



Behavioral Health Services

MEETING OF THE REGIONAL GOVERNING BOARD

Friday, August 25, 2023

9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

REGION 3 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES
4009 6TH AVE., SUITE 65
KEARNEY, NE

The Mission of Region 3 Behavioral Health Services is to foster recovery and resiliency for individuals and their families who experience a behavioral health challenge.

MINUTES

- 1. Welcome and Introductions
• Tammy Kleeb welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.
2. Posting of Open Meetings Act
• Tammy Kleeb directed the Governing Board members to the Open Meetings Act sign posted in the room.
3. Comments from the Public
There were no comments from the public.
4. Roll Call
• Roll Call was taken by Jean Starman.

Present:

Adams – Lee Hogan
Custer – Tammy Kleeb
Franklin – Joshua Johnson
Furnas – Dennis Tegtman
Garfield – Jerome Zulkoski
Greeley – Jordan Foltz
Hall – Gary Quandt
Hamilton – Richard Nelson
Howard – Jessie Urbanski
Loup – Donna Steckel
Nuckolls – Jerry Grove
Phelps – Theresa Puls
Valley – Helen Cullers
Wheeler – Travis Heinz

Excused:

Clay – Ivan Fintel
Merrick – Carolyn Kucera
Webster – Trevor Karr

Absent:

Blaine – Craig Thompson
Buffalo – Bill Maendele
Harlan – Anthony Gulizia
Kearney – Larry Landstrom
Sherman – Kenneth Kaslon

Also Present:

Tiffany Gressley – Region 3 Behavioral Health Services (BHS)
Kerry Slaymaker – Region 3 BHS
Suzanne Davis – Region 3 BHS
Beth Reynolds Lewis – Region 3 BHS
Kayl Dahlke – Region 3 BHS
Jean Starman – Region 3 BHS

5. Approval of June 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes
 - Motion by Gary Quandt to approve the June 23, 2023 meeting minutes, seconded by Jesse Urbanski, motion carried.
6. Approval of Agenda
 - Motion by Theresa Puls to approve the agenda, seconded by Helen Cullers, motion carried.
7. Executive Committee Report
 - Tammy Kleeb reported that the Executive Committee met on August 25, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. FY23 Expenditures were reviewed. Tammy reported that the Regional Administrator transition process from Beth Baxter to Tiffany Gressley has been a smooth process and is going well. Employee status updates were provided and reevaluation of positions was discussed. There were no policies to review.
8. Region 3 Fiscal Reports
 - a. FY23 Year-End Network Expenditures

Kerry Slaymaker reviewed a handout, *Region 3 Behavioral Health Services Network Expenditures July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023*. An asterisk beside a service denotes that it is a Medicaid eligible service. Mental Health services expended 76% of the budgeted amount for FY23.

Kerry explained that there is a wide variety of utilization. The fiscal department monitors the budget throughout the fiscal year and budget shifts are done when necessary. Few budget shifts were done this year due to Medicaid expansion that caused our drawdown amounts to be less than usual.

Services that show 100% utilization are typically expense reimbursement services. Kerry explained that in these types of services, a Network Provider submits a budget, Region 3 approves it, and they bill us based on their expenses rather than on a unit rate. Expense reimbursement works better for certain services. Some new pilot projects are set up on an expense reimbursement basis and may eventually move to a unit rate.

Substance Use Disorder services expended 66% of the budgeted amount for FY23. Some services show 100% utilization which are Prevention or the Region coordination services that are expense based services. Kerry stated that it is common for these services to be at 100%.

Other Reinvestment Projects expended 32% of the FY23 budgeted amount. With the exception of the Recovery Supported Housing Assistance project, Supplemental American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) block grant funds are being used to fund the projects. These funds can be used through September 2025. Projects that show 0% reflect future projects.

The Recovery Supported Housing Assistance project is a new service implemented in FY23 that has been very successful. The use of state funds is not permitted so Region 3 was able to use a different funding source. The project is currently on hold and will be reevaluated due to discussions with the Division of Behavioral Health regarding funding source.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) spent 100% of the funding. The funds were dedicated to increase our pool of MHFA trainers.

Mobile Translation Devices are available to Network Providers. Numerous devices have been purchased, as every Network Provider in every location, had the opportunity to purchase two electronic mobile devices. The devices are used in the field for translation purposes.

Contingency Management is a behavioral management program with incentives to help individuals meet their treatment goals.

Grand Total paid out from July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 - \$11,324,400 or 73% of the budgeted amount. The 73% utilization is the highest utilization of the six behavioral health regions in the state. The state average service utilization for the six behavioral health regions was 63%. Factors including post COVID issues, Medicaid expansion and workforce shortage challenges have affected funding drawdown.

Motion made by Rich Nelson to approve FY23 Network Expenditures July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023, seconded by Helen Cullers, motion carried. A roll call vote commenced:

Lee Hogan - Yes
Craig Thompson - Absent
Bill Maendele - Absent
Ivan Fintel - Excused
Tammy Kleeb - Yes
Joshua Johnson - Yes
Dennis Tegtman - Yes
Jerome Zulkoski - Yes
Jordan Foltz - Yes
Gary Quandt - Yes
Rich Nelson - Yes
Anthony Gulizia - Absent
Jessie Urbanski - Yes
Larry Landstom - Absent
Donna Steckel - Yes
Carolyn Kucera - Excused
Jerry Grove - Yes
Theresa Puls - Yes
Kenneth Kaslon - Absent
Helen Cullers - Yes
Trevor Karr - Excused
Travis Heinz - Yes

b. FY23/24 RGB Contract and Budget Shift Ratifications

Kerry Slaymaker referred to a handout, *Region 3 Behavioral Health Services Contract Ratifications by Regional Governing Board*, which includes contracts signed by Tiffany Gressley since the Regional Governing Board (RGB) meeting on June 23, 2023. Tiffany Gressley receives the contracts electronically, signs and returns them to the Department of Health and Human Services/Division of Behavioral Health. The contracts are then signed by the RGB Chairperson and brought to the Regional Governing Board for ratification. This is the process approved by the RGB.

Kerry referred to a handout, *Region 3 Behavioral Health Services Contract Ratifications by Regional Governing Board*.

- FY24 DHHS Division of Behavioral Health Contract \$12,553,499.76

This is the primary Region 3 funding contract. Federal funds are received at a different time of the year because the federal fiscal year is different from the Region 3 fiscal year. Funds will likely be awarded and added in September 2023. The Region 3 total contract amount is \$13,191,281.

- Budget Shift 6/30/23 \$20,300.00
The funds will move from one service line to another service line in the First Episode Psychosis program.
- FY24 Budget Shift 8/14/23 \$33,286.00
The funds will move from one service line to another service line in the First Episode Psychosis program.

Motion made by Theresa Puls to approve Contract Ratifications and budget amounts listed above, seconded by Donna Steckel, motion carried. A roll call vote commenced:

Lee Hogan - Yes
Craig Thompson - Absent
Bill Maendele - Absent
Ivan Fintel - Excused
Tammy Kleeb - Yes
Joshua Johnson - Yes
Dennis Tegtman - Yes
Jerome Zulkoski - Yes
Jordan Foltz - Yes
Gary Quandt - Yes
Rich Nelson - Yes
Anthony Gulizia - Absent
Jessie Urbanski - Yes
Larry Landstom - Absent
Donna Steckel - Yes
Carolyn Kucera - Excused
Jerry Grove - Yes
Theresa Puls - Yes
Kenneth Kaslon - Absent
Helen Cullers - Yes
Trevor Karr - Excused
Travis Heinz - Yes

c. FY24 DHHS Contract Changes – budget shifts

Kerry Slaymaker explained that the regional administrators have had discussions with the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) regarding changes in contract requirements to improve efficiency. Previously, contract shifts were only allowed four times per year (October, January, April, June) and DBH approval was needed to transfer funds from one service line to another service line within the same program.

Kerry stated that DBH made adjustments in our FY24 contract that allow us to transfer funds between service line items until it reaches 25% of our contract. However, we are to continue to notify DBH of every shift and the Governing Board is to approve every shift. Kerry explained that restrictions have been slightly relaxed but we are to continue to do the work and show Governing Board approval. The process will not change for the Governing Board but the process will be slightly more efficient for the Region 3 fiscal department. We can now send shift notifications on a monthly basis rather than on a quarterly basis.

d. FY24 Provider Contract Amounts

Kerry Slaymaker referred to a handout, *Region 3 Behavioral Health Services FY24 Contracted Services* that lists all Network Providers and the FY24 contract amounts.

Kerry noted that some Region 3 managed services are funds that come into Region 3 but we do not necessarily keep them. For example, flex funds, housing vouchers and training funds are distributed to providers who request them.

Kerry explained that we were notified in July 2023 by the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) that a change was made in the Supported Employment payment mechanism. DBH has transferred this process back to Vocational Rehabilitation. DBH significantly reduced the Supported Employment pieces that Region 3 is allowed to pay. Goodwill Industries provides Supported Employment services so their budget amount was reduced based on what we projected they will bill for in FY24. Because of the late decision by DBH, Supported Employment is currently an Unallocated item.

Tiffany Gressley added that it was disappointing that the regions were not included in the discussions regarding Supported Employment. The regional administrators composed and sent a letter to DBH that included a list of concerns regarding the change. At this time, there has been no response from DBH. When Vocational Rehabilitation handled Supported Employment in the past, an excessive wait list was a concern. The regions asked Goodwill to continue to track data, including wait times and refusals, and note successes. If the arrangement with Vocational Rehabilitation is not working well for individuals, we will provide DBH with collected data.

Tiffany explained that Goodwill Industries provides the Supported Employment program that helps individuals with behavioral health needs to prepare for employment. This can include interview preparation, job coaching and job skills acquisition to help them enter and successfully remain in the workforce. Currently, Goodwill must receive a referral from Vocational Rehabilitation before they can begin working with individuals. Previously, much time would pass before Goodwill would receive Supported Employment referrals from Vocational Rehabilitation. Additionally, Vocational Rehabilitation's philosophy differed from that of Goodwill and Region 3 regarding individuals with a substance use disorder. In the past, individuals with a substance use disorder were not served by Vocational Rehabilitation in Supported Employment services even though they expressed the desire to seek employment. Region 3 will continue to monitor the situation.

Kerry explained that there have been changes in some Prevention Coalitions. An amount of \$25,000 has been set aside to use if needed to replace former Prevention Coalition funds.

e. Opioid Settlement Funds

Kerry Slaymaker referred to a handout, *Region 3 Behavioral Health Services National Opioid Settlement Funds Report as of July 31, 2023*. Funds received are from the State Abatement Account Fund and Reallocation from Counties/Municipalities. Reallocation from Counties/Municipalities are funds from counties and cities that have chosen to reallocate their funds to Region 3.

Region 3 received the first payment of \$1,122,430.49 from the state account and \$62,959.86 from counties and cities that have reallocated their funds to Region 3.

Currently, the only expenses are from the Opioid Summit that took place in Kearney in June 2023. The Opioid Response Network (ORN) paid for the summit. However, they are not allowed to use funds for food so Region 3 provided food and coffee in the morning and snacks in the afternoon for the 50 attendees.

An operating expense of \$45 reflects electronic deposit fees.

9. Region 3 Network Update

a. Voucher Provider Enrollment Process

Suzanne Davis explained that, at times, it is difficult for individuals to receive outpatient behavioral health therapy near their homes in a timely manner. To assist with the situation, a voucher program was created. Outpatient therapy challenges are associated with the behavioral health workforce shortage that increased wait lists. Region 3 is working with Horizon Recovery Center in Hastings and Live Well Counseling in Kearney to pilot the voucher program.

Tiffany Gressley added that the voucher program will provide an opportunity to work with groups of smaller practitioners who are not a part of the Region 3 provider network. The voucher program is designed to increase access to outpatient behavioral health services and increase choice of therapists within a reasonable distance from an individual's home. Updates will be provided as the process unfolds.

b. Workforce Stabilization Grant

The purpose of the Workforce Stabilization Grant is to help stabilize and increase the Regions' and Network Providers' ability to fill vacancies and retain staff. Suzanne Davis stated that the funds have been distributed to Region 3 and Network Providers. Region 3 is a provider within our Network because of the services we provide. Network Providers are to submit the first quarterly report to Region 3 in October 2023. Recruitment tools and hiring bonuses are examples of workforce stabilization approaches that Network Providers may have opted to implement using the grant funds. A list of common strategies will likely be compiled as well as their effectiveness on their workforce.

10. Quality Improvement Report

a. FY23 Region 3 Performance Measures 4th Quarter Report

Kayl Dahlke reviewed a handout, *FY 2023 Network Quality Improvement Plan: Performance Measurement and Reporting, 4th Quarter Report Ending 06-30-23*. The tool is designed to improve and sustain identified satisfaction, access and performance measures for the Region 3 Behavioral Health Services Network.

Kayl explained that the "N" number is the total number applicable for each measure. Numbers in red font indicate that Region 3 did not meet a specific target. Numbers in black show that Region 3 met or exceeded a specific target.

Discussion took place regarding Crisis Services. Beth Reynold Lewis shared that Region 3 is working closely with the Division of Behavioral Health and county sheriffs to address challenges regarding the care of individuals with unmet behavioral health needs involved in the justice system. Beth shared that we are seeing an increase of people from county jails going into an acute psychiatric hospital and returning to jail. Region 3 will continue to advocate for an improved flow of individuals into the appropriate levels of crisis services.

11. Region 3 Emergency System

a. Region 3 Crisis Response & 988 Implementation

Beth Reynolds Lewis explained that 988, the suicide prevention line, provides a direct connection to trained, compassionate, accessible care and support of individuals experiencing suicidal, substance use, and/or other kinds of emotional distress. The 988 line is accessible twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week.

Beth reviewed data from the 988 system since it began on July 16, 2022. Nebraska had 18,803 inbound contacts in FY23. Region 3 had 1,320 inbound contacts for FY23.

Beth explained that when a person calls 988 and a law enforcement officer or an emergency medical technician is dispatched to the caller's location, it is considered an Emergency Intervention. Nebraska had 627 Emergency Interventions initiated by 988 calls from July 16, 2022 – June 30, 2023. Region 3 had 83 Emergency Interventions initiated by 988 calls during the same time period. Beth stated that we hope to see a shift from 911 calls to 988 calls for behavioral health related calls to alleviate some of the calls that 911 dispatchers field.

A question was asked if 988 staffing needs are adequate. Beth said staffing for trained crisis professionals who handle initial 988 calls is stable, however, clinician staffing is more challenging. Some 988 calls are handled by a trained crisis professional and other calls are transferred to a crisis response therapist. Our area has a contract with Lutheran Family Services and South Central Behavioral Services in Hastings to field 988 calls. Many calls for Crisis Response Therapists in our area are being answered by a hub of Lutheran Family Services therapists in Omaha due to the shortage of local clinicians in our area who have the time and desire to provide this service.

b. Region 3 Emergency Protective Custody (EPC) Report

Beth Reynolds Lewis shared that the Crisis Stabilization Unit at Mid-Plains Center continues to do a good job helping prevent individuals from being taken into Emergency Protective Custody (EPC). The Co-Responder Program is also helping prevent some EPCs.

Beth referred to a handout that included a comparison of EPC and Dispositions in 2021/2022 and 2022/2023. Areas include the total number of EPCs, Dropped EPCs, Inpatient Mental Health Board Commitments and Outpatient Mental Health Board Commitments. Beth explained that a dropped EPC means that an individual is not required to go in front of the Mental Health Board. An individual with a dropped EPC typically stabilizes, chooses to voluntarily stay at the hospital or gets well enough to return home.

There was a slight increase in In-Patient Mental Health Board Commitments in 2022/2023 compared to 2021/2022. The 2022/2023 Outpatient Mental Health Board Commitments saw a decrease from the previous year.

12. Regional Administrator's Report

a. Region 3 Training Partnership & Report

The Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN) is dedicated to improving access to behavioral health care across the state of Nebraska by developing a skilled and passionate workforce. Tiffany Gressley stated that BHECN and Region 3 are continuing the long-standing partnership during Fiscal Year 2024. BHECN is contracting with Region 3 to coordinate and provide trainings for the behavioral health workforce and system partners within behavioral health. Some training topics include Compassion Fatigue, Trauma Informed Care, and Stress

Management for Practitioners and Therapists. Region 3 contracts with Kay Glidden, MS, Jordan McCoy, LIMHP and Sarah Griess, PsyD who facilitate trainings as needed. Trainings are both webinar-based and in-person and reach many people from diverse backgrounds. Region 3 has entered into a \$35,000 contract with BHECN for FY24. Finalized FY23 training numbers will be available at the next meeting.

b. Opioid Summit Next Steps

Tiffany Gressley shared a handout, *Opioid and Stimulant Summit Synopsis, June 14 & 15, 2023*. The focus of the second day of the summit included a planning process where participants identified programs and practices currently in place in communities and programs that they would like to see implemented. Participant responses are included on the handout. The areas of prevention, treatment and recovery were addressed. Attendees worked in small groups to prioritize suggested activities and programs. Exhibit E lists the approved strategies and activities in which Opioid Settlement funds can be used. Tiffany will send Exhibit E to Governing Board members.

All Region 3 area Health Departments plan to participate on the Steering Committee. A Steering Committee meeting will take place in September 2023. The Steering Committee will review data and the Opioid Summit synopsis information and help refine the community grant process. The majority of opioid funds will be distributed to communities to address opioid and stimulant misuse. The Steering Committee will act as a sounding board and create a process in which communities will have a user-friendly format for reporting requirements. Tiffany expects that priority areas will be identified by the existing data, information on the Opioid Summit Synopsis handout and the Steering Committee members' experience. We then anticipate receiving grant applications with a focus on the identified high need areas. However, all Exhibit E activities are allowable. Some Steering Committee members will likely work with Region 3 staff to review grant applications. Some communities may be prepared to write a grant and others may need technical assistance with the process. Tiffany stated that there could be a need for a Planning Grant as well as an Implementation Grant.

Tiffany shared that Region 3 has an open position for a Grant Coordinator to manage the Opioid Settlement Funds, monitor other Region 3 grant funds and provide assistance in the Prevention Program. Applications are being accepted and interviews are taking place.

13. Other Business

No Other Business was discussed.

14. Date of Next Meeting

October 27, 2023

9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Region 3 Behavioral Health Services

4009 6th Avenue, Suite 65

Kearney, NE

15. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.