

**State of Connecticut**  
**State Board of Mental Health and Addiction Services**  
**January 15, 2020**  
**Connecticut Valley Hospital**

**Present:** Chairman John Hamilton, Paul Acker, J. Craig Allen, Janice Andersen, Michael Askew, Michele Devine, Marcia DuFore, Kathy Flaherty, Alison Fulton, Ingrid Gillespie, Kathy Hanley, Jennifer Henry, Juan Hernandez, Pam Mautte, Manuel Paris, Larry Pittinger, Brian Reignier, Kevin Sevarino, Phil Valentine

**Excused:** Sharon Castelli, Bob Painter, Kate Travis

**DMHAS Staff:** Commissioner Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Deputy Commissioner Nancy Navarretta, Yvonne Addo, Cheri Bragg, Marilyn Duran, Marlene Jacques, Mary Kate Mason, Carol Meredith

**Agenda Item 1: Call to order and introductions**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 2:30 PM by John Hamilton. The Commissioner acknowledged the presence of stakeholder groups and special guests that attended the meeting and encouraged their full participation in the discussions.

**Agenda Item 2: Minutes of previous meeting review and action**

The minutes from the November 20, 2019 meeting was reviewed and accepted.

**Agenda Item 3: Commissioner's Update**

- Legislative Session – The state agencies legislative proposals are on the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) website. DMHAS has three proposals. 1) to change the patient bill of rights so that folks in WFH are able to be present during searches of their belongings, unless the search is for contraband; 2) to change some language so that DMHAS can share information amongst its facilities using an electronic health record; 3) to add people with lived experience to the WFH Advisory Board.

There will be a short legislative session this year that will start on February 5, 2020. There may be discussions and proposals related to banning flavored tobacco products used for vaping and legalizing marijuana.

- Budget – We do not know what the department's budget looks like yet. We will share that information as soon as the Governor's budget comes out within the next few weeks.
- Agency Response to Disability Rights Connecticut (DRCT) Report – The report which came out a little over a month ago on CVH/WFH had some inaccuracies in it. Commissioner Delphin-Rittmon wrote a formal response to DRCT addressing the issues and asked for a meeting to discuss the report and clarify additional components of the report.
- Census Planning – There is an opportunity for us to work and be involved in the 2020 census that is starting soon, potentially with our LMHAs and providers. The Lieutenant Governor is leading some of the work and a number of community groups have been formed related to this. The census impacts our funding and our seats in congress so it is important we count everyone. Stay tuned, we will hold a meeting to discuss ways we can be involved.

**Agenda Item 4: Vaping Video: How Juul Made Nicotine Go Viral, Presentation & Discussion**

Ingrid Gillespie started the discussion on the health complications due to vaping. The RBHAOs are at the forefront of this public health issue in terms of doing presentations or by supporting local efforts of other groups. A video on why Juul has become so prevalent was shown to the Board. Some actual vaping products

were shown to everyone. A state trooper/school resource officer and a student from a local High School spoke about students vaping in schools. In Connecticut around 23 or 24 percent of high schoolers have reported vaping past 30 day use and mostly containing THC. The students say they are using due to anxiety and stress. There was some discussion around why the younger folks are vaping and also about creating a curriculum for younger kids around vaping. Some folks do not agree with creating a curriculum for kids but to work on prevention instead, since it is mostly the adults who are using these products.

A parent of a student who was caught vaping talked about the ordeal and humiliation of it all. There are no resources for the students at a school level such as counseling. As a parent there was a need to treat him as a resource and not to punish him but to provide comfort instead. Each situation is unique and should be handled accordingly.

Connecticut's Vaping Resources Committee was established in March of 2019 and includes folks from DMHAs, DPH, RBHAOs, and other organizations. The committee has been gathering information to create a toolkit and to have available resources. For more information contact <https://preventiontrainingcenter.org>

Commissioner Delphin-Rittmon thanked everyone who participated and put together the panel discussion. She also stated that this was a really rich discussion that we should continue to have and revisit the ideas and recommendations that came up.

**Agenda Item 5: RBHAO and CAC follow-up and updates:**

- On January 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> in Regions 4 and 5, the Office of Health Strategy and a national expert on Black men and boys' health, Dr. Wizdom Powell, will hold a healthcare listening session to talk about access to primary care and behavioral health services.

**Agenda Item 6: General Updates and Announcements**

- On January 22<sup>nd</sup> the Opioid Response Network will hold a workshop at Beacon Health Options in Rocky Hill for DCF social workers.

**Agenda Item 7: Adjournment/next meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 P.M. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 19, 2020 beginning at 2:30 PM in room 217 of CVH, Page Hall.