, Vana, and Watts; nays none, absent Schwab, Schroeder; Motion carried.

BHAC Membership Application: Following review of the applicant's qualifications, Mulcahy made a motion, seconded by McEntarffer, to recommend the Board approve the BHAC application for Melissa Ripley as presented. Voting aye were: Duffek, Janak, Kielty, Knight, Kuzelka, McEntarffer, Meinders, Mulcahy, Osborne, Pohlmann, Vana, and Watts; nays none, absent Schwab, Schroeder; Motion carried.

OTHER UPDATES/INFORMATION:

Behavioral Health/Legislative Updates:

- Kreifels thanked everyone who reached out to the Appropriations Committee regarding the Governor's removal of 15 million dollars from the Behavioral Health Region's budgets. The budget will be presented next week, so decisions will be made soon.
- LB943: Senator Dorn's priority bill would appropriate 8.1 million dollars to the Behavioral Health Regions to fund rate increases approved but not funded for the current biennium. There was discussion within the Appropriations Committee as to whether or not the Governor really did veto appropriation to program 38. Kreifels commented that over the last three years 33 million dollars have been removed from the behavioral health system due to competing priorities.
- LB1355: Senator Vargas' priority bill would provide for disbursement of grants from the Nebraska Opioid Recovery Fund by creating a cash care fund. At this time the Regions are mentioned in the bill to receive funding.
- There was discussion regarding a bill that would separate DHHS into three divisions with particular emphasis on Child and Family Services. The Region is staying neutral on this bill though it was noted that there has been a lot of turmoil and change in this area over the years with frequent changes in providers.
- Kreifels pointed out that there have been significant savings in the state budget related to Medicaid and Developmental Disabilities. A priority of the Governor's is property tax reduction, among others, rather than increasing funding for behavioral health.

Budget Plan Process and Timeline: Provider Budget Requests for Allocation are due Thursday, February 29, 2024. It is anticipated that a revised allocation letter won't be available until late April so the Region will be operating with the current information, anticipating possible changes. The Regional Budget Plan must be submitted to DHHS by March 22, 2024.

Medicaid Unwind: As of January 31, Medicaid has completed 70 percent of the reviews / re-evaluations following the end of the pandemic emergency. The trend continues to indicate that 67 percent of those reviewed remain enrolled with

33 percent being disenrolled. There is a slight increase in the number of individuals being disenrolled for procedural reasons. Providers report seeing a small uptick in capacity utilization.

Square One and Voluntary Crisis Response Center (VCRC):

- Square One: CenterPointe will implement three of the four core services on the current campus. Lancaster County has negotiated the purchased of a building at 220 S. 17th St and anticipates that renovations can begin soon. Once that facility is available, the fourth core service, respite, will be activated and all Square One services will be conducted at the 17th Street facility.
- Voluntary Crisis Response Center (VCRC): Integrated Behavioral Health Services (IBHS) is working on a capacity development plan and budget. A building has been purchased near 14th and Cornhusker. The target date for this service is September 1.

Emergency System Update: Behavioral Health Threat Assessment (BETA) training was held last week with 75 participants. Region V is working with the Public Policy Center to establish BETA curriculum as a model to train law enforcement. BETA is based on a recovery oriented mindset and helps law enforcement see persons in crisis through a different lens.

Prevention System Update: Prevention has submitted a Prevention Framework Partnership for Success Grant request. Results will be available in August 2024. It has become evident that there is a lack of awareness of available resources across the Region, and increasing awareness will be a focus of prevention efforts.

Nebraska Crisis Support Services – Therapeutic Family Care (TFC): Nebraska is implementing the TFC model of care to improve outcomes for high-risk children in foster care. CAFAS scores will be used to determine eligibility for this service and currently there are 40 youth statewide in the system who meet the eligibility criteria. Under this program providers would be required to offer both Crisis Service Maintenance and Response and Mobile Crisis services. Kreifels pointed out that 988 and the Regional crisis response system are available to anyone in need of these services.

Network Continuous Quality Improvement / FY 23-24 Q2 Regional Data Overview: Rourke highlighted trends regarding data collection for stable living and employment at discharge – measures that contribute significantly to successful recovery. Regarding waitlist data a slight decrease in length of wait time was noted and Kreifels commented that persons seeking services in the rural areas may choose to wait for an opening in a particular office rather than go elsewhere which impacts waitlist data. EPC data is collected to monitor recidivism. The report includes observations and action plans where indicated.

FY 23-24 Capacity Utilization Summaries: These documents will be emailed when available and are provided for your information. The trend is toward increasing utilization of funds.

FY 23-24 Training Plan: Provided for your information.

BHAC Survey: The survey is closed, and responses are being compiled. Results will be emailed out next week and available for discussion at the March 27, 2024, BHAC meeting. Network Provider survey results will also be available at that time.

ADJOURN

- There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

IMPORTANT DATES

- March 14 – 9:00 a.m. – Regional Prevention Coalition
- March 11 – 10:15 a.m. – Regional Governing Board Meeting at Region V Systems
- March 18 – Network Provider Meeting / Teams
- March 27 – 10:00 a.m. – BHAC Meeting