



Behavioral Health Services

MEETING OF THE REGIONAL GOVERNING BOARD

Friday, June 23, 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 9:35 a.m. Introductions were made.
2. Roll Call
- Roll Call was taken by Jean Starman.

Present:

- Adams – Lee Hogan
Buffalo – Bill Maendele
Custer – Tammy Kleeb
Furnas – Dennis Tegtman
Garfield – Jerome Zulkoski
Hall – Gary Quandt
Hamilton – Richard Nelson
Howard – Jessie Urbanski
Loup – Donna Steckel
Phelps – Theresa Puls
Sherman – Kenneth Kaslon
Webster – Trevor Karr

Excused:

- Clay – Ivan Fintel
Merrick – Carolyn Kucera

Absent:

- Blaine – Craig Thompson
Franklin – Joshua Johnson
Greeley – Jordan Foltz
Harlan – Anthony Gulizia
Kearney – Larry Landstrom
Nuckolls – Jerry Grove
Valley – Helen Cullers
Wheeler – Travis Heinz

Also Present:

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

- 3. Review of Open Meetings Act
- Tammy Kleeb directed the Governing Board members to the Open Meetings Act sign posted in the room.
4. Approval of Agenda

- Motion by Bill Maendele to approve the agenda, seconded by Jesse Urbanski, motion carried.

5. Approval of March 24, 2023 Meeting Minutes

- Motion by Gary Quandt to approve the March 24, 2023 meeting minutes, seconded by Theresa Puls, motion carried.

6. Executive Committee Report

- Tammy Kleeb reported that the Executive Committee met on June 23, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. Beth Baxter provided an update on the Regional Administrator Transition process. The process is on schedule and has gone well. Expenditures were reviewed for March 1, 2023 – May 31, 2023. There were no policies to review.

7. Region 3 Fiscal Reports

a. FY23 Year-to-Date Program Summary July – May Report

Kerry Slaymaker reviewed a handout, *Region 3 Behavioral Health Services Network Expenditures July 1, 2022 – May 31, 2023*. An asterisk beside a service denotes that it is a Medicaid eligible service. Mental Health services expended 66% of the budgeted amount for FY23 with 92% of the fiscal year elapsed. Kerry explained that Medicaid expansion has impacted our drawdown amounts. Services may appear under-utilized which is due to Medicaid expansion. As more individuals received Medicaid coverage, Region 3 paid for fewer units for our services. The Medicaid expansion unwinding process began April 1, 2023 which involves a gradual review of Medicaid eligibility. It is anticipated that each month some individuals will return to Region 3 funding.

The 24-Hour Crisis Line shows a drawdown of 96% of the budgeted amount. Kerry explained that this involves the 24-hour access through the hospitals. Region 3 pays a portion of this service based on the number of Region 3 funded individuals served at each hospital. The budgeted amount will not increase and there will be no budget shifts into this service. There is a set amount for each hospital.

Assertive Community Treatment expended 86% of budgeted funds. This service was not as impacted by Medicaid expansion as some of the other services.

Crisis Response expended 30% of budgeted funds. Kerry explained that one of our Crisis Response providers was unable to provide services in some counties so a Request for Proposal was issued and another provider, Lutheran Family Services, is working to provide the service. Lutheran Family services has experienced some implementation delays, however, utilization is expected to increase in FY24.

Emergency Flex Funds expended 100% of the budgeted funds. This reflects a line change at the State level. Previously, there were Emergency Flex Funds and Flex Funds. The State decided to combine them and call them Flex Funds; either Mental Health Flex Funds or Substance Use Disorder Flex Funds.

Outpatient Psychotherapy expended 70% of budgeted funds. This reflects capacity issues, lack of therapists and Medicaid expansion. Service utilization is expected to increase in FY24.

Substance Use Disorder services expended 58% of the budgeted amount for FY23 with 92% of the fiscal year elapsed. Short Term Residential expended 54% of budgeted funding. This is likely attributed to Medicaid expansion.

Kerry stated that it has been estimated that 12% - 20% of individuals who were Medicaid paid under Medicaid expansion will return to Region 3 as the payer source. This has been factored into the FY24 Budget.

Other Reinvestment Projects expended 29% 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.

Mental Health First Aid spent 100% of the funding. The other projects are in progress or have a future start date.

Recovery Supported Housing Assistance expended 76% of the budgeted funds. This is a new service and is going well. Suzanne Davis explained that after individuals complete a 30-day residential substance use disorder treatment program, they often step down to a halfway house or recovery house. During the 30-day treatment time, the individuals are not employed. This makes it difficult for them to pay the first month's rent and deposit for housing options that will support their recovery. The Recovery Housing Assistance Program has been very successful and has helped many individuals.

Grand Total paid out from July 1, 2022 – May 31, 2023 - \$9,862,872 or 63% of the budgeted amount. Beth Baxter stated that the 63% utilization is the highest utilization of the six behavioral health regions in the state. Factors including post COVID issues, Medicaid expansion and workforce shortage challenges have impacted funding drawdown. We are now seeing positive changes in all of these areas.

Unpaid Due to Pending Contract Requirements: \$27,849. A provider has billed Region 3 for \$27,849. After receiving required audit documentation from the provider, Region 3 will release full payment to them.

b. FY23 RGB Contract 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 Beth Baxter since the Regional Governing Board (RGB) meeting on January 27, 2023. There were no Budget Shifts to report at the March 24, 2023 RGB meeting. Beth Baxter 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*.

- FY23 Budget Shift 4/20/23 in the amount of \$285,566.

A budget shift in the amount of \$285,566 took place to implement a Recovery Support Program at The Bridge in Hastings and to expand the SOAR Program. The SOAR program, provided by Goodwill Industries, assists individuals with the application process for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). There was a high demand for the service so additional funds were shifted into the program to

allow Goodwill Industries to serve more individuals. The additional funds have allowed the program to have two FTEs rather than one FTE.

- FY24 DHHS Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) Signed  
Kerry explained that Region 3 pays into the Department of Medicaid for our hospital contracted service payments. It then goes through a federal match and the hospitals receive more than what was billed to Region 3 as part of an uncompensated pool. The match percentage changes every year. The hospitals receive approximately 1.78 times more than the amount they billed. It is helpful to them and helpful to our budget to offset some of the expense-based services.

Beth Baxter added that state funding cannot be used for match on disproportionate share. This applies only to the hospitals that contract with the Behavioral Health Regions. In Region 3 it includes Richard Young Behavioral Health Center in Kearney, Mary Lanning Healthcare in Hastings and St. Francis Alcohol and Drug Treatment Center (ADTC) in Grand Island.

Any contracted service that a hospital bills to a Region goes into the Disproportionate Share. These can include short term residential services at St Francis ADTC, and Emergency Protective Custody services, acute services, outpatient therapy and medication management services at Richard Young and Mary Lanning.

Disproportionate Share is a good way to leverage more dollars and to use the county matches' leverage to bring additional resources to the system. Kerry said there is no amount on the contract. An agreement is in place between Region 3 and the Department of Medicaid to send those funds through. The amount depends on what the provider bills each month.

- Tobacco Free Nebraska Contract 64534 Y3 in the amount of \$133,216.  
The Tobacco Free Nebraska contract is a two-year grant of \$133,216.

Motion made by Rich Nelson to approve FY23 RGB Contract Budget Shift Ratifications listed above, seconded by Ken Kaslon, motion carried. A roll call vote commenced:

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

Helen Cullers - Absent  
Trevor Karr - Yes  
Travis Heinz - Absent

c. FY24 Regional Budget Plan Status

i. FY24 County Match

Beth Baxter referred to a handout, *Region 3 Behavioral Health Services FY24 Preliminary County Tax Match May 16, 2023*.

Beth Baxter explained that a 15% rate increase was included in the 2022 legislative session but no additional funds were allotted.

When the legislative session was completed, we confirmed that the Region 3 County Match would remain the same as in FY23. Beth Baxter emailed a letter to all Governing Board members regarding this information for county budgeting purposes.

ii. FY24 3% Network Provider Rate Increase

Beth Baxter referred to a handout, *Region 3 Behavioral Health Services FY24 Budget Changes (State Funds Only) as of June 9, 2023*, that relates to a rate increase that we received. The Nebraska Association of Behavioral Health organization asked for a 5% rate increase which is what the Appropriations Committee included in their budget. Governor Pillen vetoed the full 5% rate increase but approved a 3% rate increase in FY24 and an additional 2% in FY25. However, there was no allocation for that rate increase. The thought was that there were dollars at the Regions that were not being drawn down for various reasons so there was no additional allocation. Essentially, it reduces capacity. We did receive a rate increase but there was no allocation so there was no need to ask for additional match on it. We applied that rate increase (as we have in past years) to all of our services. The amount of the 3% rate increase was \$181,889.

8. Regional Administrator's Report

a. Workforce Stabilization Grant

Beth Baxter reviewed a handout, *Workforce Stabilization Grant, Presented to the Regional Governing Board June 23, 2023*. Beth explained that the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) has provided the Regional Behavioral Health Authorities and Regional Network Providers one-time grants for the purpose of stabilizing the behavioral health workforce across Nebraska. Behavioral health provider organizations across Nebraska continue to experience significantly higher costs related to staffing needs and continue to experience high staff turnover rates. Therefore, the purpose of the Workforce Stabilization Grant is to stabilize and increase the Regions' and network providers' ability to hire and retain staff. These grant funds are restricted to costs that support these activities and achieve the goal of decreasing agency vacancy rates of licensed treatment FTEs and non-licensed direct care FTEs.

The DBH has allowed us to focus on the workforce shortage with existing dollars, rather than new dollars. Our 15% rate increase that was implemented this fiscal year was also aimed at improving the workforce. An accountability and reporting process is in place that requires providers who receive funding to indicate their strategies to improve workforce and decrease their vacancy rates to impact service, access and capacity. Information was sent to providers June 19, 2023 and their first report is due to Region 3 on July 7, 2023. Region 3 will then issue the funds to them within fifteen days of receipt of their plan. The metrics, outcomes and

reporting process is to ensure a plan is in place. Suzanne Davis will then combine all the plans and they will be submitted to the State by July 15, 2023.

The handout shows grant funding allocation amounts. Beth added that the providers are appreciative of the funds.

Approximately \$15 million is to be distributed across the state of Nebraska. Approximately \$14.5 million is to be distributed to the six behavioral health regions. Region 3 will receive approximately \$2.5 million. DBH utilized the allocation formula which is based on population and poverty level to determine the amount each region will receive.

Beth explained that Region 3 is a provider within our Network because of the services we provide. We began to identify potential ways to retain our staff, improve engagement and continue to support employees. There were funds remaining within the Region 3 allocation so they were re-distributed to Network Providers.

b. Legislative Update

- LB 433 and Unfunded Rate Increases

Beth Baxter referred to a handout, *2023 Legislative Report June 23, 2023*. LB 433, which relates to flexibility, was introduced by Senator Mike Jacobson and co-signed by Senator Teresa Ibach. Over the last few years, DBH has reduced the behavioral health regions' flexibility making it difficult to fulfill our responsibilities of managing behavioral health services. Beth added that the DBH has started to provide some flexibility and there has been some movement on their part.

c. Region 3 Transition Process Final Report

Beth Baxter referred to a handout, *Regional Administrator Transition Process Final Report, Application of Change-Capable Leadership Principles, June 23, 2023*. The handout provides an overview of the process that has been in place since March 11, 2022. The process has been transparent and has worked well.

Beth shared that hiring our Regional Administrator within our organization was important to help maintain our culture and ultimately our results. Over 60% of the current staff have been employed at Region 3 for a minimum of 10 years.

Tiffany Gressley has been hired as the Region 3 Regional Administrator. She has been employed with Region 3 for 25 years. Beth Baxter has been with Region 3 for 34 years and is the second Regional Administrator at Region 3 since 1974. Tiffany will be the third Region 3 Regional Administrator.

d. Appointment of Tiffany Gressley as Regional Administrator

Beth Baxter requested that the Board formally approve the appointment of Tiffany Gressley as the Regional Administrator at Region 3 Behavioral Health Services, effective July 1, 2023.

Tiffany shared that she has spent her entire professional career at Region 3, starting as an intern in the spring 1998. Tiffany graduated from the University of Nebraska at Kearney with a Psychology major and a Family Studies minor. She later obtained a Master of Business Administration degree from Doane University.

Tiffany worked full-time at Region 3 in Prevention services working with schools, youth and drug-free youth groups. The position evolved over time and she transitioned to a community

position and acquired additional responsibilities, including system coordination and the development of the Region 3 training program.

Beth Baxter was Tiffany's supervisor for the majority of time. Tiffany shared that Beth has been a great leader, coach and mentor. Beth helped Tiffany develop professionally and provided many learning opportunities. Tiffany stated that Region 3 has an excellent team, knowledgeable and effective leadership and a supportive governing board.

Tiffany grew up in Kearney and resides in north of Kearney with her husband, son and daughter. She is looking forward to her role as Regional Administrator.

Motion made by Gary Quandt to approve the appointment of Tiffany Gressley as the Region 3 Behavioral Health Services Regional Administrator effective July 1, 2023, seconded by Bill Maendele, motion carried.

A roll call vote commenced:

Lee Hogan - Yes

Craig Thompson - Absent

Bill Maendele - Yes

Ivan Fintel - Excused

Tammy Kleeb - Yes

Joshua Johnson - Absent

Dennis Tegtman - Yes

Jerome Zulkoski - Yes

Jordan Foltz - Absent

Gary Quandt - Yes

Rich Nelson - Yes

Anthony Gulizia - Absent

Jessie Urbanski - Yes

Larry Landstom - Absent

Donna Steckel - Yes

Carolyn Kucera - Excused

Jerry Grove - Absent

Theresa Puls - Yes

Kenneth Kaslon - Yes

Helen Cullers - Absent

Trevor Karr - Yes

Travis Heinz - Absent

e. Region 3 Organizational Chart

i. Employee

Beth Baxter referred to a handout, *Region 3 Behavioral Health Services Organizational Position Chart*, which provides a visual communication tool for employees and other stakeholders that illustrates employee names, job titles and reporting relationships within the organization.

Beth noted that the Network Director position is new this year. It will help Region 3 to be more efficient as is designed to lessen some of the responsibilities of the Regional Administrator position.

Beth briefly explained the other Director positions which include a Youth Systems of Care Director, Emergency Systems Director, Information Technology Director, Fiscal Director and Operations Director.

ii. Functions

Beth Baxter referred to a handout, *Region 3 Behavioral Health Services Functional Organizational Chart*, which provides a visual communication tool for employees and other stakeholders that illustrates the functions within the organization. The Functional Organizational Chart is similar to the Organizational Chart but provides responsibilities and functions.

9. Quality Improvement Report

a. FY23 Region 3 Performance Measures 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report

Kayl Dahlke reviewed a handout, *FY 2023 Network Quality Improvement Plan: Performance Measurement and Reporting, 3rd Quarter Report Ending 3-31-23*. 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.

A question was asked about the Co-Responder Program. Kayl explained Lutheran Family Services provides Co-Responder services in Hall County and Buffalo County. A therapist is co-located with law enforcement and they respond together on all mental health related calls. Outcomes can reduce the amount of time that law enforcement spends with an individual which frees up law enforcement to handle other law enforcement responsibilities. Resources are provided to individuals to get them connected with appropriate services.

ValiData-Outcomes: Post-Discharge Tracking Project is a newly implemented service in which there is no data available at this time. Software glitches have slowed the process of the program.

b. FY2022 Annual Consumer Report

Kayl Dahlke referred to a handout, *Region 3 Adult Consumer Survey Comparison from FY18 to FY22*, which shows the results of the Region 3 Adult Consumer Survey for the last five years. The Division of Behavioral Health conducted the survey with consumers receiving mental health and/or substance use disorder services from the publicly funded, community based behavioral health system in Nebraska to assess the quality and impact of the services provided by measuring consumer response in seven domains. The seven domains included Access, Quality and Appropriateness, Outcomes, Participation in Treatment Planning, General Satisfaction, Functioning, and Social Connectedness. Details are provided for each domain on the handout. The survey received input from 184 adults receiving services through Region 3 Network Providers.

The Division of Behavioral Health conducts the survey and then Kayl compiles the information to compare data results from the past five years. The response numbers remained fairly steady in the past five years.

10. FY24 Alternative Compliance Request

- Families CARE, Inc.



Beth Baxter referred to a handout, *Alternative Compliance Ratification for Families CARE, Inc., Effective July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2026*. Region 3 on behalf of Families CARE, Inc., has requested a three-year Alternative Compliance effective July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2026 to waive the requirement of National Accreditation for the organization. Region 3 will utilize network accreditation processes to oversee the quality of service delivery by Families CARE, Inc. A requirement can be waived if it does not impact the safety of an individual.

Beth explained that Families CARE, Inc. is a fairly small organization receiving approximately \$32,500 annually from Region 3. The cost of going through a National Accreditation Survey is approximately \$10,000 - \$12,000. The Division of Behavioral Health has been agreeable to offer the Alternative Compliance to Families CARE, Inc.

Families CARE, Inc. received approval from the Interim Director of the Division of Behavioral Health for the three-year period of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2026.

Beth Baxter requested that the Regional Governing Board ratify the Approval of the FY24 Alternative Compliance Request.

Motion made by Theresa Puls to approve the Families Care, Inc. Alternative Compliance Request for Families CARE, Inc., effective July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2026, seconded by Donna Steckel, motion carried. A roll call vote commenced:

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

#### 11. Region 3 Opioid & Stimulant Summit

The Region 3 Opioid & Stimulant Summit took place June 14 – June 15, 2023 in Kearney. Tiffany Gressley shared that the Opioid Response Network (ORN) is a national, technical assistance center that is supporting the local and regional strategic planning activities across the country regarding opioid and stimulant misuse. Summit attendance included 36 people from various backgrounds including law enforcement, education, health care, community coalitions, network providers and a Region 3 governing board member, Rich Nelson. Three speakers provided information and insight regarding opioid and

stimulant misuse. One speaker shared information on evidence-based treatment strategies and the benefits of Medication Assisted Treatment. Another speaker addressed evidence-based programs and practices to prevent opioid and stimulant misuse. A third speaker shared his perspective on the importance of engaging individuals with lived experience and the value of Peer Support workers.

Summit attendees discussed evidence-based approaches and strategies identified in the state approved Exhibit E document for preventing, treating and recovery from opioid and stimulant misuse. Attendees worked in small groups to identify local needs and potential strategies to be considered for use in their communities. Attendees were invited to participate on a steering committee to help with guidance on the application process and the review of submitted applications. Many individuals agreed to be a part of the steering committee to help move the process forward. Tiffany will compile the identified needs and share the information with governing board members at the next meeting.

Rich Nelson agreed with Tiffany that the speakers were excellent and provided meaningful and relatable information. Each speaker brought a different perspective. Rich stated that he was impressed with the level of attendee participation. Great ideas were shared regarding ways to use the Opioid Settlement dollars. Suzanne Davis added that Region 3 took a proactive approach and contacted the Opioid Recovery Network which resulted in offering the Region 3 Opioid and Stimulant Summit.

Region 3 received the initial funding amount of \$1.1 million on June 13, 2023. The Brown Greer Group is responsible for management of the funds across the country. Region 3 is expected to receive a total amount of \$5-\$6 million over an estimated 18-year distribution process.

Tiffany shared that we want to be accountable for the opioid settlement funds that we receive and use them wisely to make a positive impact in communities.

12. Other Business

No Other Business was discussed.

13. Date of Next Meeting

August 25, 2023

9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Region 3 Behavioral Health Services

4009 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 65

Kearney, NE

Remaining 2023 Meeting Schedule

- October 27

14. Invitation to Beth Baxter's Retirement Celebration

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

June 30, 2023

Region 3 Behavioral Health Services

15. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.