

**Mental Health/Early Intervention/Intellectual Disabilities Program
Board Minutes
May 18, 2023
Butler County Human Services Conference Room and via Zoom**

Board Members in Attendance:

Mr. Peter Szura	Ms. Jackie Eppler
Mr. Shawn Pugh	Ms. Shirley Warburton
Dr. Kathy Selvaggi	

MH/EI/ID Administrative Office:

Mr. Brandon Savochka	Mr. Cory Achezinski
Ms. Marni Rettig	Ms. Grace Abbruzzese
Ms. Sarah Wearing	

Visitors:

Bette Peoples, Grapevine Center

Call to Order

Mr. Szura called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Introductions were made.

Public Comment for Agenda Items

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Szura asked the Board for approval of the minutes from the February meeting. Mr. Pugh made a motion to approve, Ms. Eppler seconded.

In favor:	5
Opposed:	0
Abstentions	0

Mental Health Report

Ms. Rettig reported that we hosted the “Early MH and the Impact of Traumatic Experiences” training on April 20, for therapists, and Human Services and Children & Youth staff. This training provided a basic overview of infant mental health and how traumatic experiences effect brain development. Seventy people registered, about 67 people attended. This training was put on by the Theiss Center for Adolescent Trauma from UPMC Western Psych. The training was held locally at Family Pathways. The training and the CEU’s for therapists were paid for by a grant.

Ms. Rettig gave an update on our MST Psych (Multi-Systemic Therapy) program which is focused on keeping children from out of home placements. The one-year anniversary was in April. She reviewed statistics from the first year of this program.

Ms. Rettig reported that County providers across the state of Pennsylvania are monitored, based on claims data, to see that individuals upon discharge from an inpatient Mental health hospitalization have a follow-up appointment with an outpatient provider, or partial hospitalization program, within 7 days or 30 days post discharge. Butler County had the highest follow up after hospitalization numbers for any of the Beacon (Carelton) counties. Our percentage for 2021 was 71% of individuals accessing the next level of care within 30 days. The state benchmark is 66.95%. Care managers from CCR do screenings in the inpatient units for Social Determinants of Health in order to mitigate any barriers that patients may have to accessing follow-up appointments.

We were monitored this past month for the federal portion of money that we receive for the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant. This money goes to support our Mental Health Representative Payee program.

May is Mental Health Awareness month. The Community Support Program organized a Wellness Walk. They walked from Diamond Park to the Grapevine Center where a lunch was held.

The Butler NAMI branch (the National Alliance on Mental Illness) has support groups for families with loved ones with mental health challenges. The meetings are free and confidential and are held in several locations including: Trinity Lutheran church, Saint Johns United Church of Christ in Evans City, the Slippery Rock Community Library, and Passavant Retirement Center in Zelienople. They also offer an online group.

NAMI has online book discussions and they are starting a new group on Thursday, May 25. The book is titled: "You Are Not Alone". NAMI is also starting a new peer to peer educational session starting in June. It will be an eight-session recovery-focused course for adults with mental health conditions.

The Butler County Suicide Coalition created "Mental Health Matters" bookmarks that will be distributed to the libraries in Butler County. Phone numbers for the Butler County Crisis Line, the Suicide Prevention Lifeline, and the Trevor Project are printed on the front. Printed on the back is a list of books for youth and young adults.

We have created "My Pet is Home Alone" cards which state: "If I become ill or injured please contact one of the people on the reverse side to care for my pet." These cards will be distributed to case management agencies and we will also highlight these with ambulance services.

Early Intervention Report

Ms. Wearing reported the Early Intervention numbers from February, March, and April:

In February the total number of children enrolled in Early Intervention was 514. The total number of children in tracking was 42. The total number of children active with plan was 472.

In March the total number of children enrolled in Early Intervention was 518. The total number of children in tracking was 42. The total number of children active with plan was 476. There were 54 referrals.

In April the total number of children enrolled in Early Intervention was 500. The total number of children in tracking was 46. The total number of children active with plan was 454. There were 43 referrals.

Jill McDonald participated in a two-day training for EI policy forum to include a “coaching model”. Coaching will ensure that EI providers across the state are implementing same practices for services. Coaching will allow providers to refer to themselves as fidelity providers – however there is no incentive or rate increase for this.

Intellectual Disabilities Report

Ms. Wearing told the Board that the paintings on display in the meeting room were created by individuals who attended a second art night. Individuals were asked if they wanted to make two paintings and donate one to our office. The paintings were mounted and framed and included the artist’s first name on their painting. After the paintings are hung up on the wall, we will have an open house and invite the artists and the Board members.

Ms. Wearing provided a copy of the Summer 2023 edition of The Vision newsletter for the Board. She reviewed several features including the Participant Spotlight, the photo and caption of the Participant Pour Paintings, and the Summer Picnic with First Responders.

Our first Vendor Fair was held on May 10th at the Tanglewood Center. There were 41 vendors and approximately 80-100 people attended.

The Independent Monitoring for Quality for this year is 92% completed. Fifty-four of the 59 that have been billed and entered into the system have resulted in 82 considerations. Considerations are gathered through the survey process and focus on what may improve the individuals’ quality of life.

Ms. Wearing reported we are currently working on fiscal year renewals and plan to have this process completed by the end of June.

Ms. Wearing announced that in April, Butler County received an increase to our Waiver capacity. We received two additional Community Living Waivers which had a capitation at 70,000. We are now at 85,000 and we will be able to help support more people in our community.

Fiscal Report

Mr. Achezinski reviewed the fiscal report which was through March 31, 2023.

New Business

MH/EI/ID Administrator Report

Mr. Savochka reported the overnight warming center closed as of April 3rd. Glade Run will reopen it on November 1st for the 2023/2024 winter season. Glade Run's first annual golf fundraiser for the warming center will be held on September 29th at Conley's Resort.

Mr. Savochka gave an update on Center for Community Resources' involvement with the schools: for the 2022-2023 school year, we have had 165 contacts between CCR and the schools. This is a significant increase over the past two years. Butler had 58 contacts, Knoch had 17, Seneca Valley had 22, Moniteau had 18, Slippery Rock 1, Freeport 16, and Mars has had 33. Schools are reaching out more to CCR. Of the 165 referrals, 83% were successfully connected to resources. Twenty-six were for mental health services, 19 were for housing, 120 were listed as general resources. The top three reasons were food, utilities, and clothing/school supplies. Barriers were private insurance not being accepted, assistance with mental health co-pays, needs for larger housing in the same school district, families that had already exhausted resources such as the emergency rental assistance programs.

Mr. Savochka reported that he had the opportunity to speak with legislators that represent Butler County regarding what the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania is asking for in Governor Shapiro's proposed budget for this year. There is a \$20 million increase for county mental health programs for the Block Grant and there is a \$100 million increase for school mental health. CCAP is proposing a \$50 million increase for county mental health funding, and a \$100 million increase for school mental health funding to be committed to the counties to utilize for school mental health funding.

Mr. Savochka talked about the services that we paid for with our 5.2 million dollars of base funds for mental health. During the past two years we increased provider rates 13-20% but overall, our county allocation remained the same. We raised the rates but had to reduce the amount of services. The majority of these rate increases went into increasing wages for front line staff at community provider agencies. Bachelor level graduates in social services in Butler County earn between \$36,000 to \$45,000 annually.

Mr. Savochka talked about working collaboratively with the schools. He explained there are 500 school districts in the state of Pennsylvania and there are 48 counties and jointers. If the money for mental health is given to the school districts, they will spend it 500 different ways. They will pull away from our community mental health system to create their own system. If the money goes to the counties, they can work together with the schools and build on our community systems instead of creating a second system.

During the current school year there are 1,170 students who are receiving outpatient services at satellite locations in their home school district.

Seven of the eight school districts located in the county have therapists providing these services. These services are all delivered by providers that have community based mental health clinics that have access to the full array of mental health services that are available throughout the county.

Strong community mental health clinics benefit not only the children that are being treated but also are then able to provide services for the communities that the children also live in.

Working with schools to utilize providers in the community ensures that there is not a duplicate system being built. For example: a school hires an internal therapist. The school will pay 100% of the salary for this position. If a school works with a provider that accepts Medical Assistance and/or commercial insurance the cost of having a full-time mental health therapist in the school will cost about 33% depending on the amount of billable insurance units. There could be three therapists for the price of one!

Receiving other levels of care recommendations, medication, medication management, case management, and the ability to receive outpatient services outside of the school are all benefits of working with a community clinic.

Mr. Savochka told the board members that if anyone has questions to let him know and he will be glad to provide additional information.

Board Members' Concerns/Comments/Announcements

Dr. Selvaggi asked for information on the utilization of the Overnight Warming Center. Mr. Savochka said he will have the statistics sent out to the Board.

Mr. Szura spoke about the Grapevine Center and the resources and information that they provide through the CFST.

Public Comment for General Items

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

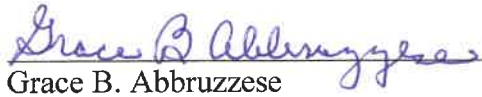
APPROVED AS TO FORMAT:



Pete Szura, Chairperson

Susan Stover, Board Secretary

SUBMITTED BY:



Grace B. Abbruzzese

cc: Mr. Richard Latsko, OMHSAS
Ms. Michele O'Toole, Western Regional Program Manager
Advisory Board Members


APPROVED AS TO FORMAT:

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