



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND INTEGRATION STRATEGIES (BHIS)
SUBCOMMITTEE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE POLICY & FINANCING (HCPF)**

Virtual Meeting
Video conference: meet.google.com/npv-fjqb-ymg
Call-in number: (US) +1 657-845-0818
PIN: 389 037 673#

January 5, 2022, 9:00 - 10:30 A.M.

1. Introductions

Daniel Darting called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Voting member attendance and roll call were taken.

Facilitators:

- Daniel Darting Signal Behavioral Health Network (Co-Chair)
- Sue Williamson Colorado Children’s Healthcare Access Program
- Matt Pfeifer Health Care Policy & Financing (Department Liaison)

Voting Members:

- Imo Succo Southwestern Colorado Area Health Education Center
- Mary Ellen Benson Diversus Health
- Camille Harding Office of Behavioral Health
- Monique McCollum Parent Family Advisor
- Tammy Phillips Larimer County Department of Human Services
- Tom Keller Colorado Program Improvement Advisory Committee
- Amanda Jones Community Reach Center

Other Attendees:

- Doug Muir Centura Health
- Marjorie Champenoy Rocky Mountain Health Plans
- Elizabeth Freudenthal Children’s Hospital Colorado
- Taylor Miranda Thompson Colorado Community Health Network
- Samantha Richardson Colorado Community Health Alliance
- Suzanne Kinney Colorado Community Health Alliance
- Amanda Berger Colorado Access
- Lilli Carillo Colorado Health Network
- Jenn Conrad Signal Behavioral Health Network
- Rich Bottner Colorado Hospital Association

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- Christine Andersen Beacon Health Options
- Mattie Brister Mile High Health Alliance
- Lauren Showers Colorado Access
- Maureen Carney Rocky Mountain Health Plans
- Carol Meredith The Arc Arapahoe & Douglas
- Christine Andersen Catholic Health Initiatives
- Karen Masters SCL Health
- Carrie Craig Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
- Heather Durosko Larimer County Human Services
- Joseph Anderson Colorado Access
- Megan Comer Dept. of Health Care Policy and Financing
- Tina Gonzalez Beacon Health Options
- Erin Herman Dept. of Health Care Policy and Financing
- Youngsin Joh Colorado Dept. of Human Services
- Bridie Johnson Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
- Anne Jordan Dept. of Health Care Policy and Financing
- Natasha Lawless Northeast Health Partners
- Courtney Phillips Dept. of Health Care Policy and Financing
- Chris Ukoha Dept. of Health Care Policy and Financing
- Cris Matoush Rocky Mountain Health Plans
- Doyle Forrestal Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council
- Kellen Roth Colorado Access
- Kim Cassidy
- Mika Gans Colorado Access

2. Housekeeping

A. Meeting Minutes and Voting Member Applications

The group votes to approve the November 2021 meeting minutes. Sue Williamson motions to approve and Amanda Jones seconds. All voting members vote “aye”; there are no abstentions. The November BHIS meeting minutes are approved.

BHIS is accepting [voting member applications](#) through the end of January. Questions about the application can go to Matt Pfeifer at matthew.pfeifer@state.co.us. Among various types of expertise, the group is looking for applicants who demonstrate experience in youth behavioral health.

B. Crisis Services Recommendations

In response to BHIS’s crisis service recommendations made to the Program Improvement Advisory Committee (PIAC), the Department is encouraging RAEs to be more descriptive of how they are engaging with crisis services across the

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state. Therefore, HCPF has added a narrative section in the Health Neighborhood RAE deliverable about crisis services. This is an example of recommendations from the PIAC subcommittee being reflected in ACC program management.

Health Neighborhood deliverable is submitted by the RAE twice a year. The deliverable includes quantitative data and qualitative data.

Matt Pfeifer agrees to review the next Health Neighborhood deliverables submitted by the RAEs and bringing back relevant content to this BHIS group.

C. COVID-19 Updates from the Department

Updated COVID-19 data can be found on the [Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment \(CDPHE\) dashboard](#).

Updated information on the Public Health Emergency can be found [here](#); a possible extension to the end date is anticipated.

D. Department of Corrections (DOC) metric review

Matt Pfeifer presents the monthly review of the DOC metric data (reviewing June 2021 data) that the BHIS sub-committee helped to create for the Department. The data is a month behind, due to the holiday. The metric illustrates behavioral health (BH) engagement of members who have been released from the DOC in a 14-day period. The metric is statewide. The trend continues to be positive. The 30-day engagement rate continues to improve as well.

3. Family First Prevention Services Act Implementation - Heather Durosko, Larimer County Human Services

Implementation of the Family First Prevention Act has been underway for three months (October 1, 2021 start date). Heather Durosko from Larimer County Human Services [presents on project progress and opportunities](#). The implementation of the act is centered around keeping children safely in the home.

Colorado's Title IV-E Prevention Program Plan was submitted for final approval on 09/30/21. This is the first time that Title IV-E federal funds (federal child welfare funding) can be used for prevention services. The plan has not yet been approved. The State is eager to get the plan approved as this is an immediate opportunity to drawdown funds.

Implementation challenges are discussed, including:

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- Efforts to include a broader definition for candidacy for what programs would qualify for prevention funding,
- Ensuring health equity is being addressed as States are lacking culturally specific programs for communities of color,
- Working with the Medicaid and providers to maximize funding and reimbursement for approved treatment programs.

Heather transitions to discuss the out-of-home placement implementation component of the program.

- A new placement type was created called a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP).
 - Workforce shortages for QRTP providers has proven to be a challenge. There are some regions in Colorado (e.g., the San Luis Valley, Northeastern Colorado, and Northwestern Colorado) where there are no providers in these areas. This is an ongoing need.
 - There are also challenges around aftercare services, which are required for six months. It is important that the RAEs be included in this coordination.

Daniel Darting notes that this program is a major driver of reform nationwide, specifically as it relates to the child welfare system.

4. Behavioral Health Workforce Shortage and Challenges

The State PIAC has charged the BHIS group with exploring how to tackle the broader conversation around workforce challenges occurring within Colorado. Daniel Darting brought this charge to the group for discussion with the objective to discern where this conversation should exist in the realm of PIAC. The scope of the challenge is vexing, and all stakeholders are acknowledging these barriers.

Amanda Jones conveys the importance of not having isolated discussions. There needs to be a unified approach.

At the State PIAC level, there is a focus on the Accountable Care Collaborative (ACC); however, this problem doesn't just exist in the Medicaid space, and is not even isolated to behavioral health. This is a problem in healthcare, in general. This group could address the problem in the scope of behavioral health and the ACC. The group's previous work on crisis recommendations is an example of this approach.



Sue Williamson conveys the challenges of trying to tackle the problem from a system's lens. Sue encourages the group to inquire about "low-hanging fruit" in the regulatory and licensure space. Credentialing is discussed as a possible component to tackle.

Camille Harding discusses [Senate Bill \(SB\) 19-222](#) which requires the state department to work collaboratively with managed care entities to create incentives for behavioral health providers to accept Medicaid recipients with severe behavioral health disorders.

Additionally, the Behavioral Health Task Force has recommendations for system reform [available online](#). Part of these recommendations is a focus on care coordination work and the role of care navigators and case managers. There is a need to get clear about roles and responsibilities because resources are being wasted as multiple groups/professions are trying to do the same thing in multiple ways.

Imo Succo shares her lived experience as a case manager and the insufficient compensation. Housing is a large piece of this puzzle; if there are housing challenges for the behavioral health workforce the problem is exacerbated. Pay and housing are two key pieces of this conversation. There is also pressure to maintain an unrealistic caseload.

Daniel notes the relationship between the work becoming more difficult and the pay not matching that level of difficulty. Agencies are pressured to have high productivity. There needs to be incentive for people to not burn out. It isn't just about the money, it's about satisfaction.

The group discusses what should be taken back to PIAC:

- The BHIS group acknowledges that there is a role for the committee in this discussion; the challenge is understanding how that role fits into the larger landscape. Part of this is looking at what has changed in the payment structure and service delivery structure.
- Matt Pfeifer acknowledges that the scope is the challenge (e.g., housing is clearly outside of the scope of the BHIS committee). The scope is always the challenge; the experiences and expertise are not. It sounds like BHIS wants to be a part of the conversation but not in the facilitator role. Is there something BHIS can do to put out ideas out there to send along? Is there something BHIS can send out as a committee?
- Sue encourages the group to start with what recommendations already exist (e.g., BH taskforce recommendations).



- Daniel suggests the group convey that it believes this must be a statewide strategy. BHIS is a willing participant in this work but cannot and should not be a leader in the conversation as it would be a misappropriation of the committee. The group agrees with this approach.
- Amanda Jones recommends the idea to provide written recommendations to the State PIAC, from this group. Matt Pfeifer to follow-up with a request for written recommendations from the committee.

5. Wrap-up and next steps

Next meeting scheduled for February 2, 2022.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request for persons with disabilities. Please notify the Committee Coordinator at 303-866-3369 or matthew.pfeifer@state.co.us or the 504/ADA Coordinator hcpf504ada@state.co.us at least one week prior to the meeting.

