



Executive Committee Meeting Notes

February 4, 2021

1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Paso del Norte Health Foundation

Via Zoom Virtual Platform

Attendees:

Marie Alvarez
Alexsandra Anello
Joel Bishop
Sharon Butterworth
Zulema Carrillo
Kristi Daugherty
Chrystal Davis
Cathy Gaytan
Juanita Galaviz
Annette Gutierrez
Emily Hartmann
Dr. Sarah Martin
Carlos Martinez
Enrique Mata
Dr. Paula Mitchell
Dr. Tewiana Norris
David Stout
Ivonne Tapia
Dr. Peter Thompson
Isidro Torres
Jeanette James
Tracy Yellen

Representing:

Rio Vista Behavioral Hospital
City Rep. District 2
County of El Paso
PdNHF - Mental Health Advocate
El Paso Psychiatric Center
Emergence Health Network
Emergence Health Network
El Paso Child Guidance Center
Paso del Norte Health Foundation
Council of Governments
PHIX (PDN Health Information Exchange)
Texas Tech Health Sciences Center PLFSOM
County Commissioner David Stout's Office
Paso del Norte Health Foundation
El Paso Community College
Emergence Health Network
County of El Paso
Aliviane
Texas Tech Health Sciences Center PLFSOM
NAMI El Paso
Cohen Veterans Network at Endeavors
Paso del Norte Health Foundation

Guests:

Nelson Jarrin
Lt. Colonel Etheridge
Major (Dr.) Chaffin
Colonel (Retired) Chris Lindner

Representing:

MMHPI VP of Government Affairs
WBAMC Chief of Behavioral Health
WBAMC Deputy Director Behavioral Health
MCA Senior Director of Healthcare Programs

Welcome, Introductions

Ms. Tracy Yellen convened the meeting of the El Paso Behavioral Health Consortium (EPBHC) at 1:30 p.m. She welcomed the guests from William Beaumont Army Medical Center and Medical Center of the Americas and asked for .

87th Legislative Session – Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI)

Ms. Yellen introduced Nelson Jarrin, JD, Vice President of Government Affairs for the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute. Mr. Jarrin provided an overview of the activity in the Texas 87th Legislative Session. His slides (include with these meeting notes) highlighted the conditions due to COVID 19, some early wins in 2021 including some continuation of 1115 Waiver support. He explained the importance of work to enhance the CPAN/TCHATT programs, workforce expansion, securing access through telehealth and support for Collaborative Care in Medicaid. Mr. Jarrin then responded to questions from the group.

Update to the Child Psychiatry Access Network (CPAN)/TCHATT El Paso

Dr. Sarah Martin and Dr. Peter Thompson provided updates on the CPAN/TCHATT programs. Dr. Martin expressed her appreciation to the consortium for the daily increase in referral calls from all over the area for CPAN. Highlights from the update include:

- A new partnership from Alpine
- Most referrals are coming from El Paso
- The Consortium relationships contributed to more school Districts joining TCHATT.
- EPISD and Canutillo ISD are considering starting up with alternative schools.
- EPPIC psychology interns will be supporting the program in February 2021.
- EHN has been a great resource for providing referrals.

Dr. Thompson commented on the success of a collaborative among EHN, Aliviane, Child Guidance Center and other El Paso nonprofits. These agencies have taken on fellows, residents, and interns to work in their organizations. Texas Tech received very positive feedback from psychiatry fellows and residents on their experiences working with these partner organizations.

El Paso Behavioral Health System Assessment 2020 update:

Mr. Mata provided a status report on the EPBHSA and asked that the group look at the preliminary report which would be on the website through February 5th. He explained that recommendations on the future El Paso Behavioral Health Consortium structure would be a part of the report. The report and any update materials can be found on the Consortium Web Pages at: www.healthypasodelnorte.org/epbhconsortium

Brief Council Updates

Ms. Yellen called on Leadership Council Chairs to provide progress highlights since the last Consortium Executive Committee Meeting. Mr. Mata mentioned that Leadership Council Meeting notes can also be found at:

www.healthypasodelnorte.org/epbhconsortium. He explained that items such as meeting notes, action plans and other materials for a specific Leadership Council can be found simply by clicking on each Leadership Council Logo. Progress highlights include:

JLC:

- Ms. Chrystal Davis commented that both the Reentry program and the Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) program are experiencing success in helping justice involved individuals with complex mental health and addiction needs.

- The City of El Paso Crisis Intervention Teams served over 3000 encounters in the last 10 months. Many of those cases were linked to mental health services. Approximately were 500 referred for inpatient care, 1575 diverted to hospitals, and 950 case follow ups were performed.

The group discussed the concerns with increasing need for crisis services. Ms. Davis commented that the County is now working to include 3 teams within the Sheriff's Office. El Paso now has 14 teams but that is not enough for 24/7 coverage. Conversations for right sizing of CIT are happening with the Chief of Police and at City Council. Representative Alexandra Annelo commented that the city staff have mentioned extension of CIT and improving the dispatch system within 911 by adding Emergence Health Network staff to call takers.

FLC:

- Ivonne Tapia and Cathy Gaytan provided progress highlights from the last FLC meeting. Mr. Manny Castruita, El Paso Independent School District Director of Counseling and Advising, And El Paso Area Directors of Guidance (EPaDOG) Chair. Presented on what EPaDOG members (Directors of Guidance from all 11 school districts) are experiencing. They are identifying serious needs related to the COVID 19 school closures and online access that external mental health service providers can help address. There is a great deal of fatigue and depression being identified in children. The number of children in CPS increased in recent months.
- Work Groups for Help Me Grow, Strong Families, and Community Collaborations are all meeting and moving their efforts forward.
- Dr. Sarah Martin thanked Ms. Marie Alvarez, COE Rio Vista Behavioral Hospital for her support of the CPAN/TCHAT project.

ILC:

Dr. Tewiana Norris commented that while the ILC group has not met lately, she and Mr. Mata will be scheduling time to discuss the next steps in convening the group in the near future on topics such as Collaborative Care.

Other Business

- Ms. Kristi Daugherty from EHN commented that their Podcast series “this is wellness with EHN” is now active. This project is a collaborative effort between EHN, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso, and The Meadows Foundation. Podcasts for residents were developed and provide a great list of topics that cover issues related to COVID needs. The goal is to address all aspects of our lives that make up our well-being. Season One includes 11 episodes related to COVID-19. The EHN mental health professionals will explore topics such as grief, parenting, patient care, the importance of self-care and financial wellness during times of uncertainty. For more information on these podcasts visit: <https://emergencehealthnetwork.org/ehn-podcast/>
- Mr Isidro Torres reported that the podcasts are a nice addition to the weekly wellness sessions they are holding collaboratively across the city. He explained that NAMI El Paso, EHN and Texas Tech HSC have wellness tents available for frontline

workers to relax before going back to work. The tents or meeting rooms also include mental health referrals for individuals identifying they need more support. Dr. Melanie Longhurst is leading these efforts.

- Ms. Yellen shared information on the \$1.7 mil in grants provided for promotoras to help register folks and provide other COVID 19 support to the Paso del Norte community.
- Ms. Emily Hartmann, PHIX, is providing support and tracking COVID testing data and registry for the El Paso County.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:39pm. The next meeting is scheduled for 1:30 pm, Thursday, May 6th, Via Zoom Virtual Platform.

MEADOWS
MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY INSTITUTE

**El Paso Behavioral Health Consortium:
The 87th Legislative Session**

Nelson Jarrin, JD | February 4, 2021

COVID-19 and Mental Health

COVID-19 has dramatically increased mental health needs.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) now tracks mental health needs weekly. As of late January:
 - Symptoms of anxiety disorder up 4-fold (35.8% vs 8.2%)
 - Symptoms of depression up 4-fold (28.4% vs 6.6%)
- The number of people seriously considering suicide doubled.
- Mid-March through October 2020, the proportion of mental health-related ED visits increased 24% among children aged 5–11 and 31% among adolescents aged 12–17.
- A November *Lancet* study found mental illness increases the risk of COVID 65% and COVID causes more mental illness.

Legislative Preview: Budget

The General Appropriation Act, aka “The Budget” is the only bill the Texas Legislature is constitutionally required to pass.

- **FY 2020-21 budget:**
 - July 2020: projected **\$4.58 billion** shortfall
 - January 2021: projected **\$946 million** shortfall
- **FY 2022-23 budget:**
 - **\$112.53 billion** in revenue projected for general purpose spending
 - *House (HB 1) and Senate (SB 1) base budgets spend **\$119.7 billion** in general revenue*
- **Economic Stabilization Fund: \$11.6 billion** projected balance at the end of FY 2022-23, absent any appropriations

Early Wins in 2021

Now, more than ever, we must protect the investments and work of the Texas Legislature and Texas communities.

- 1115 waiver extended through September 30, 2030
- HB 1 and SB 1 provide over \$8 billion for behavioral health, an increase over FY 2020-21 spending levels.
- Mental Health Grant Programs fully funded
 - Justice-Involved Individuals (\$60 million)
 - Texas Veterans + Family Alliance (\$20 million)
 - Community Mental Health (\$40 million)
 - Healthy Community Collaboratives (\$25 million)
- SB 1 provides an additional \$19.5 million to the Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium.

Continuing to Scale-Up the Consortium

The Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium is critical to early intervention and the wellness of Texas children.

- **Child Psychiatry Access Network (CPAN)** – saw a 62% increase in calls from providers in October 2020 and another 40% increase in calls in November 2020
- **Texas Child Health Access Through Telemedicine (TCHATT)** – working with 96 school districts with continued expansion and a steady increase in referrals
- **Workforce Expansion** – partnerships with **17 community mental health providers** are augmenting the delivery of public mental health services



tcmhcc

Securing Access Gains Through Telehealth

COVID-19 has modernized the treatment dynamic.

- Since March, HHSC has authorized certain behavioral health services to be reimbursed in Medicaid when delivered by telemedicine, telehealth, or telephone.

These waivers should be permanently adopted through HB 974/SB 412 or, at minimum, adopted for the biennium through a budget rider.

Claims for Telephone (Audio Only) Behavioral Health Services

Last updated on 3/20/2020

Note: Texas Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs) must provide all medically necessary, Medicaid-covered services to eligible clients. Administrative procedures such as prior authorization, pre-certification, referrals, and claims/encounter data filing may differ from traditional Medicaid (fee-for-service) and from MCO to MCO. Providers should contact the client's specific MCO for details.

To help ensure continuity of care during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) response, HHSC is authorizing providers to submit claims for dates of service March 20, 2020, through April 30, 2020, for reimbursement of the following behavioral health services delivered by telephone (audio only):

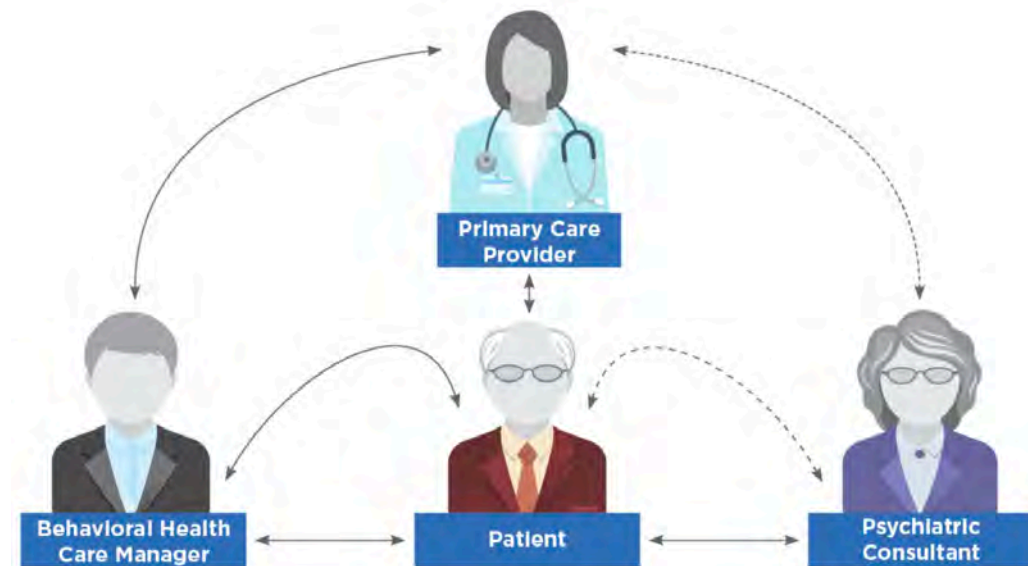
Description of Services	Procedure Codes
Psychiatric Diagnostic Evaluation	90791, 90792
Psychotherapy	90832, 90834, 90837, 90846, 90847, 90853
Peer Specialist Services	H0038
Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)	99408, G2011, H0049
Substance Use Disorder Services	H0001, H0004, H0005
Mental Health Rehabilitation	H0034, H2011, H2012, H2014, H2017

To indicate the occurrence of remote delivery, providers should continue to use the 95 modifier.

Implementing Collaborative Care in Medicaid

Collaborative Care (CoCM) is a proven, team-based approach to detect and treat mental illness in primary care.

- Coverage: Medicare since 2017, commercial since 2019
- Cost saver: *Up to 6 to 1 in total medical costs in Medicare and Medicaid settings and an estimated \$15 billion in Medicaid savings if only 20 percent of beneficiaries with depression receive it.*
- Our Texas models suggest universal access to CoCM to treat major depression could *reduce suicide deaths by 725 to 1,100 per year.*



MEADOWS
MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY INSTITUTE



THE HACKETT CENTER
FOR MENTAL HEALTH



The truth is: mental illness affects more people than you may think, and we need to talk about it. It's Okay to say..." okaytosay.org
