S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING SCDMH Administration 2414 Bull Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201 May 1, 2020

A Business Meeting of the S.C. Mental Health Commission was held in Room 320 at the S.C. Department of Mental Health Administration Building on Friday, May 1, 2020, at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Greg Pearce, Chair, was present in person. Other Commission members were present via telephone conference call. The meeting notice and agenda were posted prior to the meeting and notice made to all individuals and news media who requested information in accordance with State law.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pearce called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Stewart Cooner provided the invocation. Chairman Pearce expressed heartfelt sympathies to the family of Mr. Thomas Owens, as well as to Coastal Empire Community Mental Health Center, upon the passing of Mr. Owens on Thursday, April 9, 2020. Mr. Owens was employed with Coastal Empire Community Mental Health Center for over 25 years. Chairman Pearce also expressed heartfelt sympathies to the family of Dr. Harold Wesley Sides who passed away on April 28, 2020. Dr. Sides worked for the South Carolina Department of Mental Health as a licensed clinical psychologist and retired from Bryan Psychiatric Hospital as the Chief Psychologist.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Chairman Pearce welcomed everyone. Visitors present via telephone conference call were Jackie Brown, Allen Teague, & Linda Wright, Waccamaw Center for Mental Health; Varney Hodge, Aiken-Barnwell Mental Health Center; Brandon Lilienthal, Charleston-Dorchester Mental Health Center; Geraldine Pazi, Berkeley Community Mental Health Center; Bill Lindsay, Executive Director, NAMI SC; Jocelyn Piccine, Liberty Healthcare; and Janie Simpson, Chair, South Carolina Mental Health State Planning Council.

Chairman Pearce talked about the efforts the Department has made and continues to make to be available to meet the needs of individuals and families dealing with mental health issues during the COVID-19 pandemic. He said Jennifer Butler, Director, Office of Suicide Prevention, spoke at the Governor's Press Conference on April 3, 2020. She urged citizens to make sure they are caring for their mental health as well as their physical health. Dr. Rogers spoke at the April 23, 2020 Governor's Accelerate SC meeting at which he demonstrated to the public that DMH has been working diligently to meet the mental health needs of citizens during this crisis. Chairman Pearce said the reports presented today will provide more information and data on all the Department is doing to provide services to safely treat the mental health needs of the Department's patients and others who may be struggling emotionally because of the COVID-19. On behalf of the Commission, Chairman Pearce expressed appreciation to the staff and commended the Department for a job well done.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On a motion by Mr. Bob Hiott, seconded by Dr. Alison Evans, the Commission approved the Agenda for today's Business Meeting.

All voted in favor to the above motion; the motion carried.

2020 HASSENPLUG CLINICIAN OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCEMENT

On behalf of the Commission, Chairman Pearce extended appreciation to all of the nominees for the 2020 Louise R. Hassenplug Outstanding Clinician of the Year Award for their efforts and dedication to help the Department meet its mission to support the recovery of people with mental illnesses. He said the common traits used to describe the nominees

were considerate, cooperative, dedicated, dependable, energetic, knowledgeable, persistent, proactive, productive, team member, and valued.

Chairman Pearce announced the names of each nominee. They were: Amanda Gilchrist, CMHS – Administration; Brigette Cuonzo, Aiken-Barnwell MHC; Rodney Yeager, Anderson-Oconee-Pickens CMHC; Latasha Broomfield, Beckman MHC; Geraldine Pazi, Berkeley MHC; Sara Frierson, Columbia Area MHC; Ruth Walkup, Catawba MHC; Brandon Lilienthal, Charleston-Dorchester MHC; Thomas Owens, Coastal Empire, MHC; Candin Phillips, Greater Greenville MHC; Samara Rozier, Lexington MHC; Latisha Herriott, Orangeburg Area MHC; Angela Scott, Pee Dee MHC; Rebecca Black, Tri-County MHC; Rosyln Sanders, Santee-Wateree Community MHC; Gianella Quinones, Spartanburg Area MHC; Allen Teague, Waccamaw Center for Mental Health; Megan Smalling, C.M. Tucker Nursing Care Center; Samantha Horsley, Forensic Outpatient and Evaluation Services; Orika Chamberlain, G. Werber Bryan-Forensic Treatment Services; and Tanya Goodwin, Morris Village Alcohol and Drug Addiction Treatment Center.

Chairman Pearce announced the winner of the 2020 Louise R. Hassenplug Outstanding Clinician of the Year is Mr. Allen Teague of the Waccamaw Community Mental Health Center. Chairman Pearce read the nomination:

Mr. Teague has been with Waccamaw Center for Mental Health for 24 years and has done an excellent job in building a strong and successful Homeless Outreach program. For the last 18 years he has worked under a Health and Human Services grant, which has paid for two mental health counseling specialists and their expenses to do outreach in the community. Collectively, he and his co-workers provided 402 mental health referrals, 794 alcohol and drug referrals, and 1,080 medical linkage referrals. The data from the Grant indicate more than 14,625 duplicated participants' interventions were overseen by Mr. Teague.

Mr. Teague presently serves on two boards of directors: the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Homeless Continuum of Care and the HUD Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) for affordable housing, including specialized housing for low income elderly.

In addition to receiving several awards for meritorious service, Mr. Teague also has the honor of being nominated for the Louise R. Hassenplug Outstanding Clinician Award twice.

It requires a certain personality type and unique character to sustain the Homeless Outreach program. Mr. Teague has been able to build rapport and earn the trust of both patients and community members. He continues to go above and beyond expectations and has received a substantially exceeds overall rating on his last six yearly performance reviews due to exceptional work. Mr. Teague's role is integral to the ongoing success of the Homeless Outreach program. Mr. Teague has played an important role in the Eastern Carolina Homeless Coalition (ECHO) helping to secure more than 15 different federal grants totaling more than \$2,300,000 per year to provide services to homeless veterans and their families.

Chairman Pearce said that it is an honor to present this award to Mr. Teague and thanked him for his service. Mr. Teague thanked the Commission, the Department and Waccamaw Mental Health Center for the recognition and the support he receives to serve so many in the community. Ms. Jacqueline "Jackie" Brown, Executive Director, Waccamaw Center for Mental Health, said Mr. Teague is a special employee and goes above and beyond expectations and thanked him for his service.

2019 OUTSTANDING SCDMH EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCEMENT

State Director Kenneth Rogers announced the 2019 SCDMH Outstanding Employee of the Year is Mr. Varney Hodge. Mr. Hodge works at the Aiken-Barnwell Mental Health Center. Dr. Rogers read the nomination:

Mr. Hodge is a native of St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. He grew up in the Bronyx, New York. Mr. Hodge has devoted himself to selfless public and community service, is a passionate advocate and social worker not only for those diagnosed with mental illness but for all people, persons diagnosed with mental illness, persons diagnosed with severe mental illness and substance use disorder and persons incarcerated in local detention centers, and with those in whom he works. He always sees patients as people first, they are never a diagnosis. He helps them achieve their personal goals, he helps them understand how they need to take responsibility for their own lives and overcome fear of their diagnosis. He gives them skills to help empower them to do these things. He accompanies patients to health care providers, and teaches them valuable skills, celebrates their milestones and offers comfort in time of loss. He had made presentations in the community to educate about mental illness emphasizing the patient's value as a community member and worked to help those consider changes to meet their personal goals. He has served on the cultural diversity committee at Aiken Barnwell MHC. Once demonstrating a traditional dance from the Virgin Islands and asking the audience to join him, the room erupted in laughter as we tried to perform the dance. Mr. Hodge used something as simple as a dance to help us better understand each other, understand different perspectives and build trust across cultures. He has been an amazing teammate; always cheerful, energetic and exceptional in everything he does. He celebrates agency achievements, he challenged the agency to consider new initiatives and volunteered to lead those initiatives. He has participated in career events sharing his passion with students and job candidates. When my father passed away, I remember that Mr. Hodge made time to come by my office and offer kind words and a hug. Mr. Hodges' quest to always learn is evident by his career path at Aiken Barnwell MHC. He sought his master's degree several years ago as he wanted to be able to serve patients in a different capacity. When it was time to graduate he assured that his three sons where there to see him walk across the stage, thus again serving as a role model. He proudly showed his graduation pictures along with his family to the staff at the center. He is a deacon at his church, where he offers kind words of encouragement and hopes to minister to all inside and outside his church. He coaches a youth basketball league in his community serving as a role model for young men teaching them team work, compassion, respect, and the ability to accept defeat graciously. His work on building character has paid off. He bragged on his team when they went to the championship and encouraged staff at the Aiken Barnwell MHC to support them by attending their games. Mr. Hodge embodies the values of social work to help people in need to address social problems, challenge social injustice, respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person, recognize the importance of human relationships, behave in a trust worthy manner and enhance their professional expertise.

Dr. Rogers congratulated Mr. Hodge on receiving this award. The announcement will be posted on the Department's intranet and website.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Dr. Evans, and seconded by Mr. Hiott, the Commission approved the minutes from the Business Meeting of April 3, 2020

All voted in favor to the above motion; the motion carried.

MONTHLY/QUARTERLY INFORMATION REPORTS

Ms. Elizabeth Hutto presented the items listed under Monthly/Quarterly Informational Reports, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

Ms. Hutto reported for the month of April a total of six pending investigations by the Office of Public Safety and two allegations reported in April, for a total of eight cases subject to investigation. Four investigations were completed leaving four alleged abuse cases pending investigation.

Ms. Hutto reported a total of 15 pending SLED investigations. Three cases had been assigned to SLED; three cases, of which the oldest is from September 2019, were assigned to Long-term Care Ombudsman Office; four cases, of which the oldest is from January 2019, were assigned to local law enforcement; and five were assigned to the Attorney General's Office (AGO). She noted that one of the cases assigned to the AGO goes back to 2017. She explained the case will remain open until the defendant is located or until the AGO decides not to pursue any longer.

Ms. Hutto highlighted the following from the Patient Advocacy Report:

- 52 calls to patient advocacy in March 2020; a total of 140 year to date
- 71 complaints were resolved in March 2020.
- 218 complaints have been resolved year-to-date.
- The number of complaints by category resolved year to date is 275 (complaints are broken out by category, a single patient complaint may have more than one category).
- Access to treatment is the most frequent type of complaint filed.

Ms. Hutto reported the Patient Advocacy Team worked to register patients who wanted to vote in the February 2020 primary. Approximately 100 patients were provided the opportunity to cast their vote.

DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW AND UPDATE

Coronavirus Response

Community Mental Health Services

Ms. Deborah Blalock presented the Community Mental Health Services (CMHC) report. She provided a graph showing the CMHCs provision of care to patients during COVID-19 (a copy of the graph is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director). Below are highlights from the report:

- During the week of March 9th, CMHC served 18,214 patients.
- During the week of March 16th, CMHC served 9,495 patients, a dramatic decrease from the previous week reflecting the impact of the Governor's Emergency Declaration.
- As the CMHCs worked to transition to virtual services, there was a steady increase in the number of patients served during the following weeks. CMHS served 15,363 patients during the week of April 27th.
- The Department purchased and distributed 600 Chromebooks to the mental health centers to assist clinicians in relaying services to patients through telehealth platform.
- Ms. Blalock commended the Department's IT staff for their superb assistance and support they provided the Centers which enabled them to offer telehealth services to the patients.
- During the period February 14, 2020 through March 13, 2020 a total of 3,072 patients received family therapy and there were 3,326 incidents of family therapy. From March 13, 2020 through April 21, 2020, a total of 5,297 patients received family therapy and there were 7,061 incidents of family therapy.
- The Community Mental Health Services Division initiated "Supporting Our Staff Peer Support for SCDMH Staff" in which DMH employees can speak to a peer professional about their stress in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- DMH received a grant award from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to develop a call center specifically for issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The number for the center will be 1-844-SCHOPES and is scheduled to launch May 18, 2020. Included in the call center will be a resource dedicated for health care workers.

- DMH has partnered with the Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS) and created Project Hope. The Project focuses attention on South Carolina citizens who may or may not have previously been known to the behavioral health system who may be experiencing problems with substance use or who have both mental illness and substance use disorders and need assistance due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- "Heroes Work Here" banners will be placed at DMH centers, hospitals, and nursing homes to show appreciation for employees and their hard work during this time of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Beginning Monday, May 4th, Centers will begin to slowly increase face to face patient service delivery. Each Center is developing plans to safely see their patients who could not be serviced via telehealth due to no access to technology.

Ms. Blalock said the relationship with the Department of Education and DMH's School Mental Health Services (SMHS) is active and ongoing. SMHS provides access to community mental health services for students and their families. The number of families receiving services has increased since COVID. Many families have expressed their desire to continue to do telehealth beyond COVID. Areas with poor broadband have been identified. SMHS has coordinated parking with the school districts that provide Wi-Fi equipped school buses to provide telehealth services to students and families without internet access.

Ms. Blalock presented the Community Mental Health Services Trends and Transparency Monthly Indicators (TMI) spreadsheets, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. This was received as information.

Administrative Services

Ms. Debbie Calcote presented the Administrative Services Report. Below are highlights from the report.

- <u>Division of Financial Services</u> The Procurement Department has been phenomenal in locating personal protection equipment (PPE) for the inpatient and outpatient settings, cleaning supplies, and the Chromebooks.
- <u>Accounting</u> DMH is representative payee for almost 800 patients. During COVID, staff members have worked variable schedules and remotely to address and process patient billing matters.
- Grants Grants Administration is in the process of applying for two grants: FEMA Grant, a public assistance grant that will provide 75% reimbursement of the cost of PPE and items related to emergency medical care costs related to COVID; and FCC Grant, for reimbursement towards the Chromebooks and increased bandwidth to provide connected care services to patients and their families.
- <u>Public Safety</u> Public Safety continues to provide support to all inpatient settings in the nursing homes as it relates to patient care and safety. There has been a decrease in transportation of patients particularly from the forensic locations and SVP.
- <u>IT Division</u> IT Division rapidly expanded remote user capacity for clinicians as well as support staff. The most staff working remotely on a given day is 1,353.
- Physical Plant Services
 - All Physical Plant Services (PPS) staff are considered essential.
 - PPS assisted with moving furnishings out of Morris Village infirmary to establish isolation rooms.
 - Non-essential staff, such as project managers, are working remotely.

Chairman Pearce asked if there are any employees out on furlough. Ms. Eleanor Odom, HR Director, replied there is one employee on furlough. Employees who are out due to health issues have chosen to take sick leave.

Ms. Calcote reported that employees whose work cannot be performed remotely are volunteering to work in other areas such as Nutritional Services. Janitorial Services' focus has been disinfecting common surfaces daily.

Department of Inpatient Services (DIS)

Dr. Versie Bellamy presented the Department of Inpatient Services report. Below are highlights from the report:

• The DIS COVID-19 Task Force was formed on March 3, 2020.

- Multiple measures across the system were activated and continue to evolve in response to COVID-19.
- DIS continues to work closely with SCDHEC, SCEMD, the SC Hospital Association, CDC, and CMS in efforts to make sure healthcare partners are aware of the needs of our most vulnerable patients and residents.
- Like many hospitals and nursing homes across the country, DIS had to quickly prioritize working with the supply chains to acquire additional supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to protect the patients and the staff. Dr. Bellamy commended Steve Pullie, Director of Procurement, and Administrative Services for purchasing the supplies quickly and efficiently.
- N95 fit testing has been completed by 449 employees across all of DIS, employees for Public Safety and some senior management. Patrick B. Harris Psychiatric Hospital already had a N95 training program. A stash of N95 masks from the earlier H1N1 flu outbreak were found, however the elastic bands had dry rot. Staff members volunteered and refurbished the masks.
- A float pool was created to deal with nursing shortages. Currently, the float pool consists of the following positions: 12 RN, 12 LPN, 16 CNA, and 14 BHA. To date, one RN, four LPNs, seven CNAs, and eight BHAs have accepted the positions and started their training and orientation. Community nurses were offered 4-hour shift or medication administration work on the weekends when they were not working. In addition, 3 community mental health nurses reached out and volunteered their time.
- Dr. Kimberly Rudd reported that outside visitation of patients at the nursing homes was suspended on March 13, 2020 with any exceptions determined on a case by case basis. IT set up WiFi network at inpatient facilities to allow patients and residents to connect to families. The residents at Stone Veterans Pavilion at C.M. Tucker Nursing Center were thrilled at the recent visitation drive by where a lot of the families drove by the front of the facility while residents sat on the porch.
- A hotline number for staff was published for employees to call to offer suggestions, express concerns, or share stories to encourage co-workers. Messages are not shared without the permission of the caller. Hearing staff messages has enabled leadership to take supportive actions.
- Some efforts to shield the patients from the coronavirus include: following the guidelines of the CDC; restricting outside contact with the patients; screen all employees upon arrival to work for possible exposure to COVID-19; many staff are working remotely to decrease the possibility of spreading the virus; all staff wearing surgical masks while working with the patients or meeting with other staff members; each facility has a site identified for isolation, if needed; established observations areas; and continue to get supplies/PPE as needed.

Dr. Bellamy commended the work of the COVID-19 Task Force, led by Dr. Robert Breen, and expressed appreciation for the support from all areas at the Department and the Commission.

Chairman Pearce asked about the responses to the questions from the Commission regarding the decrease in services at Morris Village in response to COVID-19 virus. Dr. Bellamy explained the first drawdown, dropping the census from 100 to 80 beds, occurred in response to loss of Morris Village medical staff prior to COVID-19. She explained that considering the conditions of the COVID-19 Pandemic and new medical staff there was a second drawdown decreasing the census from 80 beds to zero beds. This allowed new medical staff, in consultation with the DIS COVID-19 Task Force, time to develop plans for bringing patients back to Morris Village and ensuring safe social distancing and minimizing risks associated with the virus.

Mark Binkley reported that during the first weeks of the COVID-19 crisis, as the Interim Director he met with Senior Management on a daily basis because things were changing so quickly. During the meetings, Dr. Bellamy, as well as all Senior Management, briefed every one of the measures being taken to keep residents, patients, and staff safe. With regard to the decrease in patients at Morris Village, he said that he fell short of keeping the Commission informed about the rapid decline in the census and the plan as to how to bring the census to a safe level, and emphasized there was no lack of communication by Dr. Bellamy and her team, including communicating with all referral sources, including the courts and county authorities. The Commissioners each thanked Mr. Binkley for the information.

Forensic Waiting List Update

Dr. Bellamy reported that as of today there are 59 patients on the forensic waiting list. The increase is due to less admissions because of COVID-19. The number of orders for admission increased in March, with orders for restoration more than doubling from the previous month. A flu outbreak impacted multiple units and also contributed to a temporary reduction in admission capacity as units were quarantined.

There was discussion concerning the South Carolina Supreme Court's finding that summary courts can order competency evaluations for defendants to be tried in those courts. The Department is concerned about the possible negative impact to the system such as an unanticipated increase in evaluations. The Department plans to work with Judge Frank Addy and Court Administration to remind the summary courts of their inherent authority to make capacity determinations.

Report of the Inpatient Facilities Governing Body Meeting of January 30, 2020 and Approval of the Minutes

Dr. Versie Bellamy presented the January 30, 2020 quarterly Inpatient Facilities Governing Body Meeting minutes, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

On a motion by Ms. Haynes, seconded by Mr. Hiott, the Commission approved the Governing Body Meeting minutes from the January 30, 2020 meeting.

All voted in favor to the above motion; the motion carried.

Financial Status Update

Ms. Noelle Wriston said an updated financial projection will be presented next month and will include the initial impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic to the revenue and expenses. Chairman Pearce requested the financial status update be provided to the Commission as soon as possible. Mr. Binkley said it is anticipated that the General Assembly will pass a continuing resolution that will keep state government funding at its current level. He said that it is unclear the amount of stimulus money the federal government will provide to the states in response to the coronavirus outbreak for public assistance and for other programs that the states can offer to address the needs of their population.

Medical Care Account Waiver

Ms. Hutto reported a medical care account waiver of a patient's outstanding balance of \$1,837,498.77. The patient died in 2018 and did not own any tangible property, and no estate was probated. This was received as information.

Proposed Bylaws Amendments

Ms. Hutto presented the following amendments to the Bylaws of the South Carolina Mental Health Commission, copies of which had been provided to the Commission (*underscore indicates new language*):

- Update for express compliance with SC FOIA: Under Article II. Meetings of the Commission, Section 2: Special meetings of the Commission may be held at any time upon call by the Chairman, by request of the Director or by any three members, provided not less than five days notice of the time and place of said meeting shall be given to all members of the Commission and notice of such meetings shall be made public as required by the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.
- On a recommendation from the recent House Legislative Oversight Committee review, add the following language to Article II Meetings of the Commission, Section 5: Any member of the public requesting an item be placed on the agenda must submit a written request at least seven (7) days in advance of a scheduled meeting of the Commission, or 24 hours prior to the start of an emergency session. That request will state

the name of the individual or group submitting the request, the address, the purpose of the request and the topic to be addressed. The chairperson of the Commission, at their discretion, will notify the person if their request is to be granted. The chairperson will introduce speakers who have previously submitted an approved request to the Commission at the appropriate time during the agenda and invite them to make comments on agenda topics. Speakers may offer objective comments on agency operations and programs that concern them. Each person that signs up to speak will be limited to a three-minute presentation. The Commission expressly reserves the right to terminate presentations that are irrelevant, disruptive, or otherwise out of order at the discretion of the chairperson.

- Under Article VII. Order of Business (f): other business <u>and public comments</u>. Also, add the following language: A member of the public wishing to address the Commission must sign in with their name, contact information, organization's name (if applicable), and the topic on which they wish to speak. Such comments will be limited to three minutes. No person, other than a Commission member, shall speak more than once during the public comment period without express permission of the chairperson. The Commission expressly reserves the right to terminate public comments that are irrelevant, disruptive, duplicative, or otherwise out of order at the discretion of the chairperson. The time for public comment shall not exceed three minutes, except that such time may be extended at the discretion of the chairperson or by vote of Commission.
- Under Article VIII. Minutes, (b): Names of members present or absent <u>and any other individuals who made comments during the public comment session;</u>
- Update the Chairman's name to L. Gregory Pearce, Jr.

On a motion by Dr. Evans, seconded by Ms. Haynes, the Commission approved the amendments to the Commission Bylaws as presented.

All voted in favor to the above motion; the motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Dr. Rogers expressed gratitude for the support he has received from the Senior Management Team and the Commission as he began his new responsibilities as State Director. He said it has been a great transition despite the challenges of COVID-19.
- Dr. Rogers announced that Governor McMaster has declared May 2020 as Mental Health Month in South Carolina.
- Chairman Pearce thanked everyone for their commitment and all the hard work being done during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Evans made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Hiott seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

The May 1, 2020 meeting of the South Carolina Mental Health Commission adjourned at 12:42 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members

L. Gregory Pearce, Jr. Chair

Members present via telephone conference call:

Louise Haynes, Vice Chair

Dr. Alison Evans Robert Hiott

Visitors/Staff

Kenneth Rogers Mark Binkley

Dr. Robert Bank Dr. Versie Bellamy

Debbie Blalock (Skype) Christian Barnes-Young

(Skype)

Jackie Brown (phone)

Debbie Calcote

Stewart Cooner

Patricia Handley (Skype) Varney Hodge (phone)

Melanie Ferretti (phone)

Elizabeth Hutto

Bill Lindsay (phone)

Brandon Lilienthal (phone)

Eleanor Odom

Geraldine Pazi (phone)

Jocelyn Piccine (phone)

Dr. Kimberly Rudd

(Skype)

Janie Simpson (phone) Allen Teague (phone)

Linda Wright (phone)

Noelle Wriston

APPROVALS

Chair

Recording Secretary