
**WASHOE REGIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POLICY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
October 18, 2021
3:00 p.m. to Adjournment**

The meeting was held using remote technology in compliance with *Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 241.023.*

1. Roll Call, Introductions, Announcements

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m.

Members Present: Julia Ratti (Chair), Assemblywoman Sarah Peters, Char Buehrle, Sandy Stamates, Dr. Kristen Davis-Coelho, Cindy Green, Dani Tillman, Steve Shell (Vice Chair)

Members Absent: Wade Clark, Frankie Lemus, Henry Sotelo

Staff/Guests Present: Falisa Hilliard, Wendy Whitsett, A'Keia Sanders, Alex Tanchek, Ann-Elizabeth Northan, Brandon Cassinelli, Casey Badmington, Christy Butler, Kris Homan, Lisa Lee, Marissa Brown, N. Pratt, Peter Ott, R. Vawters, Sheila Leslie, Stephen Wood, Valerie Balen, Misty Allen, Amy Roukie, Lea Tauchen, Trey Delap, Jennifer Crowe, Ethan Hovest, Jolene Dalluhn, Linda Anderson, Joe Dibble, Joan Waldock

2. Public comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes for September 2021 Policy Board Meeting

Ms. Green moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Stamates seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition.

4. Behavioral Health Legislative Update

Ms. Badmington from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto's office gave an update on the Behavioral Health Crisis Services Expansion Act, which expands behavioral health options to ensure care is provided care to meet people's specific needs when they have them. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) released a national standard for behavioral health guidelines. That document became a piece of legislation that was introduced in the with Senator John Cornyn as a cosponsor.

The bill would:

- create standards of a continuum of behavioral health crisis services, including regional health centers, mobile crisis response, crisis stabilization facilities, subacute inpatient facilities, and outpatient services after a person is stabilized;
- create a new mandatory Medicaid benefit comprised of these behavioral health crisis services, expand it to include coverage under Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 plans, and make it the eleventh

essential health benefit for Affordable Care Act plans;

- fund through the states' mental health block grants;
- build a committee to recommend protocols for calls to 911 and how operators could best refer those to 988 to put callers into the behavioral health crisis continuum to ensure police departments are not being requiring to handle calls in a specific way.

The bill was introduced in the Senate. Representatives Lisa Blunt Rochester, Brian Fitzpatrick, Tony Cárdenas, and Jaime Herrera Beutler will introduce it in the House of Representative in a bipartisan and bicameral effort.

The Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets (CAHOOTS) bill is an enhanced federal matching rate for state Medicaid programs to build mobile crisis response units. It was passed in February as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). It included funding for state Medicaid programs to provide technical assistance to get programs running in time to get to take advantage of this enhancement before it expires in three years. Nevada applied for and received funding. An extension of CAHOOTS is in the Build Back Better Plan Act. Earlier in the year, Senator Cortez Masto submitted an appropriations request to build a behavioral health crisis and 988 coordinating office at SAMHSA. The appropriations committee provided \$10 million for an office that will support technical assistance and coordination of the crisis care network through implementation of 988.

5. Washoe County Crisis Response System Implementation Plan Update

Ms. Edwards reported 988 will go live across the country on July 16, 2022. One focus in building a crisis response system is the community health implement plan (CHIP) is behavioral health. Washoe County partnered with Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. (SEI) to move this project forward. The goal of the crisis response system is to divert behavioral health crises from 911 to 988 to ensure every person in crisis receives the right response at the right place, at the right time. The regional planning project will design a continuum of services to stabilize anyone experiencing a behavioral health crisis and release them with the appropriate interventions. Elements of the crisis response system are the crisis call center, 988 crisis line, mobile crisis teams, and crisis stabilization programs. The success of Washoe County's project will depend on the participation, collaboration, and knowledge of policymakers and subject matter experts in the community.

The State released a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) that provides funding opportunities for crisis response issues. Ms. Edwards will continue to provide updates.

Chair Ratti highlighted they are working with SEI to plan for what a good crisis response system look like in Washoe County providing somewhere to call, someone who will come to an individual in crisis, and somewhere to go—the crisis call hub, mobile crisis teams, and crisis stabilization centers. The community needs to be as ready as possible for when 988 goes live. The crisis stabilization system will not be fully built by next July when 988 goes live. The County is working on how to do and

plan at the same time because ARPA money that is dedicated to behavioral health. She encouraged members to out the NOFO. It is happening while the State is still figuring out the Medicaid rate and rates for the hub, mobile crisis teams, and the crisis stabilization unit and waiting for funds to build up from phone line fees. She hopes Washoe County has good applicants for setting up mobile crisis teams and crisis stabilization units. Locally, the County needs to figure out how a call coming to 988 that requires a public safety response gets over to the 911 system and when a call comes in to 911 that does not require a public safety response gets to the 988 system. There were no Board or public questions or comments on this topic.

6. Behavioral Health Policy Board Website Overview

Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 433.4295 contains the duties of the Regional Behavioral Health Policy Boards. One of the duties NRS requests is to have a website and electronic data repository of behavioral health data and resources that members of the public, community stakeholders could use. The coordinators have worked on that. The goal is to include as many resources and as much information as possible. The website, nrbhpb.org, is a work in progress. The website belongs to the boards. She demonstrated how to navigate the site.

Assemblywoman Peters asked if there was a place to suggest a resource. Ms. Edwards said she would see if it could be added. Ms. Dalluhn noted her staff would use the site, and they will provide the link to it on their website. Coordinators want the website to be a one-stop-shop where people can come and get what they need. She would like Board members and community partners to reach out to her to get what they want on the site.

Chair Ratti was concerned about how this intersects with other things being done. Many resource directories have not been successful because they are not updated regularly. Nevada already has 211 and OpenBeds. OpenBeds includes outpatient providers. She asked if 988 could be plastered over the site for people in crisis. She also asked if the site could point people to the Nevada Resiliency Project.

Ms. Edwards replied that the resource directory has not been resolved. There is information on 211 on the site. Chair Ratti asked if they would highlight the Nevada Resiliency Project or the crisis hotline. She noted the 211 site has a behavioral and mental health services guide.

There were no further comments from members or the public.

7. Discussion/Approval of Future Agenda Items

Chair Ratti said the Board requested information about the Renown/University of Nevada, Reno partnership. Mr. Shell said he would have more information available after January. They also wanted to hear from Medicaid about the managed care organization (MCO) request for proposals, what to expect with the new Medicaid contracts regarding behavioral health, how the MCOs intend to approach behavioral health in the new contract period. A presentation on how Nevada medical schools are training medical staff is booked for April.

8. Public Comment

Ms. Allen announce a suicide prevention convention to held in Las Vegas November 4 through 5. She directed members to nvsuicideprevention.org for more information.

9. Reminder of Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held November 8.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4 p.m.