

# **NEW JERSEY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PLANNING COUNCIL**

## **Minutes**

**April 12, 2023, 10:00 am**

**This meeting was conducted exclusively through MS Teams video teleconference & conference call**

Notices of the meeting were sent to the Asbury Park Press, The Times (Trenton), Bergen Record, The Press (Pleasantville), and the Courier-Post (Cherry Hill).

### **Participants:**

Darlema Bey (Chair)	Winifred Chain	Krista Connelly	Damian Petino
Francis Walker	Joe Gutstein	Barb Johnston	Diane Riley
Jennifer Rutberg	John Tkacz	Suzanne Smith	
Julia Barugel	Donna Migliorino	Chris Morrison	
Heather Simms	Michelle Madiou	Pamela Taylor	

### **DMHAS, CSOC, DDD, DMAHS & DoH Staff:**

Nicholas Pecht	Mark Kruszczyński	Jonathan Sabin
Yunqing Li	Suzanne Borys	

### **Guests:**

Nina Smuklawsky	Amanda Kolacy (alt)	Matt Camarda (NAMI)
Rachel Morgan (alt)	Nancy Edouard (alt)	Kurt Baker
Maurice Ingram (alt)	Mike Marotta (DRNJ, presenter)	

### **Minutes:**

- I. Administrative Issues/Correspondence (Darlema Bey)**
  - A. Attendance, 17/35, 48% attendance, quorum reached
  - B. Minutes of March 2023 meeting approved.
  - C. Solicitation for more members to consider running for election to Council Chair and Vice-Chair positions.
  
- II. Assistive Technology and how it can benefit people with Mental Health Concerns (Mike Marotta, Disability Rights New Jersey (DRNJ))**
  - A. See PowerPoint sent to the Council on 04/12/23 and sharing during the presentation.
    1. [bit.ly/atac-atia](https://bit.ly/atac-atia)
  - B. Presentation was Coordinated by John Tkacz from DVRS who holds the Public Health and Assistive Technology contract with Disability Rights New Jersey, [John.Tkacz@doh.nj.gov](mailto:John.Tkacz@doh.nj.gov)
  - C. Division of Aging has resources (tablets and training) for older adults.

D. Learning and Goodwill Assistive Technology Advocacy Center (ATAC) <https://at4nj.org/> offers free Center, webinars/training, loan library/demo center, resource information home medical information.

- E. Q&A:
1. Q: Resources for other items (e.g., automobiles). A: No, but DRNJ has an office to connect people to resources/referrals.
  2. DRNJ are seeking an ethics trainer.

### III. System Partner Updates

- A. Children Systems of Care (Nick Pecht)
1. CSOC is implementing Project Connect in order to ensure youth are connected with CSOC services after an Emergency Department discharge following a suicide attempt or ideation. Goals include:
    - a. Increase engagement in community mental health services after hospital discharge
    - b. Reduce Emergency Department and Hospital admissions for suicide attempts
    - c. Improved safety and well-being for youth and families
  2. Two hospitals will pilot the program and we will be happy to provide further details at a future meeting.
- B. Department of Education (Damian Petino & Maurice Ingram):
1. School Discipline Guidance  
<https://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/programs/additionalsupports/behavior/index.shtml>
  2. Comprehensive School MH Coaching  
<https://ccsmh.rutgers.edu/njdoe/> 4/14/23
- C. Division of Senior Services (Jennifer Rutburg)
1. [Rutgers University School of Social Work: Continuing Education](#), very actively designs and delivers customized webinar trainings,:  
[Continuing Education | School of Social Work \(rutgers.edu\)](#)
- D. Department of Corrections (Krista Connelly)
1. Post pandemic operations are beginning to resume in the light of few/new outbreaks of Covid19.
  2. Visitation protocols being revised.
  3. Gov. Murphy has allowed funds for new, centrally located prison facility, with a focus on services, groups and treatment of incarcerated women.
- E. Division of Developmental Disabilities (J. Sabin).
1. DDD is pleased to release its updated Residential, Day Program, and Support Coordinator COVID-19 Policy. The policy provides additional information and flexibility related to COVID-19 which include, but are not limited to:
    - a. The option to move away from daily screening of individuals, staff, and visitors so long as all are made aware of Criteria and Actions related to exposure to, symptoms of, and positivity for COVID-19
    - b. Residential settings are still required to monitor residents for sudden or emerging symptoms/signs of illness, which includes taking and recording their temperature.

- c. Instruction to Support Coordinators on face-to-face visit requirements.
  - d. Continuation of the requirement for staff to be up-to-date with their COVID-19 vaccination or, if granted a medical or religious exemption, be tested once or twice weekly.
  - e. Continuation of masking recommendations from previous policy, as well as maintaining the option for a more restrictive policy.
2. Please see Residential, Day Program, and Support Coordinator COVID-19 Policy for complete information.  
<https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/documents/covid19-residential-and-day-program-screening-policy.pdf>
3. Since the pandemic began, DDD has permitted Temporary Service Modifications regarding the relaxing of requirements for services to be delivered in-person and/or in community settings. These “flexibilities” include:
- a. Remote provision of services for Day Habilitation, classes, etc.
  - b. Parent, Spouse, Guardian to be a Self-Directed Employee.
  - c. For list of all Temporary Service Modifications, please visit  
<https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/assets/documents/Temp-Service-Mod.pdf>.
4. As the Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) will now sunset on May 11, 2023, DDD will need to sunset some flexibilities on November 7, 2023.
- a. DDD has made policy changes to allow the following flexibilities to continue permanently:
  - b. Remote provision of virtual classes through Goods and Services up to 12 hours per week.
  - c. Allowance for Parent, Spouse, Guardian to be a Self-Directed Employee (SDE).
  - d. The Division is reviewing making the allowance for SDE overtime permanent.
5. The following flexibilities will sunset on November 7, 2023:
- a. Remote/Virtual provision of DDD services outside of Classes through Goods and Services.
  - b. Day habilitation occurring outside of daytime hours and on weekends. Includes remote/virtual services.
  - c. Certain services to overlap. For example, remote day habilitation occurring at the same time as Individual Supports 15-minute increment.
  - d. Support Coordinator Visits to be held remotely/virtually. Consumers should plan accordingly.
- G. Division Of Vocational Rehabilitation (J. T. Tkacz): See above, Item II “Assistive Technology and how it can benefit people with Mental Health Concerns”

#### **IV. Subcommittee Updates**

- A. By-laws:
- 1. Importance of having leadership (Chair and vice-chair) of Council that represent both Serious Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorders.
  - 2. Advocating for members to get involved and possible run for Chair and Vice Chair.

B. Advocacy: Meeting 041223 1200.

**V. Open Public Comment and Announcements**

Darlema Bey

A. None

**VI. Adjournment**

Darlema Bey

A. Meeting adjourned.

B. Future Agenda Items

1. May 2023

a. Jennifer R., Division of Aging Services

b. Mark K. & Yunqing Li: WebBGAS tutorial

C. Next General Meeting May 10, 2023

**Microsoft Teams meeting**

**Join on your computer or mobile app**

**[Click here to join the meeting](#)**

**Or call in (audio only)**

**+1 609-300-7196, PIN: 306216820#**

1. Subcommittee meetings on 5/10/23

a. 9:00 By Laws

b. 12:00 Advocacy

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**Advocacy Committee**  
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- I. Advocacy for Youth in Emergency Services
  - A. Follow-up on letter to Assistant Commissioners Mielke (DMHAS) and Assistant Commissioner Stephanie Mozgai (DoH).