

Illinois Mental Health Planning and Advisory Council Minutes

May 7, 2020

Attendees from Council in Chicago:

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic offices are closed and the meeting was held via conference call.

Attendees from the Council in Springfield:

N/A

Attendees from Council by Telephone:

Georgianne Broughton, Ray Connor, Andrea Cooke, Shirley Davis (Co-Chair), Yasmin Diodonet, Thane Dykstra (Secretary), Stephanie Frank, Sondra Frazier, AJ French, Fred Friedman, Joanne Furnas, Dennis Hopkins, Patty Johnstone, Nanette Larson, Joan Lodge, Katie Mahoney, Jennifer McGowan-Tomke, Ron Melka, Orson Morrison, Margo Roethlisberger (Co-Chair), Debbie Sheppard, Amy Starin, Christine Walker, Dr. Sidney Weissman

Resource Personnel:

David Albert, Lisa Betz, Irwin Kerzner, Pearl Madlock (for William Pluta), Lee Ann Reinert

Guest:

Christopher Stohr

Call to Order:

The Meeting was called to order by Margo Roethlisberger at 12:35pm.

Approval of Minutes

There was discussion regarding the time that the minutes were posted. It was determined that according to the Open Meetings website that only the agenda needs to be posted 48 hours in advance of the meeting. The minutes were also posted within that timeframe. Thane Dykstra asked for assistance with two last names there were unclear. Michelle Churchey-Mims and Barbara Roberson. The names were confirmed and a motion to approve the March 5, 2020 minutes with those edits was made by Amy Starin and seconded by Andrea Cooke. A vote was taken, all were in favor with no opposition or abstention. The minutes are approved with the above mentioned edits.

DMH Report:

Division of Mental Health Director Dave Albert reported that he is struck by the timing of today's meeting and our last meeting (March) since the world has changed so much since then. He wanted to reflect and share what DMH has been doing to manage during the COVID 19 pandemic. DMH has moved into crisis mode and are working seven days a week. Very quickly, DMH recognized that those in the hospital settings were very vulnerable and a plan took swift action. On March 12th they made the decision to stop all but essential visits, stop transfers, instituted temperature check points and created separate triage areas to allow staff to observe new admissions for symptoms. All new admissions have been and still are being vetted through the triage centers before going onto units. For some it meant closing the admissions for two weeks. Those three hospitals were Reed, McFarland and Madden. For individuals negatively affected, funding was provided for those that had to be admitted to a private hospital so they could still be admitted. Admissions have since been re-opened.

Initially, DMH struggled to obtain personal Protective equipment (PPE). Now the mental health centers do have the PPE that they require. When they get PPE that goes above and beyond the needs of the hospitals they distribute to providers. Staff have been heroic in their efforts to take care of the patients in the hospitals. All of these efforts have paid off. As of today, nine people have tested positive for the virus out of about 1,600 patients. Out of 2,500 staff there, 25 have tested positive across all of our hospitals. Those at DMH realize that the hospitals are absolutely essential to support the providers. They are aware that the demand on providers will become more intense rather than less as we go through this crisis.

DMH was able to increase funding of one million dollars to mental health providers for residential services and increased crisis provider funding by one million dollars as well. There are 3,000 individuals in the state that are in a variety of congregate settings that are funded by DMH and the funding was increased for those providers. DMH recognizes that providers are incurring many additional costs for staff wages, cleaning supplies, food, etc. DMH is providing technical support. Most providers have responded to a DMH survey and staff are developing a plan to help where needed. DMH is determined to help providers and individuals in any way they can. Director Albert will send out a communication soon with the main areas of need highlighted and next steps they will take to help providers. The Department of Human Services has been able to distribute a limited amount of personal protective equipment (e.g. masks) to providers. The Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (IARF) has helped with distribution.

Lisa Betz mentioned two web pages that were created to help address individual needs of COVID 19. One is a consumer page and one is on the provider page. There is information about telehealth, webinars, links to all the national pages, etc.

Director Albert noted there is a text line that utilizes the network of crisis providers entitled 'Call 4 Calm'. Individuals seeking assistance and support can text 'talk' to 552020. A provider returns the text with a call within 24 hours. It has been wildly popular. It is highly utilized and DMH has received much positive feedback. Director Albert also mentioned a warm line that includes staff who are recovery support specialists. It runs six days a week until 8:00 pm. Some people aren't inclined to text and this could be a resource for them. It was also noted that today is older adult mental health awareness day.

IHFS Report:

No report

Committee Reports:

• **Development Committee Report:**

Ron Melka noted that the report was sent out to all members. Chris Stohr was nominated as a new member of the council. The Development Committee, following the bylaws and ensuring the number of members is in compliance, recommended Chris Stohr be elected to fill the position of Matt Perry. Ron recommended the Co-Chairs hold the formal election after his report.

Ron Melka reported that vacancies need to continue to be filled. The committee is currently contacting members who's terms are due to expire so they will know what vacancies there will be in the future. The slate of new members will be presented for election in November. Which concluded the Development Committee report.

The Development committee motioned Chris Stohr's membership. AJ French supported the motion and asked to hear from Mr. Stohr. Chris Stohr stated that he looks forward to working with everyone. Professor Stohr presented his extensive resume to the Development Committee and Ron Melka expects some in-depth conversations in working with him. A vote was taken on Chris Stohr's membership. All were in favor with no opposition or abstentions. The motion carried and Chris was welcomed to the council. Professor Stohr will be receiving orientation and trainings prior to November.

• **Adult Inpatient Committee Report:**

Andrea Cooke spoke about the database of available mental health beds. The committee wanted to revisit this topic after feedback from the last IMHPAC meeting. The committee continues to believe that it is essential for DMH to have knowledge of how many psychiatric beds are available across the state on an ongoing basis. Tracking needs to include non-state hospital beds. Andrea Cooke noted that some sort of database must exist for hospitals since they are able to provide numbers across the state related to COVID 19. James Kellerman is going to contact Public Health to see if there is a database already. Director Albert stated that he doesn't know enough about the existing tracking systems to comment on how easy or difficult it might be to obtain the desired information. Shirley Davis asked if someone could look into it to see if it is even feasible. She noted the importance to those that are being turned away or waiting for long periods of time for hospitalization.

Christine Walker noted that it might be helpful to approach officials in the Commonwealth of Virginia since they seem to have created such a database. Dr. Weissman expressed concern that there has to be a mandated requirement for hospitals to update the registry daily. AJ French noted that no one has answered Shirley's question about someone looking into the feasibility of creating a database. Director Albert noted that DMH has no control over the private hospitals and is not in the position to get the database that people are looking for. He shared that there are State operated hospitals, free standing mental health hospitals and beds in private hospitals and currently there are no mandates that require them to report vacant beds. It was noted that hospitals change their beds regularly and it would be an extremely important and difficult thing to do. At this point DMH needs to focus their energy on the COVID 19 response. After this passes, DMH could then look into it. Shirley Davis noted that she understands the current crisis and hopes that we can work on it in the future.

- **Justice Committee Report:**

AJ French presented the Justice Committee report. The committee was able to meet Alyssa Williams-Shafer who presented an excellent power point presentation related to the programs and support services for those committed to the Department of Corrections for the delivery of consistent and effective programs. She noted that she was pleased with her candor. Fred Friedman brought up a lawsuit related to addressing COVID 19 in prisons and Ms. Williams-Shafer responded openly with what the DOJ was doing about it. Ms. Williams-Shafer mentioned at the time they had a lower risk and now people are making masks and responding positively to the crisis. Fred Friedman noted that the lawsuit is still in litigation.

Governor Pritzker has talked about it in some of his daily briefings. The number of people in prisons has gone down. Fred noted that the number of people in prisons and jails are dying at an alarming rate due to COVID 19. Fred said that he had no more information with regards to the lawsuit. AJ French shared that people have been released but it is unclear if it was in response to COVID or if it was already on the agenda. AJ noted there were multiple letters from stakeholders in response to the COVID 19 executive order. They Advocated for creating quarantine units and transferring people, granting temporary relief, releasing those that don't meet the criteria, etc. AJ French pointed out that it shows that there are many different things that need to be addressed.

AJ French reached out to Dr. Sharon Coleman to ask questions about COVID 19. She wrote back to AJ the same day and talked about what they are doing to prevent the spread of the virus. AJ French encouraged the council members to take a look at the power point that was sent out with the other meeting materials for today's meeting.

Fred Friedman pointed out that that on Facebook there was a report that there were fifteen new cases of COVID 19 as of yesterday at Stateville and two cases at another prison. Fred noted more statistics and that the numbers show there is still a growing problem.

- **Child & Adolescent Committee Report:**

Margo Rothlisberger reported the committee has been unable to meet due to the COVID 19 crisis. Margo will set up a meeting for them in May.

New Business:

- No agenda items.
- Fred Friedman indicated that Tresholds was currently holding their on-line fund-raising gala.
- Christine Walker mentioned that a bill that was related to the use of seclusion and restraints in IL, HB3975. There is some opposition from a very small residential provider that wants to retain the opportunity to use restraints. The bill reads that within three years they have to eliminate it completely. Research has been completed about best practices and there is a technique that Virginia is using that eliminates the need of seclusion restraint.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Adjournment

Ron Melka motioned to adjourn meeting. AJ French seconded motion. Meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting: Scheduled for July 9, 2020 @ 12:30pm

Respectfully Submitted by Thane Dykstra, Secretary, May 8, 2020