**National Council for Behavioral Health**

Association Executives Teleconference Summary Notes

Tuesday, February 9, 2021

2:00 – 3:00 p.m. ET

**Participants**: Jason Cain, Gian-Carl Casa, Nadia Chait, Tom Chard, Ann Christian, Le Ondra Clark Harvey, Lauri Cole, John Coppola, Annette Dubas, Richard Edley, Candy Espino, Josh Evans, Mark Fontaine, Doyle Forrestal, Robyn Garrett, Linda Grant, Shannon Hall, Jesse Hambrick, Kelly Hansen, Robb Layne, Richard Leclerc, Mark Levota, John Magnuson, Holly McCorkle, Maggie McCowen, Brent McGinty, Pete Nielsen, Jorge Petit, Sarah Potter, Mary-Linden Salter, Flora Schmidt, Malory Shaughnessy, Andrea Smyth, John Tassoni, Jr., Julie Tessler, Kerran Vigroux, Debra Wentz, and Mary Windecker.

**Staff in Attendance**: Chuck Ingoglia, Jeannie Campbell, Frankie Berger, Neal Comstock, Rebecca Farley David, Stephanie Katz, Conner McKay, Joel Nepomuceno, Dr. Joe Parks, Michael Petruzzelli, Reyna Taylor, Sarah Surgenor, and Aaron Williams.

**Summary Notes:**

COVID-19 Policy Related Efforts to Support Members

Reyna Taylor

Reyna provided an overview of the progress of COVID-19 relief legislation and stated that the funding from the proposed bill will likely remain consistent with President Biden’s proposed outline which includes $3.5 billion for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and $500 million for the Health and Resource Services Administration. She also stated the House Energy and Commerce Committee will release a markup of the bill this afternoon. Reyna stated our goal is to ensure we help federal legislators understand where funds from the bill should be allocated. She said the package will likely go to the Senate floor in the beginning of March.

Opioid Response Network

Aaron Williams

Aaron shared that the National Council has been a partner of the Opioid Response Network for the past three years. He stated that the partnership stemmed from CURES Act funding, which provided $1 billion to states to address opioid use disorder and to fund technical assistance centers. Aaron shared that in addition to opioids, the Opioid Response Network is now doing work and developing resources around stimulants. He said that some resources developed includes:

* A report from the technical assistance panel evaluating opioid treatment in emergency situations.
* The Medication Assisted Treatment and Implementation Checklist.
* An upcoming report on recovery housing.

Vaccine Update

Dr. Joe Parks

Dr. Parks gave an overview of vaccines being developed and the vaccination progress. Dr. Parks stated that another vaccine (Johnson & Johnson) will most likely be approved by the end of this month which is 85% effective in preventing severe cases within a single dose. He also said that 9.1 million people have been fully vaccinated while 31.6 million have had at least one dose. He shared that current estimates show September 16th as the projected date to achieve 70% vaccination, the threshold for herd immunity. Dr. Parks also shared with Association Executives an overview of the various variants of COVID, which includes the:

* Variant from Britain, which is more contagious and slightly more deadly, but against which the current vaccines are just as effective.
* South Africa variant, which is not as susceptible to vaccine induced antibodies, but against which the current vaccines are still effective.
* Variant from Brazil, which is very similar to the variant from South Africa.

Dr. Parks also shared with Association Executives how persons with mental illness or substance use are far more likely to suffer severe symptoms from COVID-19.

National Council Announcements

2021 Awards of Excellence

Jeannie Campbell

Jeannie reminded Association Executives about the 2021 Awards of Excellence. She shared that the nominations period is still open and encouraged Association Executives to nominate or encourage their members to nominate a person or organization for one of the awards. She described how there are three categories of awards—Peer Specialist of the Year, Innovation at Work, and Lifetime Achievement.

**Next Association Executives Teleconference**

The next Association Executives meeting will be on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 from 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET.