

DBHIDS Executive Directors' Meeting  
December 2, 2020  
-Session Notes and Chat Comments/Questions

**Office of the Acting Commissioner**

Dr. Jill Bowen opened the meeting at 9:30 AM, welcoming everyone and expressed her wish that everyone had a nice Thanksgiving despite the changes due to COVID.

- Introduced herself as the Acting Commissioner in light of David T. Jones' departure in October.
- 2020 was such a difficult year as the opioid crisis continued, COVID, and civil unrest -including the shooting death of Walter Wallace.
- Extraordinary effort across the city but also includes people in our provider network. The year saw many hardships and also Heroes.
- Dr. Faith Dyson-Washington joined us as the new CEO of Community Behavioral Health on October 12, 2020. Dr. Dyson-Washington is a very highly respected leader who is a Philadelphia native and has over twenty years clinical and administrative leadership experience.
- Kleckner Charles who goes by "Kleck" joined us as the new Director of IDS on November 1, 2020. Kleck brings decades of experience and service to the ID community.
- In 2021, the Executive Directors' Meeting will have a new start time of 9:00 AM.
- Dr. Bowen wanted to assure everyone that we ARE **essential services** even with the new restrictions.
  - All health and behavioral health programs/agencies are essential.
  - We did put out guidance on the current situation on November 18<sup>th</sup>.
- In the wake of the death of Walter Wallace, Jr. we put out a press release and began a blog in collaboration with Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) regarding plans going forward to address the concerns about such situations.
- BHJRS has been elevated to a separate division within DBHIDS -it becomes our 7<sup>th</sup> division. Dr. Jean Wright is the Director of BHJRS and will be speaking next this morning.

**Behavioral Health Justice Related Services (BHJRS)**

Dr. Jean Wright from BHJRS opened by saying there has been a lot of work going on with our criminal justice partners.

- Co responder plans. Currently Merakey is participating in this program.
  - We are adding a second shift.
- We will also have behavioral health specialists partnering with the police.
  - Currently there are four teams in the North, South areas.
  - We will be expanding this in January 2021.
- We are also working with the MacArthur Partnership Program which has 9-1-1 calls that do not need a police response, but rather have a clinician(s) and peer(s) go out.
- There is also a pilot program with a behavioral health professional in the radio room to gather data and give insight on types of crisis calls. We have developed a script of questions for 9-1-1 dispatchers to use to better help them with the response.
- Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for 9-1-1 dispatchers. This has been taking place in Philadelphia for 12 years. It will now include a full day training for dispatchers to enable them better understand and respond to mental health crisis situations.
  - The first training began on November 9<sup>th</sup> and by the end of year will have held 35 classes.
  - The goal is to help dispatchers have de-escalation tools and skills at hand as well as have better tools for the police and all first responders.

## Community Behavioral Health (CBH) Updates

Dr. Fatih Washington, Chief Executive Officer of CBH

- Health Management Associates is hosting its last training this month on Wednesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM. These trainings have been happening all year.
  - We would also like your feedback on the trainings.
- Our disparity lecture series will be continuing.
  - The next session is on December 15, 2020 from 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM.
  - Topic: Protest Psychosis: Race, Rebellion, and the Diagnosis of Schizophrenia with Dr. Jonathan Metzl, Director of the Center for Medicine, Health, and Society.
  - Feel free to contact Dr. Chris Tjoa, Chief Medical Officer of CBH with any questions ([chris.tjoa@phila.gov](mailto:chris.tjoa@phila.gov)).
- The APA is extended through the first quarter of 2021 -for both community and bed-based providers. There are forms to be completed if you are making changes.
- We do have the expectation that you will submit your expense reports as well as claims. Any questions, reach out to your Provider Relations Representative

Andy DeVos, Chief Program Officer, CBH

- Telehealth: with the APA continuing the telehealth will continue into 2021. Thus, things will continue as they have for at least the first quarter.
- OMHSAS and Mercer will be submitting their white paper on telehealth which includes discussion on disparities of care. It is not a complicated policy document.
- Continuity of Operations Program. Telehealth and APA are designed to keep things going. One thing we want to keep is your “front door access” capacity to take care of your clients. There is a lot of hurt and loneliness out there and people.
- We want to make sure we keep the communications open. If you are having any issues concerns please let us know through your provider relations representative.
- Also think of how you will provide in person care in the future. Keep in mind what the return to work and fee for service will look like in 2021.
  - We will continue to review this with you.
- There is guidance on congregate care:  
[https://www.phila.gov/media/20200729120204/vF\\_CongregateSettingChecklist\\_English\\_01.pdf](https://www.phila.gov/media/20200729120204/vF_CongregateSettingChecklist_English_01.pdf)
- Social Determinates of Health -this will be a huge area of focus for the Commonwealth and all our partner agencies. Keep this in mind.
  - From Andrew Devos to Everyone: 10:13 AM.
  - As mentioned, here is another helpful link from Phila Dept of Public Health:  
<https://www.phila.gov/media/20201118125433/Guidance-for-positive-test-1.pdf>

## Chief Medical Officer Updates

Dr. Sosunmolu Shoyinka opened by thanking everyone for joining us today.

- As Acting Commissioner Dr. Bowen noted we want to acknowledge that this is a uniquely challenging time for everyone. Thank you for all that you are doing to support our members.
- Crisis 2.0 System Improvements
- As most of the people on this call we aware, we have been working on re-imagining our crisis response system. The unfortunate shooting death of Mr. Wallace has brought new attention to the Philadelphia’s crisis system. Our work is not new, we have been working on re-imagining the crisis response model for many months.

- We plan to expand the care for anyone in Philadelphia who is having behavioral health crises to a capacity beyond merely the crisis centers. People do much better when they get services in their own community.
- Crisis care is available in some urgent care units and there is “short stay” vs. hospitalization, plus our mobile teams. We are looking to weave all of these programs together including real time data for an expanded care continuum.
- There will be a request for information (RFI) for your input and information sessions hosted.
- There is also significant amount of work with the CRC units/partners with the program.
- We are also looking for a standardized assessment program.
- The plan includes looking to bring the wait time down to max of 2 hours from the average of 6 hours.

### **Planning Innovation Updates**

Deputy Commissioner Roland Lamb began by noting that the Executive Management Team of DBHIDS is really grateful for all of you and hoping you are safe and well.

- We are going through a rough time right now, and need to make sure our clients are getting the care they need.
- “Stay connected and not get infected!”
- 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Serve the Community events on Saturday, December 5, 2020 at two locations (Kensington and Germantown). They will be giving away masks, gloves, hand sanitizers.
- Mural Arts Program is hosting introductory Spanish Classes for direct service providers.
  - They are going on via Zoom on Thursdays, from November 25<sup>th</sup> through December 21<sup>st</sup> from 4:30 PM – 6:30 PM.
  - Free of charge and open to everyone.
- Virtually Free a video/movie created by Andre Robert Lee a Philadelphian which is about youth in the Criminal Justice System. DBHIDS will show it several times between January 3<sup>rd</sup> and February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. This will help us to better do things and more appropriate engagement.
  - There will community inputs as well.
- The trailer ([Click Here](#)) was played for the meeting and Roland expressed the hope that many of you will watch the full movie and participate in the sessions.
  - More details on the schedule will be forthcoming.
- Dr. Bowen remarked that the movie it is really impactful.

### **Dr. Jill Bowen’s Closing Remarks**

- Highlighting our vision for 2021; we are looking at Tech-Trauma-Equity- Community. We are all aware of how difficult a year it has been. Even as the numbers go up and restrictions continue or become enhanced; with these long periods of anxiety there is a great impact. Many layers of trauma from the Opioid Epidemic, COVID, Unrest, Shooting deaths on the rise.
- The restrictions of Philadelphia are to take us through the Christmas/Chanukah/New Year’s season. People will be struggling how to celebrate the holidays.
  - Many people are doing creative things to celebrate the holidays in light of the restrictions.
- We want to highlight the crisis work of Dr. Shoyinka and his team and we need to take care of ourselves and our clients.
- Encouraging everyone to keep sharing the importance of physical distancing but the need also for emotional connected.
- We will get through this together.

### **Questions and Answers**

Dr. Bowen opened the meeting for questions.

From Gregg Slocum to Everyone: 10:15 AM

I understand that the COVID site in Philadelphia is scheduled to close at the end of the year? Do you have any more information or updates?

- Dr. Bowen, if you are mentioning the Covid prevention spaces or those who are most vulnerable. This was funded through the end of the year. The spaces will be closing and funding. Alternate spaces will be identified for those still in those spaces.
- The City Quarantines sites will remain open.

Dr. Bowen asked the participants, how are you doing, how are you helping you staffing?

Diane J. Abatemarco of Mater. We have a program at Mater where we hold a weekly mindfulness program with about a third of our staff drop in with some meditation and sharing what is on the mind of the staff. We then use that qualitative information to make changes. We also to provide mental health days for staff as we are linked with Jefferson

From Betty Andl-Petkov -PATH to Everyone: 10:20 AM

The biggest challenge is hiring staff for residential programs as private businesses have raised starting salaries so we are not competitive.

From Jeff Wilush to Everyone: 10:20 AM

is there any update regarding DBH support to the provider community from the City CARES ACT funding?

- Dr. Bowen noting financing under the Cares Act is still under review.

From John Muehsam to Everyone: 10:20 AM

Our staff are having a very hard time with the isolation. Many of our folks appreciate the fact that the intangible benefit of working in our programs is the social connection it gives. We are making every effort to have frequent virtual contact and occasional virtual social gatherings, but many are struggling that screen time is not the same as face time. It is a key "countertransference" moment because many of our staff are struggling with precisely the same things our clients are struggling with.

From ddinich to Everyone: 10:20 AM

We are part of a series of support group for doctors, nurses, and teachers that will be starting next week. Flyers available later this week. This is an effort of 2 medical societies, Springfield Psychology, and the PPLC.

From Antonio Valdes to Everyone: 10:21 AM

Good morning, Do we have any update as to where provider staff will fall in the access to vaccine prioritization?

- Regarding vaccine prioritization, we do not know the exact timeline. Should be available by end of year and will be prioritized for those providing care in nursing homes, hospitals -those who are caring for those who are COVID positive.
- We will share updates as we get them.

From Paul Sachs to Everyone: 10:22 AM

We are enhancing supervision with therapists to focus on boundaries. We see that therapists are finding it difficult to handle the pandemic related anxiety among consumers when it triggers and overlaps with their own anxiety. Mindfulness is helpful. But direct conversations addressing the challenge and advising how to find a middle ground between disclosure and therapeutic distance are appreciated by therapists.

- Paul Sachs also noted how employees have been sharing that the protective measures (masks etc. do work citing those employees who have been caring for folks who are COVID positive and have not contracted the disease. The protections work.

From LJ Rasi to Everyone: 10:24 AM

Our staff is trying their best but getting burnt out with the duration of this crisis. We are short-staffed with early retirements, people choosing other jobs, etc, and it sounds like other providers are too. This is at a time where there is relatively high unemployment. Could CBH or the City host a virtual job fair for careers in healthcare? This could be a win-win for the provider network and city residents.

From Woody Rosenbach to Everyone: 10:25 AM

Building on Tony's question, will CBH requiring (recommending?) vaccinations for staff, consumers?

- From Faith Dyson-Washington to Everyone: 10:27 AM.
  - CBH has not made any determinations about vaccinations. We will be following the lead of the Health Commissioner and any state guidance as we move forward.

From Dyann Roth to Everyone: 10:25 AM

Do any providers offer supports to other provider organizations for employee anxiety/burnout/stress? Our frontline staff in skilled nursing facility are struggling mightily, and we have inadequate supports for them. I would like recommendations.

Dr. Bowen closed the meeting at 10:28 AM, saying:

- Please stay emotionally connected as much as possible even while distancing.
- Wish everyone a health holiday seasons and bring as much joy as you can with creative ways to be close while we are socially distancing.
- All our best to you and thank you for attending.

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General Chat Comments

From George Hanson to Everyone: 09:40 AM

Congratulations Dr. Wright and BHJRS - our new DBHIDS Division.

From Larry Real to Everyone: 09:45 AM

Indeed, these focused initiatives and impressive action steps are essential in meeting the behavioral health and social justice needs of the community. Congratulations to Dr. Wright and his talented and dedicated team

From Ivan Haskell to Everyone: 09:45 AM

Congrats Dr. Wright! Excited to see these new initiatives. Will you be making a summary available once these things are up and running so we can make our staff aware?

From Jean Wright to Everyone: 09:47 AM

Thanks Dr. Real! Yes, Ivan we will definitely keep you updated and apprised of progress toward implementation of these initiatives. Thank you.

From Ivan Haskell to Everyone: 09:48 AM

Thanks!

From dcurry to Everyone: 09:48 AM

Good morning - Congratulations Dr. Wright. It's great to hear more about a few of the initiatives. Can you share which districts the CIT trained officers are located in? Thank you

From Jean Wright to Everyone: 09:50 AM

Thanks Dawn. CIT officers are deployed across the city: North, South, East, and West. We can certainly provide information regarding specific Districts. Email me at: [jean.wright@phila.gov](mailto:jean.wright@phila.gov)

From dcurry to Everyone: 09:51 AM

Excellent! Thank you again. I will email you.

From Andrew Devos to Everyone: 09:54 AM

[https://www.phila.gov/media/20200729120204/vF\\_CongregateSettingChecklist\\_English\\_01.pdf](https://www.phila.gov/media/20200729120204/vF_CongregateSettingChecklist_English_01.pdf)

From Regan Kelly to Everyone: 10:04 AM

Can you share these flyers in an e-mail?

Roland noted that the information will go out after the meeting.

In response to the preview for the movie "Virtually Fee."

From Diane J. Abatemarco to Everyone: 10:06 AM

Thanks so much for sharing...looking forward to seeing it

From dcurry to Everyone: 10:17 AM

Wonderful Indeed! Thank you, Roland. I am looking forward to seeing the screening and will encourage others to view it as well. Great Work.

Meeting notes prepared by Jay Peterson