

Meeting Minutes: Behavioral Health Planning Council

Date: 02/03/2025
Minutes prepared by: Barbie Hess
Meeting Location: Minnesota Department of Human Services
Elmer L. Andersen Building
540 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55101
Room C2222

Attendance

- Present: Tanya Carter, Sara Costello-Fedje, EJ Dean, Anessa DeGroat, Tom Delaney, Christen Donley, Tamir Elnabarawy, Melodie Garcia, Yvonne Goodsky, Kari Irber, Heather Ites, Sarah Knispel, Keith Koegler, Marissa Lang, Charlie Mishek, Lisa Monahan, Diane Neal, John Parsons, Tim Pilcher, Kristine Preston, Shane Pugh, Mary Rogers, Henry Scere, Johanna Schels, Ellie Skelton, Krysia Weidell, Steven Wilson

Agenda

- **1:00 PM – Welcome, Charlie Mishek, Chair**
- **1:05 PM – Roll Call, Charlie Mishek, Chair**
- Charlie Mishek - Chair, Representing Parents/Guardians of a Child/Youth/Young Adult in Recovery from or at Risk of Substance Use Disorder
- Sara Costello-Fedje – Representing Advocacy Organizations - Substance Use Disorder
- Marissa Lang – Representing Parents/Guardians of a Child/Youth/Young Adult in Recovery from or at Risk of Substance Use Disorder
- Melodie Garcia – Representing Peer-Led Mental Health Consumer/Survivor Organizations
- Anessa DeGroat – Representing Peer-Led Substance Use Recovery Community Organization (RCOs)
- Shane Pugh – Representing Providers of Substance use disorder services to the LGBTQ and/or Underserved Communities
- Christin Donley – Representing Family Member of an Adult in Recovery From, or At-Risk of, Substance Use Disorder #1
- Ellie Skelton – Representing Family Member of an Adult in Recovery From, or At-Risk of, Substance Use Disorder #2
- Krysia Weidell – Representing Family Members of an Adult with Lived Experience of Mental Health #1

Teresa Steinmetz – AC of BHA, representing DHS

- Mary Rogers – Representing the Minnesota Office of Ombudsmen
 - Tanya Carter – Representing the Minnesota Department of Health
 - Tom Delaney – Representing the Minnesota Department of Education
 - Yvonne Goodsky – Representing the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families
 - John Parsons – Representing the Public
 - Kari Irber – Minnesota Department of Human Services, BHA
 - Kristine Preston – Minnesota Department of Human Services, Deputy Assistant Commissioner
 - Johanna Schels – Minnesota Department of Human Services, BHA
 - Heather Ites – Minnesota Department of Human Services, BH Planning Council Lead
 - Lisa Monahan – Minnesota Department of Corrections
 - Diane Neal – Minnesota Department of Human Services, Director of Mental Health
 - EJ Dean – Minnesota Department of Human Services, Manager of Mental Health Services
 - Tim Pilcher – Minnesota Department of Human Services, BHA
 - Keith Koegler – Minnesota Department of Human Services, BHA
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- **1:10 PM - Behavioral Health Administration Update, Kristine Preston, Deputy Assistant Commissioner**
Introduction of the BHA Federal Grants Team (topics include How to Maximize Participation and Input of the Behavioral Health Planning Council, Planning of Meetings for 2025).
 - Assistant Commissioner Teresa Steinmetz informed the group that Shireen Gandhi has accepted the appointment as the temporary DHS Commissioner.
 - Kristine Preston shared that the BHA has had structural changes which included the BHA Federal Grants team. The goal of the BH Planning Council Meetings will be to maximize participation and input of the council. Kristine shared the following questions for the group to consider:

Questions for Consideration

- *Are there specific populations (e.g., youth, rural residents, BIPOC communities) that we should prioritize more in the next funding cycle?*
 - *Are there gaps in services that block grants should be addressing but currently are not?*
 - *How can block grant funding be leveraged to drive long-term systemic change rather than just addressing immediate service needs?*
 - *Are there promising community-driven models that we should consider funding or scaling up through these block grants?*
 - *What are some topics that you would like to discuss in future meetings?*
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- **1:20 PM – SAMHSA Federal Block Grants 101- Behavioral Health Administration Members of the Federal Grants Team**
 - Kari Irber shared the agenda for the update on the Federal Grants Team which included an overview of all funding, block grant funded projects, requirements and the role of the BH Advisory Council.
 - A history of the timeline of the role of the BHA Federal Grants team was shared with the group.

- An overview of DHS funding for mental health services and substance use disorder order services was shared with the group.
 - Kari talked about recent legislation and what the current 2025 legislative session is projecting (deficit for FY 28-29 biennium).
 - Mental Health Funding and non-federal funding grants and sources were outlined along with the estimated budget for FY 25.
 - Substance Use Disorder grants which included other funding sources were outlined. These included federal and non-federal funding.
 - Substance Use Disorder Funding – behavioral health fund pays for residential and outpatient substance use disorder (SUD) treatment services for low-income Minnesotans.
 - Kari shared the vocabulary and acronyms for the federal funding/block grants. She gave an outline about the SAMHSA block grants and the purpose of SUBG and MHBG block grants. COVID funds end in March 2025 and October 2025.
 - Keith Koegler gave an overview of what services the SUBG funding supports. He talked about what types of services the block grant is used for and the specific purposes or activities mandated by SAMHSA. He also shared a timeline of fiscal year dates for the use of SUBG award amounts. The MHBG block grant and allowed uses with targeted populations was outlined (only used at very specific services/programs). Each block grant has unique purposes, allowable uses and requirements. Block grants have prohibited uses/standards and cannot be used for certain services/payments.
 - Heather Ites gave an overview of the Behavioral Health Planning Council (BHPC) Role including the responsibilities and various websites that will help members become familiar with meeting content.
- **2:00 PM – Discussion and Questions, Kari Irber, Federal Grants Team Manager**
 - Question: I am an RCO member of this group, will I be able to plan events or host events?
 - Answer: The planning portion of the group is assisting DHS with prioritizing how block grants are used (specific criteria around serving a specific population).
 - Question: Is the grant for profit or both?
 - Answer: Nonprofit.
 - Question: Is there a grant for spirituality counseling (traditional healing)?
 - Answer: There are certain areas (probably state funded) which are used for this funding.
 - Question: With regards to population (women/children) are there grants for housing?
 - Answer: There are many entities that provide treatment for women and children. Minnesota has many programs. This may be a topic of interest for future meetings.
 - Question: This may be a newbie question: As we consider "community driven" models are we strictly considering local programs that are non-profit/not for profit? Or what specific program exclusions should we be aware of? Thinking of the LGBTQ community and profit driven organizations.
 - Answer: SAMSHA and federal grants put restrictions around for-profit funding distribution.

- Question: Has SAMHSA provided DHS with any guidance regarding how the new presidential administration's funding freeze memo will impact these grant funds?
 - Answer: At 2:30 pm today Tamir Elnabarawy, DHS Director of Federal Relations, will be joining this meeting to give clarification of the freeze memo.
- Question: Are you looking at language specific services/programs for those who do not speak English?
 - Answer: There are programs that offer culturally specific services for various communities; Cultural and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure Grants (CEMIG).
- Question: What is the process to bring these questions to the group?
 - Answer: You can bring questions to the group at the BH Planning Council Meeting. Meeting ideas/questions can be sent (emailed) to Heather Ites: heather.ites@state.mn.us
 - To familiarize yourself with the MHBG and SUBG, please visit the SAMHSA website (<https://www.samhsa.gov/>)
 - What is the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant (MHBG)? <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/block-grants/mhbg>
 - What is the Substance Use Prevention, Recovery, and Treatment Block Grant (SUBG)? <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/block-grants/subg>
 - Block Grants Laws and Regulations: <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/block-grants/laws-regulations>
 - MHBG and SUBG Application/Plan, and report: <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/block-grants>
- **2:30 PM – Federal Funding & Policy Update, Tamir Elnabarawy, Director of Federal Relations, DHS**
 - Tamir shared a federal update with the behavioral health planning council. He discussed the Minnesota delegation and talked about key congressional relationships. He talked about the Trump reconciliation bill and what offsets are needed to pass the domestic policy bill. The federal aid freeze was outlined and what the freeze will affect. The Medicaid payment portal is operational, with no interruption to funding for services. DHS is working with partners to understand the freeze and potentially impacted programs. It is hard to predict what things will look like, but DHS will be working hard to monitor any changes.
 - Question: Can you send out the presentation?
 - Answer: Yes.
- **2:45 PM - Council Updates: Membership and Opening Seats, Heather Ites, Planning Council Coordinator**
 - Heather talked about the seats that are open and up for election. She has reached out to those that need to reapply and will be sharing the list of descriptions of positions. Orientation will be scheduled next month and is open to new and returning members. Heather will send members the PowerPoint presentations by the end of the day tomorrow (2/4/25).
- **2:55 PM – Closing**

- 3:00 PM – Adjourn

Next Meeting

Date: April 7, 2025 - Disparities, Gaps and Needs.

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Minnesota Department of Human Services, Elmer L. Andersen Building, 540 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55101 Room C2222 and virtually via Teams