

**MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2021**

The Mississippi State Board of Mental Health held their regular monthly meeting on Thursday, September 16, 2021, at the Department of Mental Health in Jackson, Mississippi.

In Attendance:

Board Members: James Herzog, Ph.D.; Sampat Shivangi, M.D.; Manda Griffin, Ph.D.; Courtney Phillips; Dr. Alyssa Killebrew, and Mr. Stewart Rutledge

Department of Mental Health Executive Staff: Wendy Bailey, Executive Director; Jake Hutchins, Deputy Executive Director Community Operations; Craig Kittrell, Deputy Executive Director State Operated Programs; Kelly Breland, Chief Financial Officer; Dr. Mallory Malkin, Chief Clinical Officer for Bureau of Community Mental Health Services; Dr. Kristin Merritte, Chief Clinical Officer for Community IDD Services; Toni Johnson, Director, Bureau of Human Resources; Stephanie Foster, Director, Bureau of Certification and Quality Outcomes; Cyndi Eubank, Office of General Counsel; McCall Chastain, Attorney General's Office; and Dr. Robert Maddux, DMH Medical Director

Central Office Staff: Grenaye Sullivan, Recording Secretary; and Molly Taylor, JaQuila Newsom and Adam Moore, Division of Outreach and Training

Program Directors: James Chastain, Mississippi State Hospital; Rinsey McSwain, Ellisville State School; Cindy Cooley, South Mississippi Regional Center; Dr. Paul Callens, North Mississippi State Hospital; Dr. Charles Carlisle, East Mississippi State Hospital; Jamie Prine, Mississippi Adolescent Center; Shannon Bush, Specialized Treatment Facility; Sabrina Young, South Mississippi State Hospital; Dr. Edie Hayles, North Mississippi Regional Center; Clint Ashley, Boswell Regional Center; and Jerrie Barnes, Hudspeth Regional Center

DMH Program Assistant Directors: Donna Creekmore, East Mississippi State Hospital; Dr. Kenneth O'Neal, Ellisville State School

Other DMH Program Staff: Dr. Charles Harris, Michele Rivers, and Eugene Young, Specialized Treatment Facility

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Dr. James Herzog. Dr. Herzog asked everyone to stand while Craig Kittrell opened the meeting with the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Herzog asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda.

On motion of Dr. Shivangi and second by Dr. Griffin, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

Dr. Herzog then asked if there were any changes or additions to the August 2021 minutes.

On motion of Dr. Shivangi and second by Dr. Griffin, the Board voted unanimously to approve the August 2021 minutes as presented.

Kelly Breland, Chief Financial Officer, presented the Consolidated Financial Summary for the Fourteen Months Ended August 31, 2021 (FY21) and Two Months Ended August 31, 2021 (FY22).

Mr. Breland presented for Board action, the "Request for Board Approval of Contracts" non-state retirees, \$50,000 or more annually and state retirees, \$20,000 or more annually.

Contracts, non-state retirees, \$50,000 or more annually

East Mississippi State Hospital

Name	Start	End	Amount	Annual/Hourly	Description
Sentita Rochelle Smith, RN	10/1/21	9/30/22	\$95,000	\$42/hr.	Contractor will assess, plan, implement and evaluate nursing care for residents.
Carrie Ann Hodges, RN	10/1/21	9/30/22	\$95,000	\$42/hr.	Contractor will assess, plan, implement and evaluate nursing care for residents.
Ashley Joyce Johnson, RN	10/1/21	9/30/22	\$95,000	\$42/hr.	Contractor will assess, plan, implement and evaluate nursing care for residents.
Lashondra Hall, RN	10/1/21	9/30/22	\$95,000	\$42/hr.	Contractor will assess, plan, implement and evaluate nursing care for residents.
Briana Brunson, RN	10/1/21	9/30/22	\$95,000	\$42/hr.	Contractor will assess, plan, implement and evaluate nursing care for residents.
Barbara Jean Pitts, RN	10/1/21	9/30/22	\$95,000	\$42/hr.	Contractor will assess, plan, implement and evaluate nursing care for residents.
Aliesha Houtson, RN	10/1/21	9/30/22	\$95,000	\$42/hr.	Contractor will assess, plan, implement and evaluate nursing care for residents.

Mississippi State Hospital

Cesco Linguistic Services, Inc.	10/20/21	10/20/26	\$320,000	\$64,000	Contractor will provide interpreter services as rates of \$75/\$85/\$95 hourly.
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Ellisville State School

Star Services, Inc. of Jackson	10/01/21	6/30/22	\$3,078,000	\$54,000/mnt.	Contractor will provide Comprehensive Maintenance and facility services for entering into a Guaranteed lifetime Protection Contract for HVAC services.
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Contracts, state retirees, \$20,000 or more annually

East Mississippi State Hospital

Name	Start	End	Amount	Annual/Hourly	Description
Howard Tyrone Sims, LSW	7/1/21	6/30/22	\$21,000	\$20/hr.	Retiree will consult and provide social work services to ESMH Nursing Homes.

Mississippi State Hospital

Stephanie Land	9/5/21	6/30/22	\$29,261	\$24/hr.	Retiree will provide medical coding services.
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Hudspeth Regional Center

June Travie, Psychometrist	10/4/21	6/30/22	\$27,950	\$40/hr.	Retiree will provide testing services in the
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					Diagnostic and Evaluation Department of HRC.
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On motion of Dr. Shivangi and second by Mr. Phillips the Board voted unanimously to approve the "Request for Board Approval of Contracts" non-state retirees, \$50,000 or more annually and Contracts, state retirees, \$20,000 or more annually.

Wendy Bailey, Executive Director, provided a COVID-19 update. She reported that as of September 14, there were 88 active cases among staff at the 11 program locations across the state and 49 active cases among patients/clients/residents. She reported that vaccination numbers remain about the same but are starting to revamp efforts to encourage staff to be vaccinated. She sent a letter to all programs to share with their staff and a video thanking the entire agency for their dedication to the people served and their programs during this difficult time and encouraging them to become vaccinated. Ms. Bailey reported for the state hospitals, the vaccination rate for staff is an average of 64%; 82% at Central Office; and 46% at IDD programs. Ms. Bailey reported due to staffing issues related to the COVID pandemic, DMH made a request to SPB related to the nursing shortage. Ms. Storr will present the request later on the agenda. She reported that DMH had conversations with MSDH for testing machines and supplies for the programs utilizing a federal grant they received. They are also providing testing kits at no-cost to the CSUs until the mitigation grant from SAMHSA for the CMHCs is received. She reported that the state hospitals are now requiring a negative COVID test prior to transfer from a CSU to a state hospital.

Ms. Bailey reported that earlier this month, she e-mailed the Board and DMH leadership team that Bill Rosamond, Office of the Coordinator of Mental Health Accessibility, reached out to inform her that she had been mailed the wrong status report in August. Ms. Bailey said that the report she received was a financial status report. Ms. Bailey included in the Board packet a copy of the actual quarterly status report. She reported that many months ago, the Board expressed interest in having Mr. Rosamond come present the quarterly status report once published. She reported that if this is still of interest to the Board, she will be happy to make that request. Ms. Bailey reported that the methodology that will be used is discussed on page 3 (Canadian Health System General Rating System) and how it will intersect with monitoring by the State Monitor is yet to be determined. The report reviews the different funding streams such as Medicaid, grant funding, county contributions, self-pay and uncompensated care. Ms. Bailey said the report also addresses the Board of Mental Health and DMH. She reported that there is an error on page 12 that states MS is one of only two states where services are administered by a free-standing state agency overseen by a Board, but is inaccurate. As of 2020, there were eight states including Georgia and Alabama. She also stated that page 13 discusses the priorities for initial states of review.

Ms. Bailey reported that beginning September 6, DMH launched a weekly video series called "Your Mental Health Minute", that will be shared every Monday on social media. She reported that DMH is also encouraging advocacy groups and others to share the videos as well. Each video will touch on a topic related to mental health to bring awareness and education to our state. Ms. Bailey reported that there will also be special guests and each video is 2-4 minutes long. She said that September videos focus on suicide prevention and trauma. Several special guests have already been lined up for the next several months. Ms. Bailey encouraged the Board to watch and share the videos on a weekly basis. She reported that DMH is doing this in partnership with Mississippi Public Health Institute.

Ms. Bailey reported that on September 7, DMH hosted a virtual meeting with advocacy partners across the state including NAMI MS, Disability Rights, Coalition for Disability, Council for Developmental Disabilities, The ARC of MS, Mental Health Association of South MS, and MS Families as Allies. DMH shared information related to FY21 highlights, specific goals/objectives for mental health, IDD and addiction services for the next two years, and a budget overview. She included several handouts that were shared. Ms. Bailey reported that much of this same information will be shared later this month and next month as she will meet one-on-one with state leaders and the LBO budget hearing next Friday. She asked for the advocates to share feedback on what they saw as challenges and goals that needed to be accomplished over the next 24 months. Ms. Bailey reported that she encouraged their continued partnership as we all work together towards the same mission.

Ms. Bailey reported NRI will be engaging this fall a variety of community mental health stakeholders to understand their experiences interacting with Mississippi's community mental health system. She reported that the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors Research Institute (NRI) is the premier national agency for conducting comparative research methods in behavioral health. NRI is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit research firm dedicated to data analytics to improve the lives of everyone with a mental illness or behavioral health challenges. In addition to the NRI Mental Health-Criminal Justice Research Center that conducts research on a variety of justice-related topics, NRI has direct relationship and access to State Mental Health Agencies (SMHA) executive staff in all 50 states, four (4) territories, and the District of Columbia. Ms. Bailey reported that feedback from these various stakeholder groups will be synthesized to provide recommendations to DMH on which measures (key performance indicators) should be collected to better understand the effectiveness of the community system, make improvements to the system, and guide development of future planning efforts. She reported that NRI has designed an approach that will help DMH better understand the experiences of its multiple stakeholder groups and develop metrics that provide actionable information for planning. NRI has the expertise to conduct unbiased qualitative research to identify gaps and opportunities in Mississippi's community mental health system. Ms. Bailey reported that NRI will draw upon its extensive experience conducting focus groups, interviews, and surveys to implement the stakeholder engagement study protocol. She reported that NRI expects to conduct data collection from September 2021 to early December 2021.

Ms. Bailey then shared copies of the most recent news articles. The articles included:

1. Getting Mississippi children mental health services in rural areas
2. In court filings, Mississippi signals intent to appeal mental health ruling
3. Report details changes to mental health system
4. Judge Reeves said final ruling coming soon in state's mental health lawsuit
5. Final decision in mental health case looms after hearing

Ms. Bailey reported that the October 2021 Board of Mental Health meeting will be held at North MS State Hospital on October 21 unless a virtual meeting is needed due to COVID.

Jake Hutchins, Deputy Executive Director, Community Operations, provided an update on the Mississippi Opioid and Heroin Data Collaborative. He reported that this is a collaboration of four state agencies in an effort to combat the opioid epidemic. These agencies include Mississippi Board of Pharmacy, Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics, Mississippi State Department of Health, and Mississippi Department of Mental Health. He said the report summarizes data on opioid prescriptions dispensed in the state, fatal drug overdoses reported to the Bureau of Narcotics, naloxone administrations by EMS for suspected overdoses, drug-related arrests, and treatment services for opioid-related disorders within facilities certified by DMH. Mr. Hutchins reported that during 2020, there were over 2.4 million opioid prescriptions dispensed in Mississippi. Compared to 2019, there

were 149,050 fewer opioid prescriptions dispensed during 2020. Mr. Hutchins reported that in 2020, 324 of the 443 suspected overdose deaths reported to MBN were opioid-related. He reported that in 2020, data revealed that naloxone was administered 2,065 times, which is higher than the number of administrations in 2019. Naloxone administrations average 172 in Mississippi each month during 2020. He reported that 2,065 individuals to whom naloxone was administered during 2020, but some individuals may have encountered more than once. Mr. Hutchins provided an update on suspected overdose deaths and naloxone administrations by county. He reported that the top three counties in suspected overdose deaths in 2020 were Jackson County, Hinds County and Harrison County. He reported that the proportion of patients admitted for other opioids was 51.6% in 2020, a decrease from 63.6% in 2019. He reported that the Drug Enforcement Administration holds a National Prescription Drug Take Back Day each year in April and October in order to collect unused prescription medications. In October 2020, a total of 985,392 pounds of drugs were collected from 4,587 sites across the United States. During the same event, 8,222 pounds were collected from 57 sites in Mississippi.

Katie Storr, Chief of Staff, provided an update on the State Personnel Board nursing salary proposal. She reported DMH programs are continuing to experience staffing challenges, in particular with nursing. Ms. Storr reported that over the past 18 months (January 2020 to July 2021) filled nurses are down over 48% at South Mississippi Regional Center, down over 22% at Mississippi State Hospital, and down over 23% at East Mississippi State Hospital. She reported that it is difficult to recruit replacements for those separations because we are competing against the private healthcare sector and hospitals, and we are a state agency with very strict rules on payment. Ms. Storr reported that the pandemic has created an extreme staffing shortage among nurses in all areas of healthcare. The work is extremely demanding, and the agency is not able to compete with hospitals offering compensation packages inclusive of large sign-on bonuses of \$15,000, and hourly rates of \$85 per hour. She reported that DMH is requesting authorization to grant temporary COVID-19 adjustments to the compensation for employees in the following occupational titles: Nurse Licensed Practical I, II, and III, Nurse I, II, III, and IV, Nurse Manager, Nurse Administrator, and Nurse Chief. Ms. Storr reported that DMH is ask requesting authority to provide an increase of up to 75% temporary COVID adjustment pay from September 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021. She reported that if this request is approved the adjustments would be effective September 1, 2021, through the end of December. She reported that DMH is able to fund this request internally for that temporary timeframe.

JaQuila Newsome, Director, Suicide Prevention, provided an update on Suicide Prevention Month and the Yearly Report. She reported that September is National Suicide Prevention Month. She said that in 2019 it was reported that suicide was the 10th leading cause of death in the United States. On average, there were more than 47,511 deaths by suicides per year nationally. Ms. Newsome stated that for every on suicide, there is estimated 25 to 30 attempts and the rate is highest in middle-age white men. She reported that females attempt suicide more often than males, but males actually die by suicide more often. She reported that in Mississippi suicide is the 12th leading cause of death. In 2019, there were 436 deaths by suicide with 70.64% of all suicides were by firearms. Ms. Newsome reported that DMH has created the FY21 Progress Report for the Mississippi Suicide Prevention Plan. She reported that 5,379 Mississippians were reached during FY21 through the Shatter the Silence program. Ms. Newsome reported that DMH has partnered with Dream of Hattiesburg, Boondocks Firearms Training Academy and the Department of Public Safety to raise awareness of safe storage of firearms to reduce access to lethal means for individuals in suicidal crisis by distributing educational brochures and displaying posters. In FY21, there were 27,377 cards and 23 posters distributed to fireman owners and retailers in Mississippi. She reported that in

order to bring more awareness to our state the 5th Annual Suicide Prevention Symposium will be held September 28. Ms. Newsome provided a copy of the FY21 Suicide Prevention Plan Progress Report.

Adam Moore, Director, Division of Communications and Planning, presented the DMH Strategic Plan FY21 End-of-Year Progress Report. He reported that the DMH Strategic Plan has around 360 total items, including three goals, and the associated outcomes, objectives, strategies, and outputs. Mr. Moore reported the Outcomes as being reported on-track and off-track are reported for the mid-year and end-year reports. There are 60 Outcomes total in the plan and 13 are reported as either off-track or at-risk. He stated that the COVID-19 pandemic has been a significant factor in areas that are off track. He highlighted a few items in each goal of the plan to show progress and challenges that have been encountered in FY21.

Craig Kittrell, Deputy Executive Director, State Operated Programs, presented the Emergency Procurement of Contract Worker Nurses at Mississippi State Hospital. He reported that MSH is pursuing emergency measures to modify all of its current contracts with contract worker mental health technicians (MHTs), certified nurse assistants (CNAs), licensed practical nurses (LPNs), and registered nurses (RNs) who work within its inpatient psychiatric services and/or within Jaquith Nursing Home from August 30, 2021, through June 30, 2022. He said this modification is increasing the hours of up to 40 hours per week. He reported that historically, these contracts have been written to allow for either 24 hours per week or 30 hours per week to be worked; however, utilizing contracts written in this manner are not providing the staffing needed to adequately supplement existing full-time staff. Mr. Kittrell reported that MSH is also in discussions with travel nursing companies and with the help of the Mississippi Hospital Association, MSH has identified a company named Qualivis, LLC as a company to contract with to provide nurses on 13-week contract assignments to supplement MSH's current limited nursing workforce. He reported that during initial discussions with Qualivis, the following rates were provided: LPNs, \$47/hr., RNs in Nursing Home settings, \$40/hr. and RNs in Behavioral Health settings, \$74/hr. He reported that MSH is pursuing to enter into the contract with Qualivis, LLC with a contract amount not to exceed \$1,664,000. Mr. Kittrell reported that no action is needed from the Board because this is an emergency procurement.

Mr. Kittrell presented the Monthly Survey Reports for Mississippi State Hospital, North Mississippi State Hospital, Hudspeth Regional Center, Mississippi Adolescent Center, Ellisville State School, North Mississippi Regional Center, and South Mississippi Regional Center.

Jerrie Barnes, Director, Hudspeth Regional Center, presented the Hudspeth Regional Center Review. He gave a brief overview of HRC's vision and history, catchment area, campus departments, and cottages and group homes. Mr. Barnes also provided an update on HRC's 2020 and 2021 events. He reported that 90% of people served at HRC and 50% of HRC staff have been vaccinated. He reported that the community services comparison between FY18 and FY21 was Campus ICF 2018 was 229 vs 182 in 2021. The census for ICF Community Homes in 2018 was 120 vs 101 in 2021. Mr. Barnes reported that since FY18, 57 people have transitioned from campus to community ICF; 23 from campus to ICF community home; 16 from campus to community or home with waiver; and 18 from ICF community home to waiver services. He reported that community services comparisons in FY18 was 727 vs 775 in FY21; and the number served in Target Case Management in FY18 was 387 vs 398 in FY21. Mr. Barnes provided a video of the Home Living and Recreational Center and the people served at HRC.

Dr. Charles Harris, Clinical Director, and Michele Rivers and Eugene Young, Behavioral Health Specialists at Specialized Treatment Facility, presented Evidence-Based Practices and outcome data for STF. Dr. Harris reported STF utilizes Structured Psychotherapy for Adolescents Responding to Chronic Stress (SPARCS), and Let's Talk: Runaway Prevention Curriculum is utilized in group therapy. For individual therapy, Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is utilized. Ms. Rivers reported in 2015, STF noticed an increase in adolescents

who have a history of running away. She reported 2.8 million youth run away each year and two to three runaways have a CSM diagnosable mental illness. She stated STF implemented the Let's Talk: Runaway Prevention Program. This program was developed by the National Runaway Safe Line, the federally designated national runaway and homeless youth ages 12-21 years old. Ms. Rivers reported the program helps youth build life skills; increase knowledge about resources for youth that have run away; educate youth about alternatives to running away; and help youth identify and seek help from trusted community members. Mr. Young reported that in the past year, 27 adolescents participated in TF-CBT with 152 sessions and 71 family sessions with a reduction in trauma symptoms of 33-84%. He reported that in the past year, 87 adolescents were served in SPARCS, with 71 completing the program.

Strategic Plan Subcommittee:

Dr. Herzog reported that the Strategic Plan Subcommittee met prior to the Board meeting. He stated that the Subcommittee met to discuss the DMH Strategic Plan FY21 End-of-Year Progress Report. He reported that there was no report from the subcommittee.

Property Subcommittee:

Ms. Eubanks reported that the Property Subcommittee met via email prior to the Board meeting. She reported that Lauderdale County has asked for a long-term lease on property owned by East Mississippi State Hospital (EMSH). EMSH didn't even realize it still owned the property and is in full support. The Property Committee recommends the DMH Board authorize this long-term lease between EMSH and Lauderdale County and authorize any actions necessary to effectuate the lease. Mr. Phillips made a motion to approve the recommendation. A second was made by Dr. Killebrew, the Board voted unanimously to approve the recommendation.

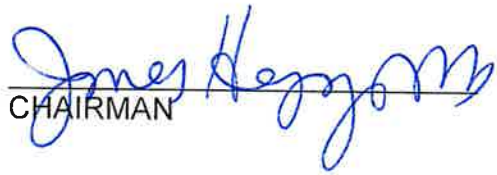
Ms. Eubanks reported that the Jones County Economic Development Authority has asked Ellisville State School to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to allow the Authority to build a temporary all-weather road for its purposes. Ellisville State School is in support and has taken the necessary precautions about post-use condition. The Property Committee recommends the Department of Mental Health Board authorize this MOU between Ellisville State School and the Authority and authorize any actions necessary to effectuate the lease. Mr. Phillips made a motion that the MOU between Ellisville State School and the Authority and authorize any actions necessary to effectuate the lease. A second was made by Dr. Shivangi, the Board voted unanimously to approve the recommendations.

Ms. Eubanks reported that a private citizen requested a permanent easement over North Mississippi Regional Center (NMRC) property in Water Valley. Although statute could be interpreted to say that the Board could grant this easement without legislative approval, the Property Committee believes that this is so permanent that the Board should treat this like a conveyance, which means that the Board does not have the authority to approve the request. The citizen was told this and asked the Board to seek legislative approval. The Property Committee recommends that the Board vote to deny the citizen's request to seek legislative approval (as opposed to simply not acting). NMRC and local legislators agree with this path. Dr. Shivangi made a motion to accept the recommendation to deny the citizen's request to seek legislative approval. A second was made by Mr. Phillips, the Board voted unanimously to approve the recommendation.

On motion by Dr. Shivangi, the Board voted to close the regular monthly meeting to determine the need for an Executive Session. On motion of Dr. Shivangi and second by Mr. Phillips, the Board voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters related to Mississippi Code Section 25-41-7 (4)(b).

On motion of Dr. Shivangi and second by Mr. Phillips, the Board voted unanimously to exit the Executive Session reporting all actions taken by the Board during this session. There were no actions taken.

With no further business, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn this meeting.


CHAIRMAN


EXECUTIVE SECRETARY