

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

January 13, 2021

CALL TO ORDER:

A meeting of the Human Services Advisory Board was Called To Order at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at the Sharwell Building in Williamsport.

Members: William Weber; David Wright; Carol Sides; Pete Smeltz; Marwin Reeves, Jr.; Commissioner Richard Mirabito; Ben Green; Emily Powell Hodges; Carla Mitcheltree; Virginia Council; and Commissioner Jeffrey Snyder. **Staff:** Keith Wagner – Executive Director/MH-ID Administrator; Mark Egly – CYS Administrator; Kathy Lynn - Deputy ID Administrator; Jacque Miller – HealthChoices Director; and Cathy Bennett - Administrative Assistant.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Mr. Wagner welcomed everyone to the first meeting of calendar year 2021. He noted that he, Mark Egly and Kathy Lynn were present at the Sharwell Building and that everyone else was joining the meeting by zoom conferencing or telephone. He introduced and welcomed two new Advisory Board attending today's meeting: Ben Green, Executive Director of the Clinton County United Way and Emily Powell Hodges, a counselor for Lock Haven University.

ELECTION OF HSAB OFFICERS:

Mr. Wagner noted that the Election of Officers for the calendar year is to occur at the January meeting and that the current Slate of Officers had been contacted and agreed to continue serving in their roles if nominated and approved. David Wright made a Motion and Carla Mitcheltree Seconded that:

“William Weber be reappointed as the Chairman of the Human Services Advisory Board for calendar year 2021.”

The Motion passed unanimously. William Weber made a Motion and Pete Smeltz Seconded that:

“Carla Mitcheltree be reappointed as the Vice Chairman of the Human Services Advisory Board for calendar year 2021.”

The Motion passed unanimously. William Weber Made a Motion and Commissioner Mirabito Seconded that:

“Carol Sides be reappointed as the Secretary for the Human Services Advisory Board for calendar year 2021.”

The Motion passed unanimously.

MEETING DATES FOR REMAINDER OF CALENDAR YEAR 2021:

It was noted that the meeting dates for the remainder of the calendar year would be Wednesday, April 14th; Wednesday, August 11th and Wednesday, November 10th. Meetings will be scheduled for 5:00 p.m. from the Sharwell Building and the ability to attend by zoom or call in will continue to be offered. A legal notice of the meeting dates has been run in the Sun Gazette and LH Express.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES:

Mr. Wagner and Mr. Egly noted that when the COVID pandemic first escalated back in March, 2020, a decision was made to lock the doors and reduce the number of staff being present in the building at any one time. As services provided by the Joinder are considered “essential,” staff

were always present at the building for scheduled appointments and to serve anyone who would still come to the door. Fortunately, the majority of Joinder staff were already equipped with laptops or Ipads and were able to do paperwork, conduct telephone contacts with consumers, etc. from home. At the Sharwell and our other satellite locations, we also implemented the wearing of masks, appropriate social distancing, and provided sanitation items, such as gloves and hand sanitizer, weekly “fogging” in high traffic areas, etc. Any meeting rooms that are used are under a clean in/clean out policy and these procedures are still presently in place. By late summer, the building was reopened to the general public, but we still maintained a reduced staff presence to avoid over populating the building. In November the COVID numbers began to escalate again and, to date, we have resumed closing our doors to the general public; however, staff continue to see scheduled appointments that can’t be handled through telephone contact or individuals who do come to the building. In regard to the provision of services, Mr. Wagner noted that the State has discouraged our Intellectual Disability staff to meet in person with their consumers as they are a very vulnerable population. To date, the majority of ID staff have worked from home and have been continuing to interact with their consumers via zoom, team meetings, or by telephone. In regard to mental health services, he noted that contacts from April through June were dramatically down from the previous year but they picked up in May and remained consistent through September. In November, the numbers are back up and have remained consistent since then. He added that at the beginning of the pandemic suicide numbers were up, in the summer they flattened, and they went up again in the Fall. He noted that the highest impact has been in the elderly and that the State is now viewing that age group as a priority population for services. Mr. Egly added that in the initial few months of the pandemic that CYS referrals were down as many of the locations that employ mandated reporters (schools, day care centers, etc.) were closed and children were not coming in contact with these individuals. He noted that in the summer and fall, we have received more referrals. He added that 48 children are currently in care. He noted that throughout the pandemic that court ordered visitation appointments have continued in our Visitation Center, with efforts being taken to secure the safety of both our staff and the individuals involved in the visit. He noted that our outreach staff are continuing their visits with their consumers, with some appointments being conducted from porches. He added that staff are making sure that our youth are continuing their on line education. Mr. Wagner noted that efforts are underway to get as many Joinder staff vaccinated who would be interested and contacts have been made to both UPMC and Geisinger in this regard. He added that our crisis staff currently fall in the 1A category, however, the services provided by the Joinder are considered “essential” so hopefully we will be approved to offer the vaccination to all of our employees. He added that there have been some staff who have come down with COVID but, to date, it does not appear they are contracting the virus from being in the Sharwell Building.

OVERVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY MANAGEMENT QUARTERLY REPORT AND IM4Q UPDATES:

Kathy Lynn, the Joinder’s Deputy Intellectual Disability Administrator, noted that she was present to provide the Board with a required update of Administrative Entity Quality Management Plan Objectives and IM4Q reporting information. She noted that two objectives from the previous fiscal year do not appear on this report as staff had met their goal for these objectives: ISP’s are reviewed/authorized within 365 day timeframe and Incidents are finalized within a 30 day timeframe. She distributed a summary sheet which covered the first quarter of FY 2020-2021 (7/1/20 thru 9/30/20) which listed five objectives. She noted that of these five objectives, two are new for this fiscal year and none are mandated objectives from the Office of Developmental Programs. She provided a brief overview of these objectives which include: Individual to Individual Abuse; Employment; Restraints; IM4Q; and Choking. She noted that each quarter’s report will provide information on the ongoing progress of the objective. The information that she distributed will be retained as an attachment to these minutes (Attachment A). Ms. Lynn added that she is also to provide an update of the IM4Q Program Monthly Reporting Form; however, she did

not have any information yet from this fiscal year (2020-2021) to report. She noted that the MH/ID Agency has a contract with Advocacy Alliance to conduct evaluations with consumers to determine their level of satisfaction with services and that they plan to start the evaluation process in the near future.

LYCOMING-CLINTON HEALTHCHOICES CFST SPECIAL FOCUS SURVEY RESULTS:

Mr. Wagner introduced Jacque Miller, the Joinder's HealthChoices Director, and noted that she was present to provide an overview of a survey pertaining to telehealth services during the period 10/1/20 to 12/31/20. Jacque noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the majority of services being provided to mental health and drug and alcohol consumers by telehealth methods. The Consumer/Family Satisfaction Team conducted 41 surveys involving 22 adults, 11 families, and 8 youth. In total, 88% of the consumers felt that telehealth made it easier to get services and 12% felt it did not. 46% of the consumers preferred a combination of telehealth and in person appointments; 32% preferred in person appointments and 9% preferred telehealth only. 90% of the individuals surveyed felt telehealth helped them accomplish their treatment goals. She noted that overall the surveys conducted with the consumers were positive. In response to a question, Keith noted that thus far the State has been in agreement to allow the MH/ID Agency and our contracted providers to continue providing services to consumers via telehealth. The survey that Mrs. Miller distributed will be retained as an attachment to these minutes (Attachment B).

OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Snyder noted that the STEP Office is preparing to undertake a Community Needs Assessment and it was agreed this information would be shared with the HSAB once it has been made available.

Commissioner Mirabito noted that he is involved in a recently formed committee called the Lycoming County's Diversability Advisory Committee. Involved in the committee are Amber Logan, an intellectual disability consumer, and her mother, and includes representation from organizations such as the Center For Independent Living (CIL); North Central Sight Services; Hope Enterprises, IU #17, STEP, Penn College, etc. He added that the mission of this committee is to educate and advise the Commissioners and the broader community about issues affecting people with disabilities; promote the expansion of equitable opportunities to participate in, benefit from, and relish the opportunities the County provides such as: housing, employment, healthcare, transportation, accessibility, education and community awareness. He noted that the committee meets the second Tuesday of the month at noon at the Commissioners' Conference Room and if anyone would be interested in joining to please contact the Commissioners' Office or Joinder administrative staff.

NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m. It was noted that the next meeting of the Human Services Advisory Board is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, April 8, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. at the Sharwell Building. Instructions on how to join the meeting by Zoom or telephone call in will be sent out with the meeting notice.

Respectfully Submitted,

Keith A. Wagner
MH/ID/EI Administrator

Mark Egly
CYS Administrator