



**Passaic County Local Advisory Committee on Alcohol and Drug Abuse  
June 3, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

**Members present:**

1. Ronna Bouton
2. Evan Covello
3. Linda Doering
4. Gabrielle McQueen
5. Jeanette Pimentel
6. Paula Tedesco

**Members absent:**

1. Heather Batten
2. Humberto Maravi
3. Michele Shell
4. Le'Var Starr
5. Lia Travers
6. Jennie Vega

Also present were Brenda Browne, Director Passaic County Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Donna Huber, Passaic County Municipal Alliance Coordinator.

Meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM by Ms. Tedesco, Chair of the Local Advisory Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (LACADA). The meeting was held via videoconference.

Ms. Tedesco welcomed Gabrielle McQueen a new member to the LACADA.

Ms. Browne made the announcement of the Open Public Meetings Act. There was no public present.

A motion was made by Mr. Covello and seconded by Ms. Bouton to accept the May 6, 2020 meeting minutes. Motion passed with one abstention (Gabrielle McQueen)

County Division of Mental Health & Addiction Staff Report  
Mental Health & Addictions Updates

June 2020

- The Innovation Grant has one applicant, Prevention is Key. DMHAS preliminarily extending contracting deadline for this award until August 31, 2020 to conclude by August 31, 2021.

- Division Director in discussions with providers to address concerns of access to mental health and addiction services in Upper Passaic County. New Life is interested in applying for IOP services once again in Upper County. IOP will be re-bid.
- Division Director still awaiting county approval to hire a Health Educator.
- Upcoming Federal Pathways to Employment Grant to be released. May be over \$650,000 for 18 months. Looking for a lead person or entity to get partners together to start planning to apply.
- Return to Work plan for our department starts on 6-15-20.

Professional Advisory Committee on Alcohol and Drug Abuse – (Attachment 1)

County Alliance Steering Subcommittee (hereafter “CASS”) Report

- **GCADA Update – FY20 – Funding Freeze**
  - Due to the reduced DEDR collections, there remains a freeze to Municipal Alliance programming and countywide activities that will stay in place until 9/30/2020
  - GCADA plans to reimburse the Municipalities for the 5<sup>th</sup> Quarter Municipal Alliance Coordination through 9/30/2020.
  - GCADA will be extending the FY2020 County contracts until 9/30/2020. GCADA is waiting final guidance from Treasury on the extension process. Once GCADA receives final guidance further instructions will be furnished to the counties.
- **GCADA Update FY2021-2025 Planning Cycle**
  - The FY21 will have 3 quarters and will begin on 10/01/2020 and end on 6/30/2021.
  - The FY2021 County Awards will be revised and reduced based upon the reduction in the DEDR collections.
  - Once the final projects are made by OMB, GCADA will release the revised awards to the County staff.
- **Alliance Update**
  - The Alliances have continued to meet virtually.

There was no Special Committee report.

In Old Business Ms. Browne reminded the Committee that the LACADA continues to look for membership. If anyone knows of someone who would be interested in serving on LACADA, please contact Ms. Browne

In New Business Ms. Pimentel made a motion to accept the Bid Review Committee recommendation to approve Morris County Prevention Is Key, Mobile Recovery Unit Innovation Award bid, motion approved unanimously.

There was no correspondence.

A motion was made by Mr. Covello, and seconded by Ms. McQueen to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:44 PM.

Attest:

/ s / Donna Huber, Acting Secretary

**Passaic County Mental Health and Addiction Professional Advisory Committee  
(PAC/PACADA)  
Meeting Minutes  
May 20, 2020**

**Present**

Leslie DeBlasio, Eva's Village  
Joanne Green, MHA Passaic  
Danielle Granados, SJHMC  
Ruth JeanMarie, Straight & Narrow  
Sherrine Schuldt, UPinPC  
Cynthia Gatica, DMHAS  
Yisel Alaoui, Partnership MCH  
Tashai McFarlane, PCDHS  
Annette Wright, Social Connections  
Ria Martinez  
Donna Huber, PCDHS  
Christina Ward, Turning Point  
Diedre Lonza, New Hope  
Ratna Joshi-Nelson, Care Plus, Inc.

Earl Leitch, SERV  
Kathleen Fisher, St. Mary's Hospital  
Tina Miles, SJHMC  
Sybil Schreiber, MHCP  
Juliet Quiles, CSPNJ  
Tracey Dwan Blash, MHA Essex & Morris  
Brenda Browne, PCDHS  
Sarah Lombard, PCDHS  
Tess Medina, Clara Maass  
Tracey Dwan Blash, MHA Essex  
Derk Replogle, New Bridge Services  
Alma Yee, CHLP  
Matthew Gray, Care Plus, Inc.

**Others Present**

Kathleen McKenna, Adult Family Health Services  
Jessica F., JFS  
Cynthia Fox

**Agenda**

1. **Call to order** – meeting to order at 2:10pm.
2. **Minutes** –
3. **Staff Report** – See attached report.
4. **SRC** – Next meeting May 21, 2020
5. **DMHAS Report** – See attached
6. **PAC Discussion** – Providers agree the role of telehealth will increase moving forward. A few providers have temperature check points before entering their facilities. There are concerns about sanitizing vehicles for transporting clients. Tracey Dwan Blash, MHA Essex & Morris is sanitizing their vehicles. Most providers are going to establish a mandated policy around PPEs. Leslie DeBlasio, Eva's Village mandated masks to be worn at all times, disciplinary actions will occur if masks are not worn.
7. **Announcements** – Mental Health Association of Passaic is offering a chat line to the community Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm.
8. **Open Public Portion** –
9. **Other Business** –
10. **Adjourned** – Kathleen Fisher motioned to adjourn, Joanne Green moved and Tess Medina seconded. Meeting adjourned at 3:11pm.

**Next meeting date: June 17, 2020**

County Division of Mental Health & Addiction Staff Report  
Mental Health & Addictions Updates

May 2020

- The Innovation Award RFP has been posted. Bids are due on 5/22/2020.
- Mental Health and Addiction agencies are coping best they can with the immediate change to telehealth with limited access to the technology needed to get this done. FCC released grants to assist with technology and telehealth challenges that this pandemic has created.
- Deployment of Disaster Response Crisis Counselors (DRCC's) telephonically and at William Paterson University's Testing Site for the past several weeks. Division Director has been providing support and resources to the volunteers and provided cards with emotional support number in English and Spanish for the residents being tested.
- Division Director meeting with Paterson's Overdose Response Team & Coalition of Opioid Assessment and Response team to find best ways to tackle the Opioid concerns in Paterson.
- Challenges with mobile outreaches are being addressed.
- RFQ's for providers in Passaic County to identify what MH and Addictions services they could provide in the county.
- FEMA grant funding available for pandemic related disaster crisis counseling.

**Program Analyst Notes**

**May Notes 2020**

- Mental Health Videophone Support Available to Assist Sign Language Users During COVID-19 Outbreak
- *Press Release: The ACCESS Program at St. Joseph's Helpline Offers Emotional Support to Sign Language Users During the Coronavirus Pandemic*
- (TRENTON) – A free emotional support helpline is now available to deaf and hard of hearing New Jerseyans feeling the emotional and mental toll of COVID-19.
- With support from the New Jersey Department of Human Services, ACCESS at St. Joseph's Health in Paterson is offering help in American Sign Language to people dealing with anxiety and worry related to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. New Jerseyans can call the videophone helpline at 973-870-0677 for free, confidential support. Direct communication in sign language will be offered from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday by live trained specialists.
- News Letter was sent in Guidance Regarding Telemedicine/Telehealth and Telecommunication Support Services for Behavioral Health Provider Agencies Dealing with COVID-19. In light of Coronavirus (COVID-19) public health concerns, both State and Federal declarations of emergency, and recent actions at the State and Federal level to support the use of telemedicine/telehealth during this public health emergency, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (Division) is recommending that Mental Health (MH) and

Substance Use Disorder (SUD) provider agencies (PAs) consider providing programming through telemedicine/telehealth to the extent practicable and where appropriate.

- DEPT. OF HEALTH ANNOUNCES NEW HOSPITAL VISITORS POLICY

- Department of Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli announced a new policy on April 25th requiring hospitals to allow a designated support person to be with a disabled patient during hospitalization. This designated support person can be a family member, personal care assistant or another disability service provider knowledgeable about the patient's care and must be allowed to remain with the patient while in the hospital, subject to the restrictions. The patient's disability may be due to altered mental status, intellectual or cognitive disability, communication barriers or behavioral concerns.

- DISABILITIES RIGHTS NJ TO HOLD VIRTUAL TOWN HALL MEETING

- DRNJ the State's Protection and Advocacy will be holding a virtual listening session on Wednesday, April 29, 2020, 7:00 PM 8:00 PM to hear about what is working and what is not in the time of COVID-19. This listening session is an opportunity for individuals with serious mental illness, their advocates, and family members to speak to DRNJ and one another, and to promote the sharing of resources, information, and experiences. You may send questions in advance of the Town Hall to: [PAIMQuestions@drnj.org](mailto:PAIMQuestions@drnj.org)
- Register at <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMrdOqrrjkvGtE37fIYle76H-mvrrlMiblj>

- The COVID-19 crisis is putting first responders at a dangerously high risk for a variety of mental health problems, psychiatric experts say. CarePlus NJ -- a non-profit organization that provides primary care, mental health care and substance abuse rehabilitation services -- is launching a mental health trauma hotline for first responders on May 4.

- There is a new CSS termination notification form that has been sent to our CSS providers as talked about on CSS conference call in April.

- Final Awards went out for the purchase of telehealth Equipment/techenology to service consumers with opiod use disorders. Hispanic Family Center of southern NJ. (Camden County). Legacy Treatment Services (Atlantic, Burlington, Middlesex and Cape May Counties). New Hope (Monmouth and Middlesex Counties) Stress Care of NJ (Monmouth County). Vantage HealthCare (Bergen County).
- the process during this COVID19 Pandemic for some of the BOSS have limited office hours, but all BOSS have active phone lines where messages are to be left and someone is to return calls to the community. Please see attached for your individual counties.
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- Medicaid Alert: Effective April 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 all Prior authorizations for CSS and Substance use disorder services for Medicaid consumers have been suspended until further notice.
- DMHAS distributed a small supply of N-95 Masks and gloves to priority providers, based on frequent contact with consumers: Opioid Treatment Providers (30) and Non-hospital based Designated Screening Centers (10). As more supplies become available, the next target group of providers to receive supplies is residential providers with COVID-19 positive residents.
- To complement the COVID-19 helpline operated by the Mental Health Association of New Jersey (866-202-HELP), a helpline is now operational for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. That helpline is operational Monday – Friday from 9 to 5 (973-870-0877).
- DMHAS contracted providers have submitted their required attestations asserting they will continue operations and continue to accept admissions, and have received their April contract payment as specified in the DMHAS March 25, 2020 correspondence. DMHAS staff continue to have frequent contact with our contracted providers to ensure the availability of services to our consumers.
- DMHAS has submitted our grant application to FEMA for the Immediate Service Program and to SAMHSA for the Emergency Grant to Address Mental and Substance Use Disorders During COVID-19.
- Additional Guidance Documents have been issued to providers as follows:
  - Telehealth for Designated Screening Services issued 3/27/20 by DMHAS
  - Partial Care and Partial Hospitalization Telehealth Services issued 4/14/20 by Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services
- Please see the DMHAS website for on-doing updates:
  - <https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/home/index.html>
- Please be reminded that if you need additional one-time funding for PPE you can request this through DMHAS.