

State Mental Health Planning Council Meeting Notes  
(42 in attendance)

January 6, 2022

1. Welcome

Danna Mauch opened the meeting and welcomed the sister state agencies in attendance.

2. Subcommittee Updates

Subcommittees provided brief updates of their activities

- a. Housing: the subcommittee met 5 times in 2021, with an average of 40 individuals attending the meeting. Highlights from the last year include:
  - i. Ongoing efforts on rental subsidies and budget increase advocacy
  - ii. Started a work group for peer support in housing, how peers support overlaps with housing
  - iii. Advocacy for safe haven increases
  - iv. Offer statewide provider meetings in which any provider offering state vouchers can join and discuss how to move people out of inpatient facilities and into GLES, own apartments
  - v. Discussed effects of staff vacancies with providing support for those looking for housing or with housing issues
- b. Youth Development Committee (YDC): the committee is on pause until they understand how to roll out YDC since it should be a mix of youth and advocates. Had too many advocates and no youth. The State Youth Adult Committee (SYAC), a subcommittee of YDC, will be involved in the redesign
  - i. SYAC: providing great networking and connections to those involved. It also helps engage young adults and get direct feedback from them on services. If want to join SYAC or know of young adults who may be interested, contact Ali Gold at [alisa.gold@mass.gov](mailto:alisa.gold@mass.gov).
- c. Employment: Updated vision, mission, and goals statements. Goals are road maps for work in the near future, with objectives still being formed.
- d. Elder Collaborative: Provided feedback to DMH through Rob Walker.
  - i. Have an equity subgroup that focuses on training on culture responsibility, diversity in employment for older adults, teach people how to get elders access to care.
  - ii. Meeting in January to discuss partnering with DPH on aging conference-training on older adults and substance abuse.
  - iii. Working with DMH and MAMH to provide training to providers on meeting needs of elders
  - iv. Contact Cassie Cramer if interested in participating in subcommittee
- e. PAC: it's a family and child subcommittee. The group discussed recovery as a family experience and attempts to collaborate with other groups to bring family experience

to them. Have groups talk to the subcommittee to promote peer mentors, etc. Will focus more work with young adults.

f.

### 3. Bylaw Review and vote

The group had a brief discussion on the bylaws which were sent and reviewed before the meeting. The bylaws were accepted with no "No" votes.

### 4. Legislative Update

Steve Cidlevich provided a legislative update, which included information on the general ARPA funds and how the legislature wants a role on how it gets allocated, which will be done over the next 3-4 months. He gave a general overview of redistricting in the state, which is resulting in small changes. For the Governor's last budget, there may be opportunities for enhancement. Attention will be paid to the mental health and substance abuse committee on future activities. Not a lot of action on bills in committee. The Senate President made mental health a priority and the House Speaker prioritized hospital service access, which both are beneficial to DMH. Housing is still a top priority.

### 5. Commissioner's Update

The Commissioner discussed efforts on early intervention and COVID. DMH is working with community providers and hospitals on implementation of ED diversion. This includes providing interventions for youth and adults and get access and support for what is needed. CBHC and BHAL will have procurement processes. These should help with providing additional resources to help with higher ED boarding rates. The Commissioner discussed a homeless diversion hot line to find shelter for those who become homeless. The Commissioner fielded questions on ED boarding and CBHCs.

### 6. Presentation by Jon Delman on his recent research

Jon Delman presented on barriers and facilitators for black youth with SMI. His published article and SMHPC meeting presentation can be found on the SMHPC website (<https://www.mass-smhpc.org/>).