

National Council for Behavioral Health Public Policy Committee Minutes

October 22, 2020

2:00-4:00pm Eastern Time

Members Participating:

Sara Howe, Chair	Mark Fontaine
Melanie Brown-Woofter, Vice Chair	Jesse Hambrick
Laura Aldinger	Kelly Hansen
Matt Brooks	Carmen Heredia
Blanca Campos	Susie Huhn
Gian-Carl Casa	Lee Johnson
Danette Castle	Brigitte Johnson
Nadia Chait	Maryam Zoma Kiefer
Ann Christian	Kyle Kessler
Cari Cho	Mark LeVota
Le Ondra Clark Harvey	John Magnuson
Lauri Cole	Holly McCorkle
Pat Coleman	Brent McGinty
John Coppola	Michelle Ponce
Yaberci Perez-Cubillan	Steve Ronik
Ric Dalke	Mary-Linden Salter
Robert Davison	Flora Schmidt
Bahney Dedolph	Malory Shaughnessy
Lori Doyle	Andrea Summerville
Mark Drennan	Julie Tessler
Vitka Eisen	Debra Wentz
Candy Espino	Ed Woods

Staff in Attendance:

Chuck Ingoglia, Jeannie Campbell, Jeremy Attermann, Brett Beckerson, Malka Berro, Neal Comstock, Christopher Coughlin, Rebecca Farley David, Tom Hill, Stephanie Katz, Connor McKay, Joel Nepomuceno, Joe Parks, Michael Petruzzelli, Bruce Pelleu, Shelley Starkey, Sarah Surgenor, Reyna Taylor, Mohini Venkatesh, and Natalie Weiner.

Guests:

- Catherine Finley, Partner, Thorn Run Partners
 - Al Guida, President and CEO, Guide Consulting Services
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Sara Howe, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Summary – The Public Policy Committee held its annual Fall meeting and focused on implications of 9-8-8 and new telehealth flexibilities.

Items Discussed –

- Implications of 9-8-8, the Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Lifeline -
 - The big picture advocacy goal is for the 9-8-8 network to be linked with support for communities in an effort to ensure individuals who need service have adequate access to quality care.
 - Exploration of legislative opportunities for implementation at the state level -
 - The National Council is working with NAMI, MHA, the Trevor Project, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, AFSP, and others to broaden crisis response.
 - Exploration of the connection between 9-8-8 rollout and CCBHCs.
- Telehealth -
 - Recent actions at the federal level include an extension of the Public Health Emergency through January 20, 2021, DEA waiver of in-person medical evaluation requirements prior to the prescription of controlled substances, waiver of Medicare originating site requirements, and Medicaid flexibilities to cover telehealth and audio-only services.
 - The National Council submitted detailed comments to CMS' proposed Physician Fee Schedule for CY 2021.
 - Implementation should protect patient choice (the provider/patient relationship), providing for education regarding treatment options while ensuring access to needed services.
 - Audio-only should be an option to ensure equitable access to services.
- Implications of Election Outcomes -
 - Al Guida and Catherine Finley discussed implications from various Administration, House and Senate election outcomes. There is a high likelihood that we will not know who controls the Senate until mid-January due to the nature of Georgia's election rules.
 - There will be a strong focus on COVID-19 no matter the election outcomes.
 - Both the Senate and House COVID-19 packages contain earmarks for behavioral health.

- Vice President Biden was responsible for Mental Health First Aid grants for states, 9-8-8, and expanding the CCBHC agenda.

Decisions Made –

- Implications of 9-8-8, the Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Lifeline -
 - We should explore model state legislation and best practices as well begin advocating at a federal level for supporting community response.
 - Consider exploring to what extent we can influence creation of a fee structure that can reimburse the answering of calls and possibly services.
 - Consider exploring inclusion of substance use as well as crisis response.

Actions for the Board of Directors – None

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4 p.m.

Sara Howe, Chair