

MINUTES
Saratoga County Community Services Board Meeting
September 30, 2021

Present via Zoom due to COVID-19: Edmond Amyot, M.D., Wes Carr, Erin Christopher-Sisk, Ph.D., Amy Hughes, Maureen Lewsey, Lillian McCarthy, Paul Morcone, Captain Dan Morley, and RJ Stutzman. Also present: Michael Prezioso, Ph.D., Megan W. Johnson, and Cari Abatemarco from the Mental Health Center.

Absent: James Colamaria and Katie Lewis, Ph.D.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Amyot called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken. A quorum was established.

III. MINUTES

A motion to accept the minutes from 7/29/21 was made by Ms. Hughes, seconded by Ms. McCarthy. Motion carried.

IV. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

None present.

V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT/OLD BUSINESS

A. COVID-19 Response Update – We have received guidance from the Governor's office, OMH and OASAS and have moved back to masking for all guests, visitors, patients and staff. Dr. Prezioso reached out to the Legislative Director at our State Association Conference of Local Mental Hygiene Directors today to confirm that there is not a vaccine mandate that applies to Article 31 or Article 32 clinics, which we operate, yet. The agencies have drafted two sets of guidance, one in the event there is a mandate and one in the event there is not a mandate. The vast majority of our staff is fully vaccinated. There are two or three employees that are not vaccinated. If a mandate is imposed, Dr. Prezioso will work out the details with Saratoga County Human Resources. Our office has had a total of four positive COVID-19 cases since the pandemic.

B. State and Local Budget Updates – Our budget proposal was submitted. There has been one budget meeting with the County Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Director of Finance and the County's Management Analyst. The process was a bit different this year. Our Administrative Officer, Ms. Abatemarco and our Fiscal

Manager, Ms. Banden did a lot of work upfront with the Management Analyst from the County Administrator's Office, which made a significant difference. Our budget proposal was very detailed and we received several compliments and positive feedback due to the comprehensive nature of our presentation. Dr. Prezioso would like to commend Ms. Abatemarco and Ms. Banden for their extraordinary efforts. The next step will be participation in a budget workshop series at the beginning of November.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Recruitment & Retention - Recruitment and retention across the state continues to be a real issue but it's not limited to the county-operated clinics, it's also affecting outpatient programs and inpatient programs. The vaccine mandate is also going to have an impact. We have had outreach from nursing staff from other facilities that are not interested in receiving the vaccine and interested in coming to work for us because we don't currently have a vaccine mandate. Dr. Prezioso would like to compliment Deputy Director, Megan Johnson, who has done an extraordinary job turning around the interviewing process as we are almost already fully staffed with some really good candidates, including folks in supervisory positions. We have had, and will continue to have, discussions with County HR about what options we have to recruit and retain staff. There are several items on the table with regard to maintaining the workforce. Dr. Sisk says it's an issue across the profession and she has never seen anything like it. Private practices are facing the same challenges. She is hoping local universities will expand and generate more mental health professionals because there are not enough out there. Dr. Amyot says things are definitely changing.
- B. CIT - Crisis Intervention Training is run by a group near Syracuse. It has to do with mental health policing and community collaboration. It's run by Don Cayman, Ph.D. who has a law enforcement background but also is a Ph.D. Psychologist. He has been involved and worked with the state around law enforcement and mental health issues. A proposal was made by Dr. Prezioso and Captain Morley to have our own CIT program and it has been accepted. The CIT program will be made available to the Sherriff's office and over time to the other jurisdictions and agencies. It will involve sequential intercept mapping which will be able to identify different junctures with mental health needs from the criminal justice system. Captain Morley indicated the whole premise of the program is to make it so that the police, when appropriate, are the last people to respond to a crisis call. In some cases, the police may need to be the first to respond.
- C. FACT – Dr. Prezioso received notification from The Bureau of Forensic Services which has a center for diversion. There is a model for this based on the ACT model. This is a higher level of care and is more forensically-oriented. Probation would play a role in this program, as well as addiction-related issues. Dr. Prezioso is in the process of obtaining financing to start a pilot program. Ms. Lewsey is

supportive of this program. These services are like bits of glue to connect people to services, which is better for our population.

VII NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be October 28, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. to make up for the meeting that was canceled in May.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Captain Morley, seconded by Ms. Lewsey. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Cheryle Ellsworth