



A Community Mental Health / Developmental Disabilities / Addictive Diseases Program

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**NEW HORIZONS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

January 11, 2021 Via Teleconference

Members Present: David Ranieri, Damon Hoyte, April Hughes, Joseph Williams,
LaVerne Chaffin, Edwina Turner, Nancy Schroeder,
Linda McElroy, Sandra Gill, and Karen Johnson

Members Excused: Ed Harbison and Sherrell Terry

Staff Present: Andrea Winston, Valerie Bowden, Denise Wade,
Susan Gallagher, Randall Newberry, and Molly Jones

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 3:32 p.m. A quorum was established at that time. Board Chair David Ranieri welcomed Board members and staff and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

For safety concerns during Covid-19 pandemic, today's meeting is a teleconference call and, in accordance with the GACSB rules, will be recorded. Board members were made aware of this prior to the call and it was announced upon dialing in to the call. Molly Jones did a roll call of Board members and staff participating in the call.

NOTE: During the December Board meeting, Sherrell Terry, Vice Chair, and Sandra Gill, Secretary were re-elected as officers for the coming year. As neither were in attendance at the meeting, they have both been informed of their re-election and agreed to serve as officers.

RECOGNITION OF GUEST(S) ATTENDING TODAY'S MEETING: No guests were in attendance at today's meeting.

*** SECRETARY'S MINUTES (Approval of December 14, 2020 minutes):** M/S/P Joseph Williams/Damon Hoyte to approve the minutes of December 14, 2020 meeting, Board approved.

FINANCIAL REVIEW: Since the November financials were presented at the December board meeting and the January board meeting falls early this month, Valerie reported the December month end closing is not complete and the December financial report will be presented at the next board meeting. We are projecting a surplus for the month of December. A quick update on Medicaid revenue trends shows a 15% increase in the daily Medicaid MH/AD outpatient revenue productivity and a 25% decrease in monthly DD revenue as the DD Annex K Retainer Billing now has minimal billing activity. Overall, we are seeing a 15% monthly decline in total Medicaid revenue and we continue to keep expenses below budget because of the reduced revenue.

Days Cash on Hand at the end of December is at 32.00 days. Revenue collections are still down, but we have been keeping expenses down also and were able to increase days cash on hand. The pharmacy conversion to Genoa has helped to increase our days cash on hand in December. The pharmacy conversion took place on December 7, so we realized much lower disbursements due to the elimination of the pharmaceutical expense, but we also were still receiving collections on pharmacy accounts receivable from Medicaid and Insurance in the month of December. So this helped to increase our cash balance and also reduced the daily cash requirement which in turn also increases days cash on hand.

FY20 PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT GOALS/OUTCOMES: Denise reported that PI outcomes ended up with a mix of both MET and UNMET goals across programs for FY20. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of our Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 goals were not met. For example, HIV testing goals were not met as providing this service at community events and in locations throughout the community was not possible due to Covid guidelines and precautions. The Georgia Housing Voucher and EMERGE programs were able to meet their yearly goals, although EMERGE did not meet goals every month. The majority of goals not met were related to the Covid impact, although Key Performance Indicators (KPI) that are part of Performance Improvement (PI) requiring SA individuals to attend substance abuse groups had low numbers before Covid that have remained low during Covid. Not everyone with a substance abuse diagnosis wants to attend groups and are not required to do so. The Intensive Case Management census is another area that continued to miss the mark both pre-Covid and during Covid, but changes have been made to improve their numbers. The goals for FY21 will remain the same and will be reviewed and revamped for FY22.

***FY21 PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN:** The Performance Improvement Plan for FY21 (July 2020 – June 2021) was sent to Board members prior to the meeting for review. The plan begins with an introduction, then outlines the purpose, how the agency seeks input and feedback, defines the performance improvement structure, and ends with evaluation. M/S/P Joseph Williams/Nancy Schroeder to approve the FY21 Performance Improvement Plan, Board approved.

As we look to developing the FY22 plan in a few months, some goals will be revamped. We want to ensure inclusion of goals that meet CARF requirements for Access, Effectiveness and Efficiency. Additionally, we need to look at having meaningful, measurable goals for which we are able to easily and efficiently collect data. Goals should include both KPI goals and goals related to CCBHC readiness activities.

MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT (MAT): Denise indicated we currently have 3 individuals enrolled in our MAT program who are receiving Suboxone. Several other individuals have indicated interest; however, for various reasons they either have not started or not followed through on the process. The MAT program is made possible through the DBHDD MAT SOR Program contract. We also partner with the Department of Public Health for funding for the medication itself. The NHBH Team meets weekly to discuss the MAT program and our processes and to brainstorm ways to remove potential barriers to those who might be interested in the program. One of the most recent developments is that The Bradley Center has requested appointments within 5 days for those they release who are on Suboxone. We have plans in place to be able to accommodate this request beginning later this month. NHBH staff are also on the Columbus Opioid Prevention Alliance Committee. It is reported that ER visits for overdose are on the rise, as well as deaths related to overdose. It is also reported that the disruption of treatment and other supports for recovery are negatively impacting those in recovery and those who want to be in recovery. This is a much needed treatment option for the communities that we serve.

PROGRAMS OPERATION STATUS REPORT: Denise reported that most New Horizons programs continue to offer hybrids of both face-to-face and tele-services. Additionally, overall, our attendance numbers continue to be significantly lower than our pre-COVID numbers. The allowance for tele-services has enabled us to continue to serve individuals. There has been recent talk of potentially discontinuing the tele-service allowances; however, we have not seen a firm date for this. Given that COVID numbers are on the rise, I would be surprised if this happens any time soon. The tele-service allowance is tied to the declared state of emergency which is still in place for the time being. Based on our understanding, once the state of declared emergency has ended, we can expect to see a firm date for the termination of some tele-health services. My hope is that we are able to continue tele-health services even after the pandemic and state of emergency has ended. It gives both individuals and programs flexibility, and gives individuals additional treatment options.

The pandemic is reportedly having a negative impact on mental health. If we think about the stress and uncertainty caused by the pandemic, it is no surprise that this could be the case. One CDC report states, "Elevated levels of adverse mental health conditions, substance use, and suicidal ideation were reported by adults in the United States in June 2020." Additionally, there has been a recently identified psychotic disorder N.O.S. that has been linked to COVID 19.

The work that we do is now more important and necessary than perhaps ever before given the current mental health wave that is flooding our country and communities.

GENOA PHARMACY UPDATE: Andrea reported that Genoa, a retail pharmacy, took over New Horizons pharmacy before Christmas and the transition has gone pretty smoothly with a few challenges. Delays with payor sources and approval to dispense Schedule II drugs have caused some issues. Remodeling that was done this past weekend should help the work flow, with more counter space available. The providers have been very understanding and we are working through things as they occur. Patients have been mostly agreeable with pricing and the NHEAT fund continues to supplement those who are eligible and unable to pay. Mailing medications, bubble packaging, E-prescribing and patient assistance programs are available and prescriptions from Primary Care Physicians can also be filled for family members and employees. During the pandemic, the pharmacy has experienced a slight decline in usage, but we hope that more modern services, a wider array of medications offered, plus other convenient service options will enhance sales.

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DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING, AND PUBLIC RELATIONS UPDATE: Susan reported to the Board on the following:

- Facebook Live with Councilman Jerry “Pops” Barnes continues weekly on Mondays at 10 am. To date, we have aired 22 shows since August 2020. Upcoming topics from New Horizons include: Self-Harm Behavior in Youth such as Cutting; Gambling Addiction Awareness, and Adult I/DD Services. We are currently looking to provide a link on our website to Councilman Barnes website for archiving the shows. Currently, we post them to our Facebook site, but do not archive them.

- The local Sexual Assault Support Center at 909 Talbotton Road, Suite A has scheduled an in-person training for Saturday, February 6 for its employees and volunteers on the intersection of Intimate Partner Violence, Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder.

- The Mayor’s Committee on Re-Entry (from Jail and Prisons) has been accepted to be part of a SAMHSA technical assistance training program that will run from January through August 2021. New Horizons is a vital part of this committee and is included in the trainings as related to continuing behavioral health services once an individual is returned to the community and making the linkages as seamless as possible.

COVID SURVEILLANCE REPORT/VACCINE PLANS: Andrea reported Covid-19 numbers are increasing throughout the country and encouraged everyone to stay vigilant in following the CDC guidelines.

As of January 6, 2021 the Covid-19 total numbers are:

- 92 individuals exposed to the Covid-19 virus.
- 44 staff exposed to the Covid-19 virus.
- 22 individuals with a lab confirmed positive test for the Covid -19 virus.
- 22 staff with a lab confirmed positive test for the Covid-19 virus.
- 1 Covid-19 related Death.

For our eight county area:

Covid Numbers by County (per the GADPH):

County	Covid Positive	Covid Deaths
Muscogee	9541	204
Harris	1409	29
Talbot	271	9
Chattahoochee	2175	2
Stewart	618	17
Randolph	365	30
Clay	151	3
Quitman	59	1

With the vaccine rollout underway, educating staff and individuals on the risks and benefits of the vaccine is a top priority. Gloria Mott and Dr. Edward Minor are spearheading this effort. Phase 1A allowed healthcare workers to be vaccinated the first week, Phase 1B began this week for individuals 65 and over. All are encouraged to take the vaccine and we hope to have our most vulnerable individuals vaccinated when the next phases begin.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS: Board members shared information on how they, their families, and communities are managing the ongoing challenges of the pandemic including personal stories of testing positive for Covid, recovering from the virus, cases spiking in communities, family members experiencing Covid and other health challenges, and doing the best we can to follow precautions. Social distancing, wearing masks, and limiting social gatherings continue to be our normal as we all look forward to the day when we can meet face to face again realizing how important it is to maintain connections with family, co-workers, and friends.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Andrea highlighted several articles and pictures from the January edition of The Quest for Board members: An article entitled “Serene in 2021,” focusing on self-care and suggestions to make it happen in your own life and pictures illustrating our P.A.T.H. team and community partner Hand of Love Resource Center filling donated purses with hygiene products and distributing them to local women’s shelters, a project called “Compassion in a Purse.”

Mr. Ranieri extended thanks to New Horizons leadership, staff, and fellow Board members for the great job they are doing.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comments were presented.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, M/S/P Joseph Williams/Linda McElroy to adjourn the teleconference/meeting at 4:36 p.m., Board approved.

David Ranieri
Chairperson