

**ALCOHOL, DRUG ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY**

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
OCTOBER 12, 2022**

**ADAMHS BOARD DIRECTORS PRESENT:**

J. Robert Fowler, Ph.D.	Daniel Kelly
Gregory X. Boehm, M.D.	Katie Kern-Pilch, ATR-BC, LPC-S
Erskine Cade, MBA	Steve Killpack, MS
Sadigoh C. Galloway, MSW, LSW, LICDC-CS	Rev. Max M. Rodas, MA
Patricia James-Stewart, M.Ed., LSW	Sharon Rosenbaum, MBA

**ABSENT:** Bishara W. Addison, Ashwani Bhardwaj, Reginald C. Blue, Ph.D., Rev. Benjamin F. Gohlstin, Sr., Gwendolyn A. Howard, LSW, MSSA, Basheer Jones, Harvey A. Snider, Esq.

**BOARD STAFF PRESENT:** Scott Osiecki, Chief Executive Officer, Carole Ballard, Danielle Clark, Erin DiVincenzo, Tami Fischer, Madison Greenspan, Felicia Harrison, Anthony Henderson, Woo Jun, Linda Lamp, Mark Onusko, Clare Rosser, Jessica Saker, Maggie Tolbert

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

J. Robert Fowler, Ph.D., Board Chair, called the Special Meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEM**

No public comment on agenda item was received.

**3. ST. VINCENT CHARITY MEDICAL CENTER (SVCMC) PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT (PED)**

Adnan Tahir, M.D., President and Chief Executive Officer of SVCMC, thanked the ADAMHS Board of Directors for this opportunity; and to have a Special Meeting to consider SVCMC's request. He reported that calendar year 2022 has been a very challenging year for SVCMC. On Wednesday, September 14, 2022, SVCMC notified the ADAMHS Board and the community that it will close its inpatient and surgical services as of Tuesday, November 15, 2022, which includes the loss of inpatient beds in the psychiatric unit, as well residential treatment and inpatient detox beds in Rosary Hall. Rosary Hall will continue to offer outpatient substance use disorder treatment services. Dr. Tahir reported that SVCMC is committed to the PED because they understand the need in the community and the use of the PED, and traffic of the PED relies heavily on 90% walk ins from the immediate neighborhood and Cleveland Police; and felt that this is something that SVCMC would like to continue and commit to. As a result, they have been looking at options without having acute care as to what will happen to the patients and are also looking at other models within the State of Ohio, whereby free standing behavioral health urgent care centers exist.

Mr. Scott Osiecki, Chief Executive Officer, reported that for decades, SVCMC PED, which is one of two dedicated psychiatric emergency departments in the State of Ohio, has provided a vital response to individuals experiencing mental health crises. The ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County has been the PED's dedicated funding source. Since the announcement of SVCMC's closure of its inpatient and surgical services as of Tuesday, November 15, 2022, the ADAMHS Board has been working through conflicting information from St. Vincent's regarding the future of the PED. Kathryn Burns, MD, MPH, is providing consulting services related to changes occurring in Cuyahoga County's Crisis Continuum of Care. As the result of numerous conversations with the leadership of St. Vincent's, the leadership of the ADAMHS Board and Dr. Burns, the ADAMHS Board received written notification from Dr. Tahir stating "St. Vincent Charity Medical Center is committed to continuing to provide service in our Psychiatric Emergency Room beyond our transition to an Ambulatory model on November 15, 2022, and into calendar year 2023. We are currently pursuing transfer agreements with other hospitals for patients who will need an admission." The letter also stated that they have initiated the process to renew certification with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS).

Services provided at SVCMC PED include crisis stabilization, as well as 23-hour observation, assessment and discharge planning. In this setting, patients have access to a psychiatrist or licensed practitioner around the clock, as well as nurses, mental health technicians and security officers to ensure the safety of all. The ten-bed facility offers an environment that is conducive to harm reduction, including non-movable furniture and metal detectors. The PED offers 24/7 access, which is critical for the patient population being served. SVCMC also partners with other providers, such as FrontLine Service, to deliver appropriate levels of treatment. Through these partnerships, the team reduces unnecessary admissions to Northcoast Behavioral Healthcare (NBH).

Mr. Osiecki reported that Dr. Burns has completed a site visit to the SVCMC PED. He stated that during calendar year 2021, there were 3,172 visits to the SVCMC PED and approximately 25% required hospitalization, 44% were able to return home and more than 30% of the patients seen in the PED were already connected to the community mental health system. The largest number of referrals that came to the PED were from the police (35%) and the next largest referral was self/family members (29%). They also have been accepting transfers from other area hospital emergency rooms to provide second opinions about the need for psychiatric hospitalizations. Mr. Osiecki also reported that all Cuyahoga County Warrants of Detention through Probate Court go to SVCMC PED; and that they also accept intake services operated by MetroHealth at the Cuyahoga County Jail. Nearly 50% of the patients seen in the PED are brought in by the police from across the county and fewer than 10% of individuals are brought to SVCMC via ambulance, so they are not dependent on medical clearance for the remaining medical portion of SVCMC Emergency Department, which will be operating as an urgent center.

There is also a concern that SVCMC is closing 20 inpatient psychiatric beds as well. Through an analysis, 749 patients were hospitalized at SVCMC, 55 were hospitalized at NBH, and three went to private hospitals. However, there are inpatient beds at Lutheran Hospital, adolescents at Fairview Hospital and MetroHealth Medical Center; whereby MetroHealth is expanding their inpatient capacity to 112 beds at their new hospital in Cleveland Heights.

Mr. Osiecki reported that the funding for the PED was never in jeopardy and was up to SVCMC as to whether they were going to continue to operate a PED in some way or form. He stated that the Board would have funded SVCMC through the normal budget cycle, but through discussion with SVCMC staff, there was a need to inform the staff as well as the community of the continuation of services in the PED. Board staff requested this Special Meeting. He stated that staff, as well as the Board's consultant, Dr. Burns, are recommending continuation of funding for SVCMC to operate an independent PED in the amount of \$4,447,412, which is an increase from \$3,777,000 in calendar year 2022; and to monitor the impact this scenario has on the community. Dr. Fowler read Resolution No. 22-10-01 as written.

Ms. Sharon Rosenbaum had a financial question regarding the need for an additional \$700,000 above their calendar year 2022 allocation; and even with this additional funding, has the Board anticipated staffing shortages and maybe additional funds that might be needed to keep staff when the organization changes to such an extent. Mr. Osiecki stated that looking at the Request for Proposal (RFP) that was submitted to the Board, which was before a decision was made to remain open or not, the additional funds appear to be for staffing costs and increased supply costs. He highlighted that staffing shortages may be an issue, but as far as providing additional funding, the answer is no to that.

Mr. Steve Killpack inquired as to whether SVCMC has enough funding in their current contract to provide services through December 31, 2022. Ms. Felicia Harrison, Chief Financial Officer, reported that SVCMC has enough funding to last for the remainder of calendar year 2022.

Mr. Daniel Kelly thanked the Board for doing this; and inquired as to what will happen after calendar year 2023. Mr. Osiecki stated that The MetroHealth System has opened their new Behavioral Health Hospital in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, and they have also submitted an RFP, whereby Board staff are still evaluating and working with them to add a Psychiatric Emergency Department. Also, during this upcoming year; and if the ADAMHS Board elects to fund The MetroHealth System as well, the ADAMHS Board will continue to work with Dr. Burns to closely monitor the impact this scenario has on the community, which should provide adequate time to determine what should transpire after next year.

- **RESOLUTION NO. 22-10-01**

## APPROVAL OF CY2023 FUNDING FOR THE ST. VINCENT CHARITY MEDICAL CENTER PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

**Motion to approve Resolution No. 22-10-01.** MOTION: D. Kelly / SECOND: K. Kern-Pilch / AYES: G. Boehm, E. Cade, S. Galloway, P. James-Stewart, D. Kelly, K. Kern-Pilch, S. Killpack, M. Rodas, S. Rosenbaum / NAYS: None / ABSTAIN: None / **Motion passed.**

### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Julia Bruner, MD, MS, MBA, Senior Vice President, Behavioral Health and Correctional Medicine, The MetroHealth System, reported that SVCMC has been a critical protector of this community for more than 150 years, particularly for those most vulnerable, with their behavioral health and addiction supports. The MetroHealth System and SVCMC share a bond that is a mission based approach to care. Dr. Bruner requested a moment to provide a bit of context. She stated that in late 2019, 11 community health provider organizations, including SVCMC, The MetroHealth System and the ADAMHS Board, came together for the sole purpose of developing a behavioral health system of care for this community; and many individuals present were a part of this endeavor. What ultimately resulted was a series of recommendations put together in a report called the “Community and Criminal Justice Programming Mental Health and Addiction in Cuyahoga County.” This report was jointly submitted to the Cuyahoga County Executive and Cuyahoga County Council in February 2020. That process and report underscored the importance of every community partner to work together in developing remedies for the deficiencies in our care delivery for our vulnerable members of the community. We have always looked to SVCMC as a critical partner in this process.

Once the announcement became public of SVCMC’s closure, we began to prepare for additional patients. While SVCMC is still open, The MetroHealth System has already seen an increase in psychiatric patients coming to their emergency department at their main campus. Today, The MetroHealth System began accepting patients at their new behavioral health hospital in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. She reported that this 112 bed facility will treat mental and substance use disorders, as well as offer extensive outpatient services. While planning for this new hospital, it was not The MetroHealth System’s intent to open a psychiatric emergency department in Cleveland Heights. Prior to knowing about SVCMC’s closure, they recognized that there was going to be a community that sees them as providing that care. Once SVCMC announced their closure, The MetroHealth System decided that it was imperative for the ADAMHS Board to have another option, and followed through the RFP process to submit their application for the expansion of the psychiatric emergency department in Cleveland Heights. She reported that they did not intend to compete with SVCMC, but to ensure a smooth access process to behavioral health services in Cleveland Heights. Additionally, their intent to opening this Behavioral Health Hospital was to begin to close the gap in behavioral health treatment beds. Instead, with the closure of SVCMC, in addition to the closure of many other hospital systems, The MetroHealth System will instead be simply making up for the loss of these beds. In an effort to meet the long term community needs, The MetroHealth System is taking steps to expand their original proposal for the psychiatric emergency department. She noted that their predicted volume will increase to 3,000 individuals, while their original RFP response stated that they were expecting 1,700 individuals.

Mr. Charles Slife, Cleveland City Councilman for Ward 17 and Vice Chair of the Health, Human Services and Arts Committee, reported that a special hearing will be held on Thursday, October 20, 2022, at 9:30 a.m., and requested that the ADAMHS Board be present, to discuss the overall closure of SVCMC. He reported that this “obviously came as a shock to many Cleveland residents, particularly those living nearby on the near East Side in the Central neighborhood; and while it is easy to state that there are many health options in the City of Cleveland, there are hospitals within a few miles of SVCMC, I do not want us to be overly superficial to suggest that this is an easy solution for all members of our community.” However, as it relates to this specific discussion, he thanked the ADAMHS Board for offering the ambulatory care, which will serve part of what is being lost; and shared that he is concerned about the 25% of current patients who do require hospitalization – as Ms. Bruner stated, this could increase to 40% nationwide. Councilman Slife emphasized that these conversations must continue and that there are many lives that are going to be affected by this. Dr. Fowler reported that the Board shares these same concerns and confirmed the ADAMHS Board’s attendance at the special hearing on October 20, 2022.

Ms. Rosie Palfy, a member of the City of Cleveland’s Mental Health Response Advisory Committee, had a public comment, but had more questions than answers today. She requested clarity with regard to the funding that will be

provided to SVCMC for CY2023 and where the funding is coming from – additional Health and Human Services Levy funds. She also stated that she and the community are not clear as to whether inpatient beds will be open. Ms. Palfy thanked Councilman Slife for being present and pointed out that the Mental Health Response Advisory Committee was created under the Consent Decree. She noted that the “ADAMHS Board has a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Cleveland and their running the committee. A month has almost gone by and nobody has even informed the Mental Health Response Advisory Committee that the Psychiatric ER closed or anything going on with crisis intervention response with the City of Cleveland.” She stated that she is “getting calls from city employees, from police officers, from advocates – people don’t know what’s going on – so I guess I don’t understand how this wasn’t addressed with this committee.”

Mr. Osiecki responded that this funding is the ADAMHS Board’s funding through the Health and Human Services Levy. Presently, Board staff are working on the CY2023 ADAMHS Board budget and this funding is moving forward. There is no additional funding for SVCMC. Mr. Osiecki also reported that he forwarded a notice to the Mental Health Response Advisory Committee when a notice was forwarded to a group of individuals – to receive notification regarding this matter, as well as notification to the Mental Health Response Advisory Committee regarding today’s Special Meeting. He shared that the Mental Health Response Advisory Committee really does not have anything to do with this matter, as it is between SVCMC, the ADAMHS Board and the community; and is not under the Consent Decree – for the Mental Health Response Advisory Committee to have input. Also, conversations are transpiring with the City of Cleveland regarding funding for Care Response Teams and/or Co-responder Teams.

Dr. Fowler shared that Mr. Osiecki has been involved with conversations at the city level, county level and state level; and as time goes forward, the ADAMHS Board will do everything possible to address this overall situation. “This is not just a SVCMC situation, but the overall situation of mental health and substance abuse care in this county for all of the citizens that are involved.”

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.**

***Submitted by: Linda Lamp, Executive Assistant***

***Approved by: J. Robert Fowler, Ph.D., Board Chair***