

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Name of Governmental Body: WCMH Legislation and Policy Committee			Attending: Marc Herstand, Jeanie Verschay, Sita Diehl, Kimberlee Coronado, Julia Polk, Kit Kerschensteiner, Stacie Heckendorf, Amanda Anderson Guests: Adam Bradbender DHS Staff: Teresa Steinmetz, Sarah Coyle, Hannah Foley
Date: 11/9/2023	Time Started: 12:30	Time Ended: 3:00	
Location: Zoom			Presiding Officer: Brian Michel
Minutes			

1. Call the LPC Meeting to Order

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by B. Michel at 12:34 PM. Introductions were given by committee members, DHS Staff, and guests.

2. Legislative and Policy Committee Housekeeping

Review and Approval of the Minutes from the September Meeting

J. Verschay motioned to approve the minutes.

K. Coronado seconded.

Minutes approved unanimously.

Announcements:

Sita Diehl announced that NAMI Smarts held a meeting in Milwaukee 10/28 with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. A state-wide mental health coalition was also launched in October. A virtual meeting will be held in January with more information on the coalition. A call to members and guests was given. Please contact Sita Diehl with interest.

K. Coronado shared that November is National Caregiver Awareness Month. Many parent caregivers for children or adults who are disabled or medically complex are exhausted and isolated. Their mental and physical struggle is a public health crisis that costs us all. The “Unseen” documentary gives an unfiltered, honest glimpse into their lives to enable a change for millions of caregivers and their families. Learn more at: <https://youtu.be/kykQIaTMnoM?feature=shared>.

She also shared that November is Family Court Awareness Month. Here is a link to learn how New York State is making legislative changes to improve Family Court by holding a joint public hearing. https://www.nysenate.gov/calendar/public-hearings/november-01-2023/joint-public-hearing-conduct-oversight-family-court?fbclid=IwAR0_np_IkiSZJe8Scltqnu--napF_NOI332urLZ8WfkN70mG1P2bCUezk

Lastly, K. Coronado shared a proposal: SB557 (-4469) View Bill History relating to: housing and homelessness; emergency rental assistance program; indigent civil legal services; workforce development;

community action agencies; poverty reports; mental health; economic security; reimbursement for nonemergency medical transportation services; urban mass transit aid; lead exposure and abatement services; lead service line replacement; providing an exemption from emergency rule procedures; granting rule-making authority; and making an appropriation.

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/proposals/REG/SB557>

A. Anderson shared a link to an upcoming Wisconsin Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (WAMFT) webinar occurring on Saturday, December 9th from 10:00 am-12:00 pm. The guest speaker is Dr. Jennifer Benjamin. Dr. Benjamin has several specialty areas and certificates including Ecosystemic Structural Family Therapy, Accelerated Resolution Therapy, and Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and a rating of Global Adherence in Standard Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (WAMFT, 2023).

Public Comment:

A. Bradbender, an intern with NASW Wisconsin, spoke on a desire to have a future discussion item with the committee to highlight heightened support for individuals with severe mental illness, frail elders, and individuals with disabilities, to be more supported nationally.

Discussing on 2024 Meetings:

No changes to meeting dates/times for 2024. The committee discussed wishes for changes with no suggestions given. The committee voiced their interest in keeping monthly meetings at the same time/date.

3. Department of Health Services

T. Steinmetz with DCTS shared updates with the committee including current recruitment opportunities (Four Section Supervisor/Unit Supervisor vacancies), with the hope of continued support for the Bureau. Daniel (Dan) Bizjak has accepted the position of Substance Use Services Section Supervisor. This section focuses on the services and programs designed primarily for individuals with substance use needs. Dan will be starting in this new role on 11/19/2023. Dan has served in the role of the State Opioid Treatment Authority for DHS since April 2022.

DHS 72, an administrative rule that stems from Act 122, is currently being drafted. This proposal hopes to have a long-term reimbursement for Certified Peer Specialists. A final version is in the works and once finalized, the act will be posted for public comment and public hearings will occur in the near future. DHS 105 and 107 are Medicaid funding streams that will also support the financial components in reimbursement.

4. WCMH Updates

K. Coronado, Interim Chair of the Wisconsin Council on Mental Health, shared updates regarding the Fall Tour which occurred on September 19, 2023. The next WCMH full Council meeting will be on Wednesday, 11/15.

K. Coronado also shared that the Executive Committee met in October and concern was voiced regarding WCMH membership and a lack of quorum at numerous meetings.

J. Verschay shared a comment regarding accountability measures regarding discrepancies within the criminal justice system. K. Coronado shared that, if there is interest in continued conversations, establishing an ADHOC committee would be encouraged to discuss the shock and reality of the large association between individuals who suffer from a mental health crisis entering the criminal justice system when it is not the appropriate first response.

5. Housing Workgroup Update

J. Boling from the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) asked that this vote be stalled until the next meeting until WHEDA supervisors review the motion.

6. Break

7. Legislative and Policy Updates, Discussion, and Action

State Legislative Updates: Chapter 51 Discussion Update:

S. Diehl shared that NAMI has joined in collaboration with groups to educate one another. Wisconsin is one of only two states where a law enforcement officer is present to determine if a Chapter 51 is necessary. NAMI and the Office of Senator James had conversations regarding requiring a Licensed Mental Health professional, with continuous/annual training, to be present in these situations. S. Diehl shared that in Tennessee, where they previously resided for 28 years, Licensed Mental Health providers received training every two years to support these initiatives. With Wisconsin being a county-centered state, questions regarding who would provide training to these professionals were brought about. K. Kerschensteiner asked a question regarding funding for these positions. S. Diehl shared that individuals should contact Senator James' office for interest and/or comments.

B. Michel shared that, during a DHS advocacy meeting, a pilot program for law enforcement to have electronic devices to have a virtual behavioral health crisis individual on call (Assembly Bill 573) was approved.

M. Herstand with NASW WI shared an update regarding Governor Evers suing the Joint Committee of Review of Administrative rules due to their suspension of the ban on conversion therapy. Governor Evers is part of a multipart lawsuit to overturn that suspension. Marc also shared an update that in late October, Wisconsin introduced Act 269, which "prevents health care entities and credentialing boards from discriminating or retaliating against health care providers for ordering innovative therapies or novel therapies if certain conditions are met, including 1) the health care provider orders the therapy based on his or her assessment of the patient and any available clinical data supporting the therapy; 2) the patient requests the innovative therapy or novel therapy; and 3) the ordered therapy, if the therapy is a drug, device, or biological product, is either approved or authorized for emergency use by the federal Food and Drug Administration. Further, this bill prevents any health care entity or credentialing board from restricting any health care provider from informing a patient of any innovative or novel therapy that may potentially benefit the patient." This act appears to be supporting conversion therapy and NASW is actively pushing against this act. For more information on this act, please visit:

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/related/proposals/ab609.pdf>

J. Verschay asked a question regarding regional crisis centers. T. Steinmetz shared that a bill, Bill 462, requires the Department of Health Services to establish a certification process for crisis urgent care and observation facilities and a grant program to award grants to develop and support these facilities. Under the bill, a crisis urgent care and observation facility is a treatment facility that admits an individual to prevent, de-escalate, or treat the individual's mental health or substance use disorder and includes the necessary structure and staff to support the individual's needs relating to the mental health or substance use disorder. For more information, please visit: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/proposals/sb462>

B. Michel spoke on a bill, AD 541. This “bill provides that no mental health care provider may be required to be licensed, registered, certified, or otherwise approved to practice in this state to provide mental health services by telehealth to patients located in this state if the mental health care provider satisfies certain conditions, including: 1) the mental health care provider is licensed, registered, certified, or otherwise approved to practice in the state that the provider is physically present in when providing telehealth services; 2) the mental health care provider may provide telehealth services in this state within the scope of his or her license, registration, certification, or approval from the state from which the mental health care provider is providing telehealth services; and 3) the mental health care provider informs the patient whether the provider is licensed in this state, what state he or she is providing telehealth services from, what states in which he or she is licensed, registered, certified, or otherwise approved to practice, and which regulatory boards the patient may contact to file a complaint. Under the bill, “mental health care provider” means a physician, physician assistant, psychologist, registered professional nurse, counselor, therapist, or social worker who, by education, training, and experience, is qualified to provide mental health services to patients.”

For more information on this bill, please visit: docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/related/proposals/ab541

Concerns regarding this bill were discussed.

S. Heckendorf shared that one possible positive on this bill would be helpful for those who are deaf and hard of hearing to get direct services from someone who knows American Sign Language while we are not able to provide that in-state.

8. Agenda Items for the December Committee Meeting

- Revisit the Housing Policy Motion
- Continue the discussion on prison reformation and accountability for mental health
- Staffing updates from DOC/status of lock-down within jails/prisons
- American with Disabilities Act (ADA) signage within jails/prisons to remind individuals that they continue to have rights with the criminal justice system.
- Review the WCMH Strategic Plan and strategies that the committee would like to prioritize in 2024.

9. Agenda Items for Future Committee Meetings

- Bipartisan proposal to shift [17-year-olds out of the adult judicial system](#) – Phyllis Greenberger with DRW
- Advocacy for LGBTQ+ efforts (and anti-LGBTQ+ legislation) and discussion to be prepared for how to respond.
- Legislative and Policy Speakers:

- Rep. Tittl (Assembly Committee on Mental Health and Substance Abuse Prevention) – fall 2023.
- Sen. James follow-up meeting
- Rep. Zimmerman
- Plan an educational briefing for the new year once the legislature is back in session.
- Set up periodic presentations re: equity, access, and representation.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:38 PM.

Prepared by: Hannah Foley on 11/9/2023.

These minutes are in draft form. They will be presented for approval by the governmental body on: 12/14/2023