

ALCOHOL, DRUG ADDICTION & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS & ADVOCACY (CR&A) COMMITTEE MARCH 1, 2023

Committee Members Present: Patricia James-Stewart, M.Ed., LSW, Committee Chair, Ashwani Bhardwaj, Rev. Benjamin F. Gohlstin, Sr., Katie Kern-Pilch, MA, ATR-BC, LPC-S, Harvey A. Snider, Esq.

Absent: Reginald C. Blue, Ph.D., Gregory X. Boehm, M.D., Erskine Cade, MBA, Sadigoh C. Galloway, MSW, LSW, LICDC-CS, Sharon Rosenbaum, MBA

Board Staff Present: Scott Osiecki, Chief Executive Officer, Carole Ballard, Anthony Henderson, Woo Jun, Linda Lamp, Clare Rosser, Jessica Saker, Starlette Sizemore, Beth Zietlow-DeJesus

1. **Call to Order**

Ms. Patricia James-Stewart, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. Ms. Katie Kern-Pilch read into the record the Committee Mission Statement: *“To establish mental health and addiction as a permanent civic priority, enhance the public’s perception of people with mental illness and addiction, increase community support and future funding opportunities, and broaden communication, cooperation and partnerships with people living with mental illness and addiction, family members, organizations, other governments and the public.”*

2. **Audience Input on Agenda Items**

No audience input regarding agenda items was received.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the January 4, 2023 Community Relations & Advocacy Committee were approved as submitted.

[Rev. Benjamin F. Gohlstin, Sr., entered]

4. **Milestones Autism Resources Healthcare Worker Training Program**

Ms. Carole Ballard, Director of Education and Training, introduced Ms. Mia Buchwald Gelles, Operations Director at Milestones Autism Resources. Ms. Buchwald Gelles reported that Milestones Autism Resources’ mission is aligned with the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County in the following ways:

- Importance of providing accessible mental health care across diverse communities in Cuyahoga County
- Dedication to cultural humility and trauma informed care
- Value of providing training and education as a means to increase access and reduce barriers

Coordinated autism and mental health education is important in health care and behavioral health care because of a lack of awareness of significant overlap in diagnosis of mental health challenges amongst autistic individuals. There also exists a lack of training by new and veteran healthcare professionals, a disparity in diagnosis in communities of color and inadequate behavioral health access to communities of color.

Ms. Buchwald Gelles reported that autism is a neurological disorder that affects executive functioning, communication, social interaction and sensory processing. Characteristics begin prior to the age of three, and one in 44 U.S. children have been identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). ASD impacts every socioeconomic and cultural population, almost four times more common among boys and half “missed” and half “new” cases. The genetic link has been identified by parental age and weight, identical twins, relative/sibling with ASD and more often in people with certain genetic conditions.

The following co-occurring conditions exist in autistic individuals:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Anxiety Disorders
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

- Sleep Disorders
- Eating Disorders
- Depression
- Fragile X Syndrome
- Gastrointestinal Issues/Bowel Diseases
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Seizures
- Tourette's Syndrome

Milestones Autism Resources has a number of services. They provide an Annual Conference, Helpdesk, online resources and consultations and agency training. The Annual Conference has world-class speakers, networking and support, provides Continuing Education Units (CEUs) in 12 disciplines and over 1,000 professionals, families and autistic individuals attend. The Helpdesk offers free personalized, customized guidance to trusted resources. They also have a Spanish Helpdesk. On the online resource, www.milestones.org, 1,400 educational, therapeutic, medical and recreational resources in Ohio are identified. The Milestones Autism Planning tool and community calendar is also shared. Lastly, through consultations and agency training, families, autistic individuals and organizations can obtain training.

Ms. Buchwald Gelles reported that Milestones Autism Resources' goals for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are identified as:

- Remove barriers to accessing information
- Improve diagnosis
- Increase early intervention
- Build awareness and educate professionals and first responders

She highlighted that fewer children of color get diagnosed and access services – 10% more likely among White versus Black children, 20% more likely among White versus Hispanic children and 10% more likely among Black versus Hispanic children. The latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show better diagnosis rate versus past but still not equitable. The Barriers include diagnostic tools inherently biased, stigma, socioeconomic status, access to healthcare and language.

Ms. Buchwald Gelles shared that caregivers are far more likely to place the needs of their disabled loved ones before their own. Neglecting their own medical and mental health needs will lead to long-term deficits. Caregivers of individuals with autism and similar disabilities have the same rate of PTSD as combat veterans. However, through a collaborative effort of increasing training and education of behavioral healthcare workers, medical students and residents serving minority communities in the dual care of autism and mental health support, more adequate services would be directed at caregivers to decrease the risk of significant mental health issues. Ms. Buchwald Gelles responded to questions from the Board Directors. (The PowerPoint presentation is attached to the original minutes stored in the Executive Unit.)

5. Legislative Update

Mr. Scott Osiecki, Chief Executive Officer, reported that letters of congratulations and partnership were sent to Cuyahoga County legislators who hold significant leadership positions in the new 135th General Assembly. The ADAMHS Board works extensively with these Senators. The outreach to them reiterated our position as a resource for mental health and addiction expertise. Letters went to: Senator Nicki Antonio, Minority Leader; Senator Kent Smith, Minority Whip, and Senator Matt Dolan, Finance Committee Chair.

The State is currently in its budget process for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024 & 2025. The Governor's proposed budget – House Bill (HB) 33 is being considered in the House Finance Committee. With federal and General Revenue funds, the full funding recommendation for Fiscal Year 2024 for the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) is \$1.3 billion (or a 10.7% increase from FY 2023). Funding for FY 2025 is \$1.2 billion (or a 12.4% decrease from FY 2024). For OhioMHAS, crisis and workforce is a major priority in this budget. The Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (OACBHA) supports all of the increases to behavioral health community services:

- \$20 million for 988 in SFY2024.

- \$25 million for 988 in SFY2025.

The question remains as to how this funding will be distributed since there are 19 call centers in Ohio.

There is \$90 million for crisis, which is being split into two buckets – and all crisis funds will run through the Boards; and must be used by the end of September 2025. \$45 million will be split between six regions which is \$7.5 million per region for the development of an Adam – Amanda Center. There will be at least one center per region, and it must be open to all Boards in the region. These are one-time capital dollars – and there is a 10% match requirement. The other \$45 million is per region – \$7.5 million – however – Boards do not have to work together as a full region, but at least two Boards must work together. This funding is a one-time grant that can be used by the region to hire a consultant, develop a crisis center, mobile crisis team, etc.

Additional highlights from the recommended budget include:

- \$20 million for allocations to ADAMHS Boards for local priorities in prevention, early intervention, and suicide prevention;
- \$20.5 million to improve community treatment and recovery supports for Ohioans living with severe mental illness, including expanding the Clubhouse model; and
- \$16 million for forensic services to protect the needs of people with mental illness in the criminal justice system.

The Governor is also recommending \$110 billion in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for research on behavioral health best practices. Mr. Osiecki reported that no one is sure what this exactly means, by it looks like a university would bring up a new research arm. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) supports it, and the Suicide Prevention Foundation supports it but questions the amount of money being spent. OACBHA is staying neutral at this time.

Policy Changes that are also recommended in the Budget Bill include:

- Recovery Housing Certification.
- Indigent Driver Alcohol Treatment (IDAT) funding being more flexible for use by the courts.
- Medication reimbursement for Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) and psychotropic medications in jail.

Work is still continuing on Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 340 modernization:

- OACBHA has been meeting with various legislators, including Rep. Sweringen – the sponsor of last session's efforts.
- He said that he will be reintroducing something – perhaps in the budget bill.
- There are some other representatives who also support the efforts but might introduce a separate bill.
- The focus remains on the removal of the 120-day notice, data and certification of providers.

Mr. Osiecki reported that Dr. Fowler, Ms. Clare Rosser, Chief of Strategic Initiatives, and he will be participating in a joint Legislative Advocacy Day with OACBHA, NAMI Ohio and the Suicide Prevention Foundation on Wednesday, March 29, 2023. He noted that since this is a combined legislative day, participation is limited. The day will start with organizing a meeting in the morning, a recognition luncheon, a meeting with our individual legislators, and end with a legislation reception. Board staff will also participate in the Mental Health & Addiction Advocacy Coalition (MHAC) Virtual Advocacy Week from March 27 to March 31, 2023. Ms. Rosser will share more information about this and how to register at a later date.

Besides the budget, there were some new bills introduced that Board Staff are following:

- **HB 1 Property, Income Tax Changes:** To modify the law regarding property taxation and income tax rates, which may have an effect on levies.

- **HB 8 Parental Notification Requirements School Curriculum:** To enact the "Parents' Bill of Rights" to require public schools to adopt a policy on parental notification on student health and well-being and instructional materials with sexually explicit content.
- **HB 37 Increase penalties for Operating a Vehicle Impaired (OVI) and aggravated vehicular homicide** (Johnson-R, Miller-R) To increase the financial penalties for OVI and to increase the financial penalties and prison term for aggravated vehicular homicide under specified circumstances.
- **HB 38 School Mental Health Days:** To allow school districts to permit students K-12 to take up to three excused mental health days away from school each school year.
- **Senate Bill (SB) 9 Medical Marijuana:**
 - Changes disqualifying offenses.
 - Creates "marijuana cultivation areas" where medical marijuana is cultivated.
 - Adds categories to "qualifying medical conditions" including opioid use disorder as well as any condition that a physician finds would be relieved by medical marijuana or that the person would benefit from medical marijuana.
 - Creates Division of Marijuana Control within the Department of Commerce.
 - Establishes the Medical Marijuana Oversight Commission to develop and oversee the Division of Marijuana Control.
 - Requires retail dispensary employee training and registration of patients and caregivers and requirements to be eligible for registration to be established.
 - Expands forms of medical marijuana that may be dispensed including oral strips and topical sprays and lotions.
 - Provides a new formula for the number of retail dispensary licenses permitted at one time.
 - Increases the permissible tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content of extracts, from not more than 70% to 90%.
- **SB 26 Operating a vehicle, watercraft under marijuana influence:** To change the laws pertaining to operating a vehicle or watercraft while under the influence of marijuana and the admissibility of evidence for purposes of OVI statutes.
- **SB 60 Licensed certified mental health assistants:** To allow the state medical board to license certified mental health assistants and to amend the version of section 4755.48 of the Revised Code that is scheduled to take effect December 29, 2023, to continue the change on and after that date.

6. **2023 Advocacy Action Agenda**

Ms. Beth Zietlow-DeJesus, Director of External Affairs, reported the Advocacy Action Agenda is designed to inform the Board, community and system providers of the advocacy goals for each year to advance important behavioral health issues. This agenda was developed with the overarching goal of promoting recovery of individuals living with mental illness and substance use disorders by adopting and acting on the six 2021-2025 Strategic Plan Goals, which align with the Recovery Oriented System of Care principles and are overlaid in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Implementation Plan:

1. Strengthening Service Delivery System
2. Measuring Impact
3. Maximizing Available Funding
4. Maintaining a High-Performing Organization
5. Strengthening Behavioral Health Workforce
6. Sharing Information

The Advocacy Action Agenda is in addition to the advocacy and collaboration that the ADAMHS Board provides on a daily basis through its work of ensuring that mental health, addiction treatment and prevention and recovery services and

supports are available to help children and adults reach and sustain recovery. This year's agenda has five new advocacy goals.

Motion to recommend acceptance of the CY2023 Advocacy Action Agenda to the full Board. MOTION: H. Snider / SECOND: K. Kern-Pilch / AYES: A. Bhardwaj, B. Gohlstin, K. Kern-Pilch, H Snider / NAYS: None / ABSTAIN: None / **Motion passed.**

7. Problem Gambling and Suicide Prevention Awareness Activities and Campaign

Ms. Zietlow-DeJesus reported that while most can safely and responsibly gamble, the existence of individuals negatively impacted by gambling cannot be denied. Ohio's statewide survey showed that nearly one in 10 Ohioans who gamble are currently experiencing or are at risk of developing a gambling problem; roughly one in five pathological gamblers attempt suicide, a rate higher than that of any other addiction disorder. The Cuyahoga County Problem Gambling Coalition advocates for individuals who are negatively impacted by gambling and works with The Problem Gambling Network of Ohio to ensure any gambling expansion includes consumer protections to mitigate harm and funding for prevention, intervention, and treatment services.

At the beginning of 2023, online sports betting was launched in Ohio and our local community was being exposed to massive advertising campaigns. Problem gambling experts know that there will be an increase in individuals who are negatively affected by gambling and online sports betting because of the increase that was seen in other states that launched similar sports betting. To help combat an increase of individuals with gambling disorders and create education related to safe betting practices and how to connect with treatment, Ohio for Responsible Gambling worked with Origo Branding to develop the Ohio Problem Gambling Helpline and a multi-media prevention campaign specifically targeting sports betting. The campaign is called "Pause Before You Play" and is part of the greater "Get Set Before You Bet" problem gambling awareness campaign. Calls to the Problem Gambling Helpline have doubled (to 1,500 calls) since the launch of sports betting in January, with the largest jump in calls coming from individuals ages 18-34.

ADAMHS Board staff collaborated with the local Problem Gambling Coalition to connect with Origo and develop a partnership to localize the "Pause Before You Play" campaign and target demographics of individuals at-risk for problem gambling in Cuyahoga County. An estimated 137,237 Cuyahoga County adult residents can be categorized as low-risk, moderate-risk, or problem gamblers, which is 13.9% of the general adult population; statewide, the percentage is 10.3% of the general adult population. Men (17.6%), particularly African American males (19.5%), are at higher risk than women for problem gambling. Individuals ages 25-44 (16.8%) are at the highest risk for problem gambling, followed by younger adults ages 18-24 (15.4%).

A collaborative approach is needed to help save lives and connect individuals in need to treatment. It is also necessary to educate treatment providers about problem gambling. The Board and partners propose:

- Awareness Campaign: Utilize the statewide "Pause Before You Play" campaign to target local at-risk populations through a multi-media campaign.
 - Work with Origo to localize the campaign with Cuyahoga County resources and our branding.
 - Purchase digital, streaming, social media, radio, television, print, transit and billboard ads for the localized "Pause Before You Play" campaign and help promote the Problem Gambling Symposium with paid social media, digital, streaming, radio and print ads.
 - Purchase printed materials and promotional items and pay for translation of any materials related to the campaign.
- Support the Cuyahoga County Problem Gambling Symposium that will be hosted on Friday, June 16, 2023, at Tri-C Corporate College to increase treatment provider education about problem gambling. The ADAMHS Board will sponsor this symposium in the amount of \$1,000.

It is important to note that all of the resources inform residents how to connect with care when they are ready for treatment. Based on estimated impressions, hundreds of thousands of individuals will be exposed to the campaign, with millions of impressions. The Problem Gambling Coalition hopes to train hundreds of individuals and local treatment providers through the symposium on June 16, 2023 at Tri-C Corporate College. Mr. Nabil Pervaiz, MS, OCPSA, the Manager of

Prevention Services and Gambling Services Coordinator at Recovery Resources, was present to respond to questions from the Board Directors.

Motion to recommend authorization of the 2023 Problem Gambling and Suicide Prevention Awareness Activities and Campaign and allowing the Chief Executive Officer to enter into multiple vendor contracts not to exceed \$125,000 for the term of March 31, 2023 through December 31, 2023 to the Finance & Operations Committee.

MOTION: K. Kern-Pilch / SECOND: H. Snider / AYES: A. Bhardwaj, B. Gohlstin, K. Kern-Pilch, H Snider / NAYS: None / ABSTAIN: None / **Motion passed.**

8. 2023 Annual Meeting Brunch, Awards Ceremony and Client Art Show

Ms. Zietlow-DeJesus reported that the 2023 Annual Meeting Brunch, Awards Ceremony and Client Art Show is to be held on Monday, May 15, 2023, at the Holiday Inn in Independence. The Annual Meeting has traditionally attracted between 350 and 500 guests and is held during May, which is Mental Health Awareness Month. The ADAMHS Board sells tickets to the event to defray the cost of the food and service charge. The contract we enter into will not exceed \$30,000 and the cost to the Board should be less than \$10,000. The last two Annual Meetings were held at the Cleveland Marriott East. The Holiday Inn in Independence offers a centrally located space with free self-parking and easy highway and bus access and can easily hold up to 500 guests. During the Annual Meeting, the Board provides a yearly update to the community and acknowledges exceptional accomplishments in the community through the presentation of awards to clients, family members, legislators and professionals. It also showcases client art.

Due to inflation, Rev. Gohlstin stated that this amount should be increased to \$35,000 to account for rising costs and inflation. As a result, the Agenda Process Sheet will be amended to reflect this increase.

Motion for authorization of the 2023 Annual Meeting Brunch, Award Ceremony and Client Art Show on Monday, May 15, 2023, and allowing the Chief Executive Officer to contract with Holiday Inn Cleveland South in an amount not to exceed \$35,000 to the Finance & Operations Committee.

MOTION: H. Snider / SECOND: K. Kern-Pilch / AYES: A. Bhardwaj, B. Gohlstin, K. Kern-Pilch, H Snider / NAYS: None / ABSTAIN: None / **Motion passed.**

9. Media Tracking Report

Ms. Zietlow-DeJesus reported that the ADAMHS Board had a total of 37 media mentions between Sunday, January 1, 2023, and Tuesday, February 28, 2023. 36 of these mentions were positive and one was neutral. Ms. Zietlow-DeJesus highlighted that stories in this report were broad and included stories related to the Narcan vending machines, use of the Diversion Center, grassroots harm reduction outreach efforts, Milestones Autism Resources Healthcare Worker Training Program, as well as the Co-responder and Care Response teams.

10. Social Media and Website Tracking Reports

Wednesday, January 4, 2023 to Tuesday, February 28, 2023 Social Media Report

- Ms. Zietlow-DeJesus provided committee members with an overview of the social media statistics. She reported that for the timeframe Wednesday, January 4, 2023, to Tuesday, February 28, 2023, the Board had 291,068 impressions on social media, 416 engagements (likes, comments, retweets, mentions, etc.), gained 84 new followers and 211 post link clicks. Board staff posted nine times and had 14 video views on the Board's social media accounts. Message volume was less than usual during this reporting period primarily due to staff absences.

January 4, 2023 to February 28, 2023 Website Report

- Ms. Zietlow-DeJesus reported that 15,909 people have visited the Board's website since Wednesday, January 4, 2023, for a total of 24,515 times. 83% of the individuals were new visitors to the Board's website; and 17% are returning visitors. There were 55,503 page views and 71% of users came to the site from google searches, 21% came to the site directly meaning they typed it in and the remainder (8%) from social media/referral from another page or email.

Mr. Harvey Snider complimented staff on the Sprout Social handout regarding the Board's social media performance summary. Ms. Katie Kern-Pilch applauded staff efforts relative to the Board's monthly Recovery In Action Newsletter.

11. New Business

Rev. Gohlstin suggested that Board members who participated in the merger of the Cuyahoga County Community Mental Health Board (CCCMHB) and the Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services Board of Cuyahoga County should be recognized for their involvement. Mr. Osiecki referenced archived documents regarding the merger which are located on the Board's website; and reported that staff could recognize Board Directors at the Board's 2023 Annual Meeting Brunch, Awards Ceremony and Client Art Show.

12. Follow-up

No follow-up was received.

13. Public Comment Period

No public comment was received.

14. Upcoming March and April Board Meetings:

- Nominating Committee Meeting: March 8, 2023
- Planning & Oversight Committee Meeting: March 8, 2023
- Finance & Operations Committee Meeting: March 15, 2023
- General Meeting: March 22, 2023
- Faith-based Outreach Committee Meeting: April 5, 2023
- Nominating Committee Meeting: April 12, 2023
- Planning & Oversight Committee Meeting: April 12, 2023
- Finance & Operations Committee Meeting: April 19, 2023
- General Meeting: April 26, 2023

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Submitted by: Linda Lamp, Executive Assistant

Approved by: Patricia James-Stewart, M.Ed., LSW, Community Relations & Advocacy Committee Chair