

Board Update

Mental Health & Recovery Services (MHRS) Board
Serving Coshocton, Guemsey, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble & Perry Counties
1500 Coal Run Road, Zanesville, Ohio 43701
Phone: 740-454-8557

Regular Board Meeting
Highlights
November 12, 2020

Working Together During Times of Uncertainty

◆ *Meeting with National Drug Czar:*

On October 27, MHRS Board Executive Director Misty Cromwell had the privilege of virtually participating in a roundtable session with Jim Carroll, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control and Policy, who wanted to hear about rural southeast Ohio's efforts to fight the addiction epidemic during the COVID-19 pandemic. Other participants included officials from Ohio University's College of Health Sciences and key stakeholders from law enforcement, court systems, and behavioral health providers.

The Honorable Dean Wilson from the Perry County Court talked about his New Directions Drug Court that has achieved an 83% success rate (success is measured by the number of graduates on two years of probation who do not relapse or reappear in Court for an addiction-related offense). It was also pointed out that 75% of New Directions participants in the final phases of the program are employed.

Misty spoke about the unique addiction recovery needs in our Appalachian region of the state and shared how some recent federal funds were used to support maternal health case managers, address transportation issues, and help parents as they are involved with remote classrooms in their homes.

At the end of the day, Carroll noted his belief that local leaders in southeast Ohio are committed to the fight against addiction and stated he was impressed with the way law enforcement, behavioral health, and judicial professionals are working together to address addiction during the COVID-19 pandemic. He particularly appreciated hearing directly from those in recovery and their family members, noting that addiction is not a respecter of persons and can drastically impact a broad spectrum of individuals.

◆ *Upcoming Meetings with Legislators:*

On November 13, Misty will be joining a roundtable session with U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown to talk about the pervasiveness of 'deaths of despair' in Ohio due to drug overdoses and suicides — at a time when Ohioans are experiencing the nearly uncontrolled spread of COVID-19 that could bring about negative economic and mental health effects. On November 17, she will be meeting with

Executive Director

Misty Cromwell

Board of Directors

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***The mission of the
MHRS Board is to
facilitate a Recovery-
Oriented System of
Care that promotes
mental health and
supports the recovery of
each person who needs
services for mental
illness and/or addiction.***

State Senator Tim Schaffer to talk about these same issues.

◆ **MHRS Board Service Area:**

Contract organization Directors report that they and their behavioral healthcare workers are continuing to unwaveringly meet the service needs of their clients. Due to the recent surge, some providers have reverted to offering telehealth care only. Director Cromwell noted that the MHRS Board is considering everything within its power to ensure that treatment and recovery supports for mental illness and addictions remain available in the six-county service area.

◆ **COVID-19 – Building Resilience:**

Allwell Behavioral Health and the Genesis Healthcare System are virtually offering this special workshop from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. on November 19 and 24 via Microsoft Teams. Participants will learn to recognize and understand emotional responses, identify how thinking patterns contribute to increased stress and anxiety, and develop a personalized plan for improving resilience. To register, call Missy Elliott at 740.454.9766 or email melliott@allwell.org two days before a workshop date.

FinancialMatters®

(Payments for Mental Health & Addiction Recovery Treatment and Supports)

Accounts Payable	In-Network Providers	Out-of-Network Partners	TOTAL
October 13	\$118,511.28	\$246,784.18	\$365,295.46
October 27	\$308,032.60	\$73,907.26	\$381,939.86
TOTAL	\$426,543.88	\$320,691.44	\$747,235.32

◆ In other action, board members approved the following transfer in the MHRS Board’s Calendar Year 2020 Budget: \$15,000 from the Contingencies Line Item to the Employee Salaries Line Item. This transfer was needed to cover MHRS Board employee payrolls through the end of the calendar year. Additional funds were needed due to an extra payout for a retiring employee and some other personnel changes.

UPDATES FROM MISTY CROMWELL’S DIRECTOR’S REPORT



As a part of the Ohio Department of Medicaid’s efforts to launch the next phase of its managed care programming, they will be implementing OhioRISE (Resilience through Integrated Systems and Excellence). OhioRISE aims to keep more kids and families together by creating new access to in-home and community-based services for children with the most complex behavioral health challenges. OhioRISE recognizes the need to specialize services and supports for this unique group of children and families and plans to partner with sister state agencies, providers, families, and other stakeholders to develop and

implement new and enhanced services like Intensive Care Coordination, Intensive Home-Based Treatment, Psychiatric Residential Treatment, and Mobile Response and Stabilization Services.

State Opioid Response

The MHRS Board has applied for and received a 2-month extension SOR grant (\$124,283.57) to continue current projects until December 1, 2020. In addition, a SOR training grant was received in the amount of \$31,904.00. These funds will be used to provide training to 16 network provider clinicians on Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) — a best practice model.

A SOR 2.0 grant has been submitted to the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) in the amount of \$1,008,082.00. This grant would begin on December 1, 2020, and continue until September 20, 2021. These dollars will be used to cover Peer Recovery Supporters, a Job Coach, Maternal Health Case Managers at the Muskingum and Guernsey County Health Departments, Peer Mentor/Child Coaches at the Muskingum County Juvenile Court and Muskingum County Children Services, Recovery Housing Rent Supplements, Medication-Assisted Treatment, Supplies for Parenting Programs, the Sweet Life Bakery Recovery Job Program, and I-FAST supervision costs. This grant will continue to build on the SOR 1.0 grant in providing much-needed services for clients in our service area who are working on recovery from addictions.

Director Cromwell commended Associate Director Elaine Shuster for coordinating the preparation of these grants and submitting them to OhioMHAS.

Donation for Suicide Prevention Coalition

In September, the Muskingum County Suicide Prevention Coalition received a donation (**\$13,453.00**) from a suicide awareness/prevention event in Zanesville sponsored by the Red Rose Tattoo Parlor and the Blackketter family (*see picture to the right*).

Per the family’s request, a large portion of the funds will be used to establish and maintain a fund for assisting families with funeral costs. The remainder of the donation will be used to restock supplies needed by LOSS (Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors) Team Members.



Appreciation for First Responders



When you need help in a crisis, usually your first call is to a first responder. Dispatchers, firefighters, law enforcement officers, paramedics and EMTs are our super-heroes. When we call they are there, and their jobs are far from easy. They work long hours, rushing to scenes — helping complete strangers without thinking twice. So, when you see your local first responders, give them a wave or thank them for their service.

In the MHRS Board’s efforts to show appreciation to our first responders, special signs and small gift bags are being delivered to them throughout our six-county service area. The gift bags contain a pack of Life Savers candy, a key chain, hand sanitizer, a business card with Crisis Hotline information, a Crisis Text Line bracelet, and notes of appreciation from students in several of our PAX classrooms.

Update NAMI Six County

Bonnie Burns started her role as Director of NAMI Six County in January 2020, and she set a goal for connecting with and supporting more people across the six-county service area. Then the pandemic rolled in, and NAMI’s efforts were significantly slowed down.

NAMI Six County Mission
To ensure dignity and respect for persons with severe mental illness, improve their quality of life, and support their families.

However, NAMI Six County has begun adding members to its Board of Directors and holding monthly meetings to discuss and act upon issues affecting persons with mental illness and their families. Director Burns also is planning to be trained to facilitate monthly family support groups and conduct Family-2-Family trainings.

Members voted at the last board meeting to use some grant funds to provide supplies for the Zanesville Civic League — to assist them in maintaining their tutoring services for students who are making the challenging shift to remote learning.

Handle with Care

After losing some momentum due to the pandemic, the Handle with Care (HWC) initiative is beginning to slowly rebuild. The first school training was held on October 26 at the request of Duncan Falls Elementary. All school staff were trained, and they are now developing some school-specific strategies.

Handle with Care provides schools or childcare agencies with a ‘heads up’ when a child has been identified at the scene of a traumatic event. Under the program, law enforcement officers are trained to identify children at the scene of a traumatic situation, find out where they go to school or daycare, and send the school/agency a confidential email or fax that simply says . . . “Handle ‘Johnny’ with care.” That’s it. No other details. Trained teachers then attempt to mitigate the negative impact of trauma by letting identified students have rest periods, reteaching lessons, postponing testing, or referring families to counseling programs. For more information contact MHRS Board Care Management Director Jamie McGrew at 740.454.8557 or jamiem@mhrs.org.



The MHRS Board of Directors will next virtually meet at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 10. More details to come.