



**Passaic County Mental Health Board
February 3, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Members present:

1. Robert Nolan
2. Nanette A. Armenta
3. Paula Tedesco
4. Julie Rikon
5. Jennifer Hernandez

Members absent:

1. Arnell Perez
2. Jeannette Pimentel
3. Ramon Pagan

Meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Mr. Nolan, Chairman of the Mental Health Board. Meeting was held via videoconference.

Also present was Brenda Browne, Director of the Passaic County Mental Health and Addiction Services, Nataly Balah, Passaic County Mental Health and Addiction Services Administrative Assistant, Cynthia Gatica, Program Analyst for NJ Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services and from the public: Jennifer Haggis and Peggy Lore.

A motion was made by Ms. Rikon, second by Ms. Armenta to open the public portion of the meeting. Motion passed.

Mr. Nolan made the announcement of the Open Public Meetings Act.

The Public didn't have any inquiries. Ms. Jennifer from Care Plus made an introduction and is actively seeking addiction referrals.

A motion was made by Ms. Rikon to close public portion, second by Ms. Armenta. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Ms. Armenta to approve the January 12, 2021 meeting minutes, second by Ms. Tedesco. Motion passed with an abstention from Ms. Rikon.

Reports

County Division of Mental Health & Addiction Staff Report (See Attachment 1)

New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services Program Analyst Report (See Attachment 2).

Professional Advisory Committee Report. Ms. Browne announced the news about the retirement of Ms. Joanne Green from her position, and Ms. Rebekah Leon taking over the responsibilities of the Executive Director of Mental Health Association in Passaic.

Reports of Special Committee: None

Old Business: None

New Business: Ms. Browne announced the appointment of Ms. Jennifer Hernandez to the Mental Health Board Committee.

A motion was made by Ms. Rikon, second by Ms. Armenta to appoint PAC Committee. Motion passed unanimously.

Correspondence: None

Motion to adjourn meeting by Ms. Armenta, second by Ms. Rikon. Motion passed.
Meeting adjourned at 6:35 PM.

Attest:

Brenda Browne
Secretary
Nataly Balah
Administrative Assistant

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

February Notes

- “Hope One Van” will be escorted by the County of Passaic Sheriff’s department. Scheduled dates and locations will be available shortly in February.
- DMHAS announced the eligibility of Behavioral Health employees to receive the Covid-19 vaccine.
- DMHAS announced the start of 988 Suicide Prevention emergency hotline.
- Vaccination sites will have a Disaster Response Crisis Counselor to assist with any emotional distresses.
- NJ State still has the Hope and Healing free emotional support hotline.
- Resolutions on renewing Mental Health RFP’s and grants for CY 2021 were passed.
- State Addictions Grant Application for FY2021 is pending approval.
- Mental Health and Addiction Services Director will share information when available on the Prosecutor’s Office Mental Health Task Force start date.

Program Analyst Monthly Notes

February 2021

1. DMHAS welcomes Sarianne Gruber to the Office of Planning, Research, Evaluation, Prevention, and Olmstead. Sarianne will be joining us as the Project Director for our Covid-19 Emergency Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Grant. She brings many years of experience in healthcare research and performance analytics to drive a more patient-centric and cost-sensitive healthcare system.
2. Statewide COVID Vaccine Call Center 855-568-0545 is now live. The call center is staffed daily 8am-8pm to assist in scheduling vaccine appointments and pre-registration on the state site.
3. The New Jersey Department of Health is hosting virtual town halls to address facts, fears, and myths regarding the COVID-19 vaccines for New Jersey's Black, Caribbean and Latinx communities.
February 11 at 7:00 pm - Black and Caribbean Communities <https://bit.ly/3oqVXw2>
February 15 at 7:00 pm - Latinx Communities – <https://bit.ly/3tidR7x>
4. **CSS-DocuSign** is permissible for electronic signature.
5. **CSIS-A** check box was added to ask if the consumer has a rental subsidy.
6. **UIR Procedure**
 - Send all Incident Reports to: dmhas.incidentrept@dhs.nj.gov
 - **Incident Reporting Forms:** <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/forms/#11>
7. **Governor Murphy Announces Extension of Affordable Care Act Enrollment Period for Uninsured In New Jersey In Response to COVID-19 Pandemic**

New Jersey Joins Biden Administration in Effort to Assist Residents Through Special Enrollment Period

TRENTON – Following the Biden Administration’s health care action, Governor Phil Murphy announced the State is extending the health insurance enrollment period for uninsured residents to sign up for coverage through Get Covered New Jersey, the state’s official health insurance marketplace, in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The state of New Jersey transitioned from using the federally-facilitated marketplace, healthcare.gov, to its own marketplace last year, GetCovered.NJ.gov. The first Open Enrollment Period started November 1, 2020 and ends on January 31, 2021. New Jersey will extend the window for eligible uninsured residents to enroll in

a health insurance plan through the marketplace or directly from carriers through a COVID-19 Special Enrollment Period through May 15, 2021.

The coverage effective dates will be as follows:

- Enroll by February 28, coverage effective March 1;
- Enroll by March 31, coverage effective April 1;
- Enroll by April 30, coverage effective May 1;
- Enroll by May 15, coverage effective June 1.

Residents shopping for health insurance through GetCovered.NJ.gov have access to a new state subsidy — called New Jersey Health Plan Savings – on top of premium tax credits and cost-sharing reductions available to lower the cost of their health insurance.

All plans available through Get Covered New Jersey meet the stringent standards of the Affordable Care Act and offer free preventive care, free telehealth during the COVID-19 public health emergency and for 90 days thereafter, and coverage for emergency services, mental health and substance use services, and more. All plans available through Get Covered New Jersey are also required to cover COVID-19 diagnostic testing and COVID-19 vaccinations without out-of-pocket costs.

After January 31st, New Jerseyans can make updates to health plans or enroll in a new health plan for other reasons, including birth or adoption of a child and pregnancy. More information on Special Enrollment Periods will be available on GetCovered.NJ.gov, where residents can also shop and compare plans and see if they qualify for financial help.

The deadline for New Jersey’s COVID-19 Special Enrollment Period aligns with the enrollment window opened by the federal government under the Biden Administration in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

All New Jerseyans seeking health insurance are encouraged to sign up by January 31 in order to have coverage in effect on February 1, providing the maximum benefit of health coverage for 2021. To get free help choosing a plan from a trained, certified assister, go to [Find Local Assistance](#) on the Get Covered New Jersey website.

8. **The National Lifeline Program and the 9-8-8 rollout:** The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We're committed to improving crisis services and advancing suicide prevention by empowering individuals, advancing professional best practices, and building awareness.

The National Suicide Hotline Designation Act is now law. 9-8-8, the new three-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, is to be completed by July 2022. A national three-digit phone number will improve access to vital crisis services, improve the efficacy of suicide

prevention efforts, reduce the stigma about mental health and getting help. Most importantly, 988 will help to save lives, every day.

For now, 1-800-273-TALK (8255) is the phone number for callers to connect to Lifeline services (nationwide). 988 is NOT CURRENTLY ACTIVE and should not be promoted until the national Lifeline program has completed the rollout in the summer of 2022.

The 5 Lifeline Centers in NJ are listed below.

Organization	Website	Counties
CONTACT of Burlington	www.contactburlco.org	Burlington
Contact of Mercer	www.contactofmercer.org	Mercer, Ocean. Back up Monmouth
Caring Contact	http://caringcontact.org/	Union, Essex, Morris, Middlesex, Somerset; Back up statewide
MHANJ	www.njmentalhealthcares.org	Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Hudson, Hunterdon, Ocean, Sussex, Warren
Rutgers - UBHC	www.ubhc.rutgers.edu	Atlantic, Bergen, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Hudson, Hunterdon, Passaic, Salem, Sussex, Warren. Back up for other Counties.

9. Hope and Healing Helpline

https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/information/provider/Provider_Meetings/2020/HH.pdf

The **HEAL NJ Healthcare Workers COVID Hope & Healing Helpline** can be reached at 1-833-416-8773. It offers live support for doctors, nurses, hospital staff and all other health care personnel by trained crisis counselors and health care peers from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily, with emergency support available 24/7. The helpline can also provide connection to other resources, including telehealth crisis counseling, virtual support groups, and wellness webinars. To learn more and register for online webinars and support groups, please visit www.healhealthcareworkers.com.

The **RISE: NJ First Responders COVID Hope & Healing Helpline** for law enforcement officers, firefighters, EMS professionals and others can be reached at 1-833-237-4325. It offers live support from specialists and peers daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., with emergency support available 24/7. Available support also includes crisis counseling, virtual support groups, and resiliency and wellness webinars. To learn more about RISE and register for online support groups and webinars, please visit www.risefirstresponders.com.

10. VIRTUAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS TRAINING

With the stress and uncertainty in the world right now learn how you can identify the emotional needs and assist those in your community, family, or organization. QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Suicide Prevention training and Pandemic Fatigue & Strategies for Resiliency COVID-19 Strategies will be offered virtually at no cost. Please register in advance through the link below each date.

- **Pandemic Fatigue and Strategies for Resiliency (2 Hours)**
February 8th @ 10:00 AM
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEvd-uspz4qE9eaakqHqg3vF4P1bnOc9--2>
- **Question, Persuade, Refer (2 Hours)**
February 10th @ 4:00 PM
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwrf-ypRtMtG9wflmMQw9JIm91LmLfAAqQK>
- **Question, Persuade, Refer (2 Hours)**
February 16th @ 10:00 AM
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEvdu2opjkqEtNIByVB6tusOZB3iJ-F-k7a>
- **Pandemic Fatigue and Strategies for Resiliency (2 Hours)**
February 17th @ 4:00 PM
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIoF-grqDguHNlps-oVdcULYUrLgVsXzpXY>
- **Question, Persuade, Refer (2 Hours)**
February 23rd @ 1:00 PM
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcsf-CppjovGtzdr0-NIsjycA4WjV9JiQLG>

- **Pandemic Fatigue and Strategies for Resiliency (2 Hours)**
February 26th @ 1:00 PM
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81912102000>