

MINUTES

LARIMER COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POLICY COUNCIL

Date: April 5, 2021
Time: 8:00-10:00am
Location: Zoom Webinar
Contact: Laurie Stolen, Behavioral Health Services Director
Ryan Barstow, Behavioral Health Services Business Operations Coordinator

Participants:

Nick Christensen (Vice Chair), Susan Gutowsky, Will Karspeck, Wendy Koenig, Lisa Kurth, Lisa Laake, Kevin Lemasters, Clark McCoy, Chad Morris, Steve Olson, Commissioner Jody Shadduck-McNally, Barry Wilson (Chair)

Attendees:

Beth Sowder, Laura Walker

BHS Staff:

Ryan Barstow, Jessica Plummer, Kim Priddy, Andrea Smith, Laurie Stolen, Jennifer Wolfe-Kimbell

Grantee Virtual Site Visits:

Sharon Butler - Front Range Exceptional Equestrians, Aliza Menashe - Northern Colorado Health Network

Absent:

Marianne Dungan, Troy Hamman, Mary Maldonado

CALL TO ORDER – 8:02 a.m.

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

1. Barry Wilson welcomed everyone and asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2021 meeting. Steve Olson made the motion, seconded by Will Karspeck, the motion was approved unanimously.
2. Grantee Virtual Tour:
 - a. Aliza Menashe from the Northern Colorado Health Network, a 2020 BHS Grantee, presented a virtual site visit by providing an overview of her agency's work.
 - b. Sharon Butler from Front Range Exceptional Equestrians, also a 2020 BHS Grantee, presented a virtual site visit by providing a video overview of her agency's work ([available here](#)).
 - c. Aliza and Sharon then both fielded some questions from Council members on their organizations.
3. Laurie Stolen gave an update on the BHPC Subcommittees sharing that the TAC and TAG will be meeting again this month to complete this year's work session and finalize funding recommendations for the 2021 Impact Fund. Recommendations will be presented to the BHPC in May.
4. Kim Priddy gave an update on the BHS Dashboard and explained she's currently working on fixes and enhancements. She's also working to bring in some new data points including the mental health/substance use disorder jail bed day information, some ER visit data from local hospitals, government expenditures within Larimer County, some youth mental health data, co-responder and crisis line call information from SummitStone and the Connections program. Kim is looking to the BHPC to help prioritize how to pull that data into the dashboard to help support the work Council members are doing. Barry and Nick Christensen then both thanked Kim for her work on the dashboard and approachability in receiving feedback to update it. Barry asked for Council members to take a look at the dashboard when they get a chance and let Kim know what thoughts they have.
5. Laurie gave an update on the BHS Facility and the latest work is being done on the finishes and applications within the facility which includes selecting final colors of tile, paint, and furniture as well as lighting. The latest estimate for the facility opening is late 2022 or early 2023. Laurie also stated that work is being done with SummitStone to see what kind of services could be offered in the community to help with the gap time before the facility opens.
6. Barry and Laurie gave an update on the community behavioral health landscape. There are 2 new programs in Larimer County, Northpoint, a 28 day detox & rehab facility in Loveland which is a private for profit organization and Garcia House, a 16 bed residential treatment facility in Fort Collins run by SummitStone. Laurie also gave a brief overview of the challenges Garcia House is facing finding funding to support the length of treatment that folks need. Essentially, payers (insurance, Medicaid, etc.) usually only cover acute care which can typically be 3-5 days but it doesn't cover the long term treatment and transitions of care necessary to help and

support individuals to recovery. In response to a Council member inquiring on whether the BH facility will help address this issue, Laurie said the goal of the facility is to provide a crisis level of care and seek to move individuals out of the acute phase via detox or shorter term intensive residential treatment and then seek connections in the community to transition folks into the next level of care. It was also shared that a difference between the BH facility and other community facilities is that we have the opportunity to do better. Providers in the community are doing their best but it's still somewhat fragmented. Laurie said the motto of this facility is "get to yes" or in other words, don't turn people away due to funding. Dollars set aside from tax revenues will allow for some funds to be available to help pay copays and deductibles. Individuals will be transitioned to the next level of care in the community via care coordinators to provide a smooth continuum of care.

- a. In regards to outreach efforts, Laurie discussed the proclamation ([available here](#)) for designating May as Mental Health awareness month. Laurie said elected officials can take the proclamation to their town councils, boards, etc. and consider the opportunity to engage with their communities and be an ambassador for building behavioral health awareness.
- b. In regards to stigma reduction efforts, Laurie asked if BHPC members would like some kind of training in a meeting or opportunity to create talking points on how to talk to their community about these issues. Council members discussed the importance of talking about implicit bias and stigma around treatment for specific populations which may be more resistant or even not aware how or where to seek care as well as consistency of messaging. Laurie also shared that Mental Health First Aid is a training provided for free in our community via a variety of locations including SummitStone and the Health District of Northern Larimer County and encouraged those who are interested to seek out a course online.
- c. Laurie didn't have any key partner updates today but said it will be kept as a standing agenda item for the future if anything comes up.

DISCUSSION/DECISIONS

1. Barry discussed BHPC community engagement and encouraged Council members to be BH ambassadors in their respective communities. Barry shared how he uses BHPC meeting minutes and condenses them down to discuss highlights with his board and commissions. Council members are encouraged to share the meeting minutes as well.
2. Laurie and Barry took a moment to welcome and thank Estes Park Mayor Wendy Koenig for joining the BHPC and had Wendy introduce herself.
3. Laurie touched on the BH related legislation and shared that since BHS doesn't have a dedicated legislative staff, members can consult the [CBHC website here](#) to check for updates/news. In response to a question on how to handle a potential request to support State legislation, Larimer County Human & Economic Health Director, Laura Walker,

shared that she stays on top of any public health and behavioral health bills that may come through via her position as proxy and designee for the Health and Human Services subcommittee of Colorado Counties Incorporated. She went on to detail that there are a few ways that the County can be asked to weigh in including lobbying our local legislators to sponsor bills, and once bills are introduced the way we provide support or show opposition is by our CCI vote, or as an individual county, we can sign off with letters of support. As such, Laura said she thinks input from the BHPC would be helpful in that regard if it's of interest.

4. Jessica Plummer presented the [2019 grants summary dashboard](#) and walked through how to navigate and use the tool. One tip is to make sure you view the dashboard in full screen using the icon on the bottom right of the screen and to hover your mouse over the data fields for more information or if the script doesn't fit and just displays “#####”.
5. Jennifer Wolfe-Kimbell explained the 2020 BHS Annual Report, available in both English and Spanish, and where to find [digital copies](#) as well as physical copies. Barry asked members to contact Jen if they need physical copies to be sent to them. Laurie thanked Commissioner Shaddock-McNally for her quick response to writing the opening letter for the annual report and the Commissioner thanked Laurie for her support in that.
6. Ryan Barstow reviewed the proposed BHPC by-law updates. Council members provided some specific feedback they'd like to see included in those changes so those will be added and presented at the May BHPC meeting before asking for approval.
7. Barry thanked everyone for attending including special thanks to Laura Walker and Commissioner Shaddock-McNally. Laura said she's here to provide support to the group and wants to stay connected. Commissioner Shaddock-McNally thanked Barry for serving as chair and said she believes Larimer is leading the way in the state of CO with the BH initiative and the BHPC. She also thanked Laurie for her leadership and the BHS team she's built and thanked BHPC members for their work and expertise and encouraged members to reach out to her at any time.

1. NEXT MEETING:

- a) BHPC MEETING - May 3, 2021

2. ADJOURN – 9:51 a.m.