

**Luzerne/Wyoming Counties Drug and Alcohol Program
Virtual Executive Commission**

March 24, 2021

The Luzerne/Wyoming Counties Drug & Alcohol Executive Commission Meeting took place on Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

Participants:

Ryan Hogan, Jill Sprau, Pamela Coveleski, Marie Baratta – SCA

John Alunni – OHS

Dr. Charles Blewitt – Executive Commission Chair

Rev. Lou Divis – Executive Commission Secretary

Nick Wilson, Eric Bieski, John McCarthy, Bruce Lefkowitz, Ian Urbanski – Executive Commission

Rachael Wydra – NEPA DOH

Welcome and Review of Minutes: Dr. Blewitt welcomed our newest member Mr. Bruce Lefkowitz, and the current Executive Commission members introduced themselves. Mr. Lefkowitz introduced himself noting that he is a Pharmacist, and owner of Harold's Pharmacy. Mr. Lefkowitz explained his desire to join the Drug & Alcohol Executive Commission Board while also explaining his experience working with individuals who struggle with substance use disorders. Dr. Blewitt asked the Commission to review the minutes of February 24, 2021. *The 1st Motion to approve the minutes was made by Reverend Divis, the 2nd Motion was made by Mr. Bieski. Motion carried.*

Administrator's Report: Mr. Hogan confirmed that our SCA received its SAF from DDAP for the State Opioid Response (SOR) Housing Program on Monday, February 22, 2021. The SOR breakdown for housing funding is \$996,740.00. The SOR Housing Focused Case Management Services funding is \$427,110.00. Mr. Hogan confirmed that the SCA sent the contract to the Commission on Economic Opportunity for signature. CEO has requested some minor changes which have already been approved by the SCA and should not delay implementation any longer.

Mr. Hogan, and Mr. Gagliardi continued working on the 2021 Treatment Needs Assessment for the duration of the 5-year Grant Agreement for 2020 through 2025. DDAP gave the SCAs until April 2, 2021 (60 days) to complete the Treatment Needs Assessment. Most SCAs across the state are requesting extensions for submission. Our SCA is still on schedule to submit on time for April 2, 2021.

Mr. Hogan, and Mr. Gagliardi have started the 2021 Annual SCA Provider Monitoring Reviews. The completed SCA Monitoring reviews include a Better Today (3 locations), Children's Service Center's Outpatient Programs (3 locations), Clem Mar House for Men & Women, Graniteville House of Recovery, Choices Outpatient Program and Choices Recovery Program. No major concerning issues were found during the reviews. No Fraud, Waste or Abuse concerns reported. The Provider Monitoring Reviews should last through April, possibly into May 2021.

Mr. Hogan discussed HSDF Block Grant Dollars and the return of approximately \$240, 000.00 to Luzerne County OHS for possible re-allocation and re-distribution of funds. The Luzerne/Wyoming SCA has struggled to draw down inpatient residential funds due to the pandemic and the push for outpatient and MAT Services. As a result, the SCA and Office of Human Services are discussing new proposals to draw down those dollars, including the purchase of Narcan, Outpatient Cost-Sharing Programs, Rate increases, etc.

Mr. Hogan discussed the Warm-Hand Off Program updates for Tyler Memorial Hospital confirming that they now have a Contract with the SCA/Trehab/Wyoming County O.H.S. to provide CRS staff in the ER. Mr. Hogan reviewed that Wilkes-Barre General Hospital, Lehigh Valley Hospital-Hazleton and Geisinger Hospitals' Warm-Hand Off are established.

Mr. Hogan continues to implement, monitor, and augment the Warm Hand-Off policies and procedures in Luzerne and Wyoming Counties. Ambulatory Withdrawal Management using Medication Assisted Treatment is being explored as an option for up to 15 days with medication with bridge-funding from the SCA.

Mr. Hogan confirmed that the XYZ Inpatient Rate Package submissions update were submitted on time, and only two Providers had requested an extension for submission. The Rate Settings for Residential will take place with the NE Regional SCA's on March 26, 2021.

Mr. Hogan discussed the CPR Web Program that will go live on April 1, 2021.

He submitted the monthly Division Report to County Council, as well as the monthly SOR Report to DDAP. *A motion was made to approve the Administrator's Report by Mr. McCarthy, second Motion was by Dr. Blewitt. Motion carried.*

Case Management Report: Mr. Sprau reviewed that the CM Unit staff are working on a rotating schedule with two to three individuals in-person, and the others working remotely. She confirmed that all Telehealth level of care assessments are being completed timely and efficiently. Ms. Sprau completed the monthly DDAP Warm-Hand-Off Report for February and attended the Drug Court Graduation. Ms. Sprau continues to complete updates on GPRA, and holds Virtual CM Unit Staff Team meetings on a bi-weekly basis that helps everyone work effectively. She confirmed that 75 Assessments were scheduled and of those 53 were completed this past month. Emergency placements were lower than the previous month at 23 placements. Ms. Sprau confirmed that our Courts/Probation/Attorneys are sending many more referrals over the past 24 days since the Luzerne County Courts opened up again earlier this month. Ms. Sprau reviewed that Work Force Project Knowledge is being shared with the CM Unit. PA WITS Updated their System and have made very good changes for improved reporting for each Provider. *A motion was made to approve the Administrator's Report by Mr. McCarthy, second Motion was by Mr. Bieski. Motion carried.*

Fiscal Report: Ms. Coveleski reviewed the cash disbursements report for February that were within normal operative costs and procedures. Ms. Coveleski sent out all Provider Contracts and many Contracts have been signed, and returned to her. *A motion was made to approve the Report by Rev. Divis, second Motion was by Mr. Urbanski. Motion carried.*

Prevention Report: Mr. Hogan reviewed the February 9, 2021 Virtual Quarterly Prevention Meeting. He confirmed that Children's Service Center, Pathway-to-Recovery, and WVADS are all receiving their required Compliance Reports each month.

Mr. Hogan reviewed that March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month. He asked that Prevention Staff disseminate Gambling Prevention Awareness materials to our communities, workplaces, and schools.

Our SCA will begin Prevention Services/Program Planning for FY 21/22 in April/May for 2021.

REMARK Pre-Post Testing Software through Gravic, Inc. will be purchased using the additional SOR Funding that has been approved. Pre-Post Testing is a new mandate through the 2020-2025 DDAP Grant Agreement.

Narcan Kit Efforts: Mr. Hogan reviewed the Centralized Coordinating Entity in Luzerne County, and the disbursement of Narcan to non-profit service Providers that is being done through the District Attorney Office/Drug Task Force with Mr. James Noone.

Mr. Hogan discussed the SCA Narcan Kit purchase and distribution efforts and confirmed that we received funds that will allow the SCA to purchase Narcan Kits. The SCA has offered to assist Narcan distribution efforts to community outreach organizations through its prevention providers. Mr. Hogan and Ms. Wydra-NEPA DOH discussed her efforts in offering Narcan trainings twice a day, six days a week in our local communities. *A motion was made to approve the Report by Mr. Wilson, second Motion was by Mr. McCarthy. Motion carried.*

Gambling Prevention: Mr. Hogan reviewed that March is Gambling Awareness Month. DDAP Gambling Fund Allocations will be limited across the state due to low gambling revenue from casinos and other state gambling entities from the Covid-19 impact that caused shutdowns of casinos. The Commission discussed the current trend of prominent television/electronic device advertisements/commercials for On-Line Gambling. Mr. Hogan reviewed that the Committee discussed Gambling tax dollars that produce revenue, and if those tax dollars would be available to offer Gambling Prevention Services. Mr. Hogan confirmed that he reached out to DDAP to discuss this and they confirmed that the On-Line Gambling are not raising revenue as they are located on non-taxable offshore islands.

The Commission discussed Medical marijuana and asked if there may be revenue from this. Mr. Hogan noted that he believes individuals are required to pay a tax, and this revenue can be utilized by our SCA for Prevention Services. *A motion was made to approve the Report by Mr. Bieski, second Motion was by Mr. Lefkowitz. Motion carried.*

OHS Report: Mr. Alunni discussed an in-depth Data Analysis with the State Round Table regarding The Drug & Alcohol Program, and Child Welfare. A Drug & Alcohol Program Case Management Specialist will be integrated into the Child Welfare Program located in our Children & Youth Services Office starting in May 2021. They will be acclimated with terminology, and cases over time to learn, and help the families we serve. Intervention through the Implementation stage will take place with Judge Rogers, the District Attorney's Office, Probation Services, Juvenile Justice Court, and a Wellness Program. Juvenile charges may be expunged after one (1) year when protocol is met. The Treatment component will be changed if relapse is noted, to offer further treatment assistance to the individual. *A motion was made to approve the Report by Mr. Bieski, second Motion was by Dr. Blewitt. Motion carried.*

Provider Report: Mr. Hogan confirmed that Ms. Simpkins has stepped down from her role a Provider Representative, which she has held since January of 2018. He noted that Ms. Simpkins relayed her thanks to the Executive Commission for their support during the many years she was the Provider Representative. Mr. Hogan will discuss this open Provider Representative position in the upcoming Provider Meeting in April. *A motion was made to approve the Report by Reverend Divis, second Motion was by Mr. McCarthy. Motion carried.*

Executive Commission Nominating Committee: Mr. Hogan confirmed that Luzerne Counties Executive Commission Compliment is at full capacity. The application process for a Luzerne County resident volunteer application, and interview process with the ABC Committee is found on the Luzerne County Website under Advisory Boards and Commissions. We are hoping to have a candidate for the Wyoming County Student Representative position in the near future. The Wyoming County individual will send a resume' for approval to the Wyoming County Commissioners. *A motion was made to approve the Report by Reverend Divis, second Motion was by Mr. Bieski. Motion carried.*

Administrative Program Committee: No Updates. The Administrative Program Committee is at full complement with Dr. Blewitt-Chair, Mr. Dziak-Vice-Chair, and Reverend Divis-Secretary. The Administrative Program Committee meet quarterly on Feb. 24, May 26, August 25, and November 17, 2021 at 2:15 p.m.

By-Laws: No updates. The 2018 and 2020 By-Laws will be reviewed and approved by the ABC Committee in the near future. The By-Laws will be reviewed on a bi-yearly basis in the 1st quarter of Calendar Year 2022.

Next Meeting: The next Executive Commission Meeting is scheduled to take place with Microsoft Office Teams on Wednesday, April 28, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Marie Baratta, Administrative Assistant
Reviewed and approved by: Ryan Hogan, Administrator