

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
TRENTON PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of Trenton Psychiatric Hospital was held on **Thursday, February 16, 2023**, pursuant to notice duly given. In conformance with the Public Open Meetings Law, notice of the meeting has been sent to The Trenton Times, The Trentonian, Newark Star-Ledger and the Secretary of State and a notice placed on the bulletin board of Trenton Psychiatric Hospital.

**Present:**

\*\*\*Carolyn Torre - RN, MA APN Chairperson  
\*\*\*Patricia Carr – Vice Chairperson  
\*\*\*Neil Weisfeld, Esq.  
\*\*\*Maureen Lebel – LSW, PhD.

**Excused:**

Susan Rubino, MD

\*\*\***Board Member Via Microsoft Team and Via  
call in on Microsoft teams**

**TPH Staff Attendance:**

Maria Christensen, CEO; (DCEO); Michelle Senni, Executive Assistant to the CEO;  
Sheila Kwoka, Secretary to the Board of Trustees

**Guest:**

Mary Jean Weston, DMHAS, Deborah Howell, Complex Administrator of Lincoln,  
Nicole Waldron, Director of Psychology, Brittany Wilson Psychiatric Intern,  
Anna Morfe-Rehwinkel - Psychologist

**Excused:**

Intikhab Ahmad, M.D., Clinical Director, James Hollen, Deputy Chief Executive Officer-  
Operations, Faith Johnson, Deputy Chief Executive Officer-Clinical (DCEO);  
Julie Van Houten, Chief Nursing Officer; Frank Miller, QI Director  
Towana Wilkins, Business Manager

**ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER/MINUTES APPROVAL:**

Roll call was conducted via Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Teams Call-in. The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. Minutes from the January 19, 2023, meeting were approved with changes.

## **BOARD REPORT:**

### **January Monthly Report:**

- Mr. Weisfeld noted that assaults were up 5% in January.
- Mr. Weisfeld noted the Emergency Mobile Restraint Chair use was at forty-four (44), also an increase.
- Mr. Weisfeld noted that 8 patients were referred for Suicide Risk Assessment in January, compared to none the previous month.
- Mr. Weisfeld inquired about any updates on the Thomas Edison State University grant application status. There is no update currently.
- Mr. Weisfeld was very pleased that the hospital was taken off conditional status by the Joint Commission.
- Mr. Weisfeld noted No patients with COVID at this time. Ms. Deborah Howell, Lincoln Complex Administrator to the Board that the positive unit is empty currently.
- Mr. Weisfeld noted the Health Information Management delinquency Rate for the month of January decreased to 75%; Dr. Christiansen noted that the biggest offender for delinquency is no longer employed at TPH.
- Dr. Lebel positively noted the patients are learning how to use different equipment at the Greenhouse like the Power Blower, Rototiller and a Push Mower all in a safe way.
- Dr. Lebel expressed concern about the number of **A+** incidents in the month of January.
- Ms. Carr inquired about the Hospital Wide Wellness Programming. On January 27 there was the Department of Education Intellectual Wellness Event. Ms. Carr would like more information on this at the next meeting.
- Ms. Carr positively noted the hard work of the New Leaf Gardeners. She would like to recognize them with a metal for the hard work.
- Ms. Carr inquired about the status of the Boutique. She would like to see the revenue shown separately on the Welfare Fund Budget Status monthly report.
- Ms. Torre observed that the January Close Observation (1:1) was at 30 patients which is at 10%. The goal is 4%.

- Ms. Torre was pleased to see that Trenton Psychiatric Hospital is holding a Job Fair on March 20, 2023, at Thomas Edison State University.

## **AUXILIARY REPORT:**

There is no report currently.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- **Incident Committee - Dr. Maureen Lebel**

Dr. Lebel reported she went to the Violence Prevention Meeting and would like to see the power point presentation from the meeting.

- **Legislative Committee – Ms. Carolyn Torre**

**Mental Health Related Bills** Currently Before NJ Legislature and recently active:

**A2764/S1068:** “Mental Health Access Act” increases Medicaid reimbursement for certain evidence-based behavioral health services.

**1/3/22:** Introduced to Senate Health Committee

**2/28/22:** Introduced to Assembly Human Services; 1/31/22 reported from C.

**2/9/23:** Referred to A. Health C.

**Sponsors:** A.: Stanley; Sterley; Jaffer; Benson S.: Vitale; Gopal

**Link:** [https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A3000/2764\\_I1.PDF](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A3000/2764_I1.PDF)

**A4275/S3461:** Establishes Ombudsman for Mental Health and Addiction Services. Office to be in, but not of, the Dept. of Treasury. Annual Report to be submitted to Commissioner of Human Services, Governor & Legislature.

**1/16/22:** Introduced in Assembly; 1/12/23: Introduced in Senate (referred to Assembly and Senate Health Committees).

**Note:** Assembly Health Committee hearing scheduled for 2/13/23.

**Sponsors:** A.: McKnight; Wimberly; Benson. S.: Beach; Co-Sp. Deignan

**Link:** [https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A4500/4275\\_I1.PDF](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A4500/4275_I1.PDF)

### **Duties of Ombudsman:**

- (1) helping individuals with mental illness and addiction find effective treatment facilities and programs, including substance use disorder recovery services, health care services, mental health services, medication-assisted treatment services, and other substance use disorder treatment services
- (2) ensuring that individuals with mental illness and addiction, including patients and residents within mental health facilities and programs, are receiving proper care and treatment

- (3) providing educational programs, confidential drug counseling, and vocational guidance and job placement for individuals with mental illness and addiction.
- (4) educating individuals about the harm caused by substance use disorders with respect to individuals, families, and society
- (5) creating public information programs to educate individuals with mental illness and addiction of the duties of and resources provided by the ombudsman. b. The ombudsman shall treat communications received in the course of the ombudsman's duties, including personally identifiable information regarding individuals with mental illness and addiction or others from whom information is acquired, as confidential, except when disclosure is necessary to enable the ombudsman to perform the duties of the office, and consent for the disclosure is obtained. Upon the receipt of information that by law is confidential or privileged, the ombudsman shall maintain the confidentiality of the information, and shall not disclose or disseminate the information, except as provided by applicable State or federal law.

**A4615/S1153:** Requires State to foster development and implementation of graduate medical education programs in behavioral health care

Primary Sponsors: A: Greenwald;/Reynolds-Jackson; Verlina/Park,

**9/22/2022:** Introduced And Referred To Assembly Health Committee

**12/12/2022:** Transferred To Assembly Higher Education Committee

**12/12/2022:** Reported And Referred To Assembly Health Committee

**Link:** <https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2022/A4615>

**Note: Scheduled for hearing in Assembly Health Committee: 2/13/23.**

**A4755/S3261: Permits behavioral and mental health care providers to operate within homeless shelters**

Primary sponsors: A: Lopez; Moen; Speight. S: Burgess

Introduced: A: 10/3/22 Housing Committee, reported and referred to A.

Human Services on 10/13/22. S: 10/31/22, referred to Sen. Health C.

Comment: This bill was reported out of the Assembly Health Committee on **12/8/22** with amendments that APNs had requested.

**12/15/22:** Passed Full Assembly and received in Senate

**1/19/23:** Reported from Senate Health C. Awaiting full Senate vote.

**Link:** <https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2022/A4755>

**Comment:** The Assembly version of the bill was amended in Committee to expand the definition of Behavioral Health Care providers which is now: a psychiatrist, psychiatric advanced practice nurse, psychologist, clinical social worker, marriage and family therapist, or any other mental health or substance use disorder treatment provider licensed pursuant to Title 45 of the revised statutes. It now goes to the full Assembly for a floor vote.

**A3514/S704:** Anthony M. Prohibits mental health care professionals from disclosing mental health notes to health insurance carriers.

**Primary Sponsor:** S: Codey; Bucco. A.: Calabrese; Jimenez; Atkins  
Senate action: **1/11/2022** Introduced in the Senate, Referred to Senate Commerce Committee.

- **5/16/2022 Reported** from Senate Committee as a Substitute, 2nd Reading
- **5/26/2022 Senate** Amendment (Voice) (Cunningham)
- **6/16/2022** Passed by the Senate (38-0)
- **6/16/2022** Received in the Assembly, Referred to Assembly Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee  
Assembly action: Introduced 3/8/22; **12/5/22**; heard in Assembly Financial Institutions Committee. Not reported (Not passed in Committee).

**-S2668/A508: Establishes annual cost of living adjustment based on Consumer Price Index for programs providing mental health services, substance use disorder treatment services, or services to persons with developmental disabilities.**

**Sponsors:** Senate: Greenstein; Vitale; Gopal. Assembly: Benson; Murphy

**1/11/22:** Introduced in Assembly, referred to A. Human Service Committee; no action since.

**5/16/22:** "in Senate, referred to Senate Health and Human Services Committee

**10/6/22:** Reported from S. Health C. with amendments; referred to Senate Budget/Appropriations; No action on this bill in November/December.

**Link:** [https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/S3000/2668\\_R1.PDF](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/S3000/2668_R1.PDF)

**A1700/S524: Creates Mental Illness Diversion Program to divert eligible persons away from criminal justice system and into appropriate case management and mental health services.**

**Sponsors:** Assembly: Quijano; Mukherji. Senate: Ruiz; Cunningham

**Introduced:** A and S: 1/11/22. No movement in Senate, since. In Assembly:

**9/29/22:** Reported from Assembly Judiciary Committee; referred to A. Human Services, C. No action on this bill since late September.

**Link:** [https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A2000/1700\\_S1.PDF](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A2000/1700_S1.PDF)

**-S3031/A1924:** Requires health insurance carriers to categorize mental health treatment and therapy received by victim of domestic violence as medically necessary treatment and provide full benefits coverage, therefore.

**Sponsors:** S.: Gopal; Ruiz; A.: Swain; Benson.

**Introduced:** S: **9/22/22:** Referred to Sen. Health and Human Services.

A: 1/11/22: Referred to A. Financials Institutions and Insurance

No action on this bill since September.

**Link:** [https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/S3500/3031\\_I1.PDF](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/S3500/3031_I1.PDF)

**A4604/S682: Requires suicide prevention training for mental health practitioners.**

**Primary Sponsors:** A.: Rooney. S.: Bucco; Gopal

**Introduced:** A.: 9/22/22; S.: 1/11/22 No action on this bill since September.

**Link:** [https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2022/A4604/bill-text?f=A5000&n=4604\\_I1](https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2022/A4604/bill-text?f=A5000&n=4604_I1)

**A4540/S1133:** Requires mental health evaluation of all animal cruelty offenders (adult or juvenile).

**Primary Sponsors:** A. Jimenez. S.: Vitale

**Introduced:** A.: 9/22/22; S.: 1/11/22. No action on this bill since September.

**Link:** [https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/S1500/1153\\_I1.PDF](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/S1500/1153_I1.PDF)

**A4618/S3122:** Creates online job portal (in the Dept. of Health) for behavioral health care workers and online internship and externship portal for health care students.

**Primary Sponsors:** A: Freiman; Murphy; Greenwald; S: Zwicker

**Assembly Action: 9/22/2022 Introduced,** Referred to Assembly Labor

**Committee: 12/8/2022** Reported and Referred to Assembly Appropriations Committee

**Senate Action:** Introduced 10/3/22.

**Link:** [https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A5000/4618\\_I1.PDF](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A5000/4618_I1.PDF)

**New York Times Report** of 2/9/23 Describes expansion to 10 counties of pilot program (NJ Attorney General's) office pairing police with mental health professionals. Police relay the success of the program where it has been ongoing.

**Link:** <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/09/nyregion/new-jersey-police-mental-health.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare>

- **Schulley Trading Post – Mr. Neil Weisfeld**

There is no report this month

- **Therapeutic Environment Committee – Ms. Patricia Carr**

**RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS** – There is progress on the Bench Painting. Planning for the Avant-Garden Festival is ongoing. The festival takes place in April. The mural outside the Drake Complex is ongoing for Patients and Staff to paint in the evenings and weekends.

**WISH LIST-** Covered walkways in Lincoln to protect patients from the elements during inclement weather. Paving of the Roads at TPH; Smart TV's and Internet connection.

**PROJECTS WAITING IN THE WINGS** -Construction of the outside gazebos for fresh air breaks and programming (permits pending).

- **Welfare Fund – Mr. Weisfeld**

Mr. Weisfeld commented on the Holiday Decorations for the Hospital. Would like to know what fund the money came from. Staff reported that the money for the Holiday decorations came from the Maintenance Budget.

**Report from Ms. Mary Jean Weston, MSW, Regional Coordinator  
Office of Community Services, Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS)  
(February 16, 2023)**

1. **NJ Pharmacies to provide life-saving Naloxone for free and anonymously**  
<https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/news/pressreleases/2023/approved/20230110.shtml>
2. **Loan redemption program for behavioral healthcare providers**  
Governor Murphy signed into law a bill establishing a loan redemption program for behavioral healthcare providers. The Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, HESAA, has published proposed rules for the program. Visit [www.hesaa.org](http://www.hesaa.org) for more information.
3. **COVID Reimbursement Program extended for eligible, contracted Providers.**  
There are 2 separate funding opportunities, one for non-profit, contracted mental health agencies and the other for non-profit SUD agencies.
4. **NH hospitals sue to stop state from boarding psychiatric patients in their ERs**  
<https://www.nhpr.org/nh-news/2023-01-12/nh-hospitals-sue-to-stop-state-from-boarding-psychiatric-patients-in-their-ers>
5. **VA to pay for all emergency mental health care**  
<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2023/01/13/va-to-pay-for-all-emergency-mental-health-care-starting-next-week/>
6. **Accessibility: The Greatest. (from Apple)**  
<https://youtu.be/c2UF26YpPFq>
7. **RFPs/RLIs**
  - a. **Community Psychiatry Residency Training Initiative**  
This initiative is to increase the number of positions in the State's psychiatric residency programs in order to address the shortage of psychiatrists in the state. Each psychiatric residency program selected will be able to support the four years of training for two new residency positions, offer supplemental support that is lost from other clinical services during care in the community, and support dedicated faculty to provide supervision and mentorship of the residents.
  - b. **Mobile Access to Medications for Substance Use Disorder**  
An initiative that will enable agencies to travel to communities on a regular basis to provide low-threshold medication services to people with a substance use disorder (SUD) who encounter obstacles to receiving services at traditional "brick-and-mortar" treatment agencies.
  - c. **Residential Services for Individuals Discharged from Nursing Facilities**  
This RFP will result in a residential service (A+ Group home level of care) for individuals discharged from nursing facilities, who have mental health needs.

More Information on these funding opportunities and the RFP/RLI documents is available at: <https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/provider/funding/>



**COMMUNICATIONS:** – There were no communications this month.

**OLD BUSINESS:** –

No report currently.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**New Board Members:**

Dr. Christensen told the Board we are waiting on approval of a new Board member. Ms. Torre pointed out even if this potential Board member is successfully appointed to the Board, the Board will still only have 5 active members. The Bylaws state we are allowed up to 7 members.

Ms. Torre asked if an APN, a Trenton resident, and former Director of Health and Human Services for the city of Trenton, could submit an application to the Governor's office for Board membership? Dr. Christiansen asked that the potential candidate's CV be forwarded to her, and she would then send necessary forms to the candidate.

**Committee Membership:**

Ms. Torre and Mr. Weisfeld will be switching Committees/Committee Reports, going forward. Mr. Weisfeld will be reporting on the Legislative Committee and continue to report on the Schullery Trading Post. Ms. Torre will be reporting on the Welfare Fund. All other committees stay the same.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC** – There were no comments from the public.

**Post-meeting Presentation:**

Ms. Nicole Waldron: Director of Psychology; Brittany Wilson: Psychiatric Intern, Anna Morfe-Rehwinkel: Psychologist.

A presentation was made regarding the purpose and history of the Competency Restoration Group. The power point Presentation is attached at the end of the Minutes.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 16, 2023, at 9:30 a.m., via Microsoft Teams.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Sheila Kwoka  
Secretary Board of Trustees

---

Carolyn Torre RN, MA, APN, FAANP  
Chairperson

CT/sk



FINAL\_BoardPresenta  
tion\_CompResUnit.p