



SunCoast Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration

February 18, 11:00a.m.

The Department of Children and Families, 9393 N Florida Blvd. Tampa FL 33612

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Agency for Health Care Administration – Kirk Hall, **Department of Children and Families** – Asta Trinh, Melissa Leslie, Jason Reak, Madison Behling, Josue Vega Morales, Elida Mujc, Beth Pasek, Jennifer Howell, Ben Shirley, Roseanna Broderick, Kelly Kelley, **Agency for Persons with Disabilities** – Bryan Clark, **Florida Department of Health** – Ulyee Choe, Katherine Metscher, Laura Carson, Christie Sparks, **Florida Department of Education** – Charlene Grecsek, **Sarasota County Schools** – Karen Stull, Dawn Clayton, Markee Teal, **Desoto County Schools** – Amy Bennett **Pinellas County Schools** – Betsy Roller, **Pinellas County Schools** – Donna Sicilian, **Lee County Schools** – Lori Brooks, Sherry Wenzel, **Manatee County School District** – Lisa Lyon, **Area Agency on Aging** – Christine Didion, **Children’s Network of Southwest Florida** – Michelle Cooper, **Safe Children Coalition** – Amanda Bryan, **Children’s Network of Hillsborough** – Shelby Varela, **Family Support Services SunCoast** – Adrianna Gianino, **Central Florida Behavioral Health Network** – Alan Davidson, Lizette Tabares, **Crisis Center of Tampa Bay** – Katie Androff, **BayCare Health System** – Gail Ryder, Samuel Picard, **Agency for Community Treatment Services** – Asha Pereyra, **Newport Healthcare** – Tori Silvers, **Directions for Living** – Doug Brunn, Christina Garaway, **Eleos** – Nikki Rupert, **Gulf Coast JFCS** – Nicole Guincho, **Suncoast center** – Jean Pierre, **Gracepoint** – Molly Beattie, **Operation PAR** – Jim Miller, **Tampa General Hospital** – Doug Leonardo, **Lakeland Regional Health** – Nicole Sweat, **BayCare Northside Behavioral** – Kristy Hust, **HCA Florida Largo West Hospital** – Daniel Crumwell, Brittany Miyawa, **Charlotte Behavioral Health Center** – Vickie Scanlon, **Sandypines UHS** – Aida Bronowska, **Centerstone** – Roger Johnson, Lisa Williams, **Optum** – Chris Spall, Tara Bryant, **Sunshine Health** – Carole Matyas, Felicia Thomas, **Humana** – Alicia Olivieri, **Tampa Police Department** – Jessica Martin, Nicole Delarosa, Erik Sheftal, **Naples Police Department** – Jeff Perry, **Sarasota County Schools Police Department** – Mary Thorman, Derek McCarron, **New Port Richey Police Department** – Ryan Warner, **Collier County Sheriff’s Office** – Leslie Weldenhammer, **Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office** – Sheriff Claudio Dimundo, Nicole Rossodivita, **Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office** – Scott Carr, **Manatee County Sheriff’s Office** – Mark Morie, **Lee County Sheriff’s Office** – Andrew Clark, **Sarasota County Sheriff’s Office** – Arlene Tracy, **Department of Juvenile Justice** – Jarrett Ballo, Alison Fulrord, William Gurney, **6th Circuit Courts** – Michele Emmerman, **Juvenile Welfare Board** – Beth Houghton, Becca Tieder, **NAMI** – Demetroc Watkins, Beth Hatch, Sarah Miller, Jessica Kushner, **Smartremitt** - Annie Soh, **Recovery Epicenter Foundation** – Darryl Henderson, **Hillsborough Recovery Coalition** – Monica Gonzalez, **Polk for Recovery** – Craig Pickos, **University of South Florida** – Annette Christy, **Statewide RCO** – Susan Nyamora, **Lightshare Wellness** – Shawny Robey, **Charlotte Behavioral Healthcare** – Amy Hood, **American Addiction Centers** – Karen McGinnis



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I. CALL TO ORDER

Jason Reak called to order the SunCoast Regional behavioral health interagency Collaboration at 11:02 a.m. on February 18th, 2025.

II. Welcome and introductions.

Melissa Leslie, SunCoast Regional Director with The Department of Children and Families Substance Abuse and Mental Health (SAMH) welcomed the attendees and invited the following individuals with DCF to provide introductions:

Jason Reak, SunCoast Regional Collaboration Coordinator with The Department of Children and Families, SAMH

Asta Trinh, Director of Regional Operations and Initiative with The Department of Children and Families, SAMH

Madison Behling, Human Services Program Director with The Department of Children and Families, SAMH

Kirk Hall, Government Analyst with The Agency for Health Care Administration.

III.

Overview of Regional Collaboration Coordinator Position/Role/Objectives/Vision by Jason Reak provided an overview of the RCC role and background into the Commission on Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder January 1st 2024 report that recommended regional collaboratives to strengthen community networks and cross-agency collaboration. House Bill 7021 section 394.90826, Florida Statutes established Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboratives throughout the state in support of the Commission's recommendation in order to address local level challenges and improve the accessibility, availability and quality of behavioral health services.



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IV. IMPACT OF REGIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Melissa Leslie, provided an overview on the impact of the Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboratives and the importance of sharing and collaborating on Gap Analysis among agencies. Melissa Leslie shared that The Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaborative will meet regularly with quarterly meetings and complete an annual report to be presented to the Florida Legislature. The Collaborative contained required members as part of Chapter 394, F.S. as well as appropriations for the Regional Collaboration Coordinator position. These Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboratives “Kick Off” Meetings are occurring throughout the State for the month of February 2025.

V. MANAGING ENTITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Lizette Tabares - Vice President of Behavioral Health Services · Central Florida Behavioral Health Network (CFBHN) presented on the Managing Entities needs assessment.

CFBHN provided an overview of information:

CFBHN is required to complete a needs assessment every three years as outlined in the contract with the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

The needs assessment collects data to assess the needs and gaps for adults and children for both mental health and substance use, along with the priorities and goals, and the integration priorities.

The needs assessment helps inform CFBHN, DCF, and other stakeholders of the service needs and gaps, goals to focus on and initiatives to undertake over the next three years.

The information from the assessment will drive the work of the network staff and will be integrated into the CFBHN Strategic Plan, Enhancement Plan, and Community Plans.

Consistent findings include need for flexibility of funding, access to care, affordable/accessible housing.

VI. REVIEW OF FOUR KEY AREAS

Jason Reak provided an overview on the 4 key areas.

1. Strengthening Community networks and gross agency collaboration.
 2. Enhancing Crisis Care Continuum.
 3. Improving Data Collection and Management Processes.
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4. Optimizing the financial management of the Behavioral Health system of care
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VII. OPEN DISCUSSION

Attendees were asked to provide responses to the below questions.

1. Tell us about your organization GAP Analysis process and if it is public facing.
2. What other Collaboratives or Workgroups are you attending, and items being addressed.
3. What are opportunities for improvement?

Attendees discussed a capacity assessment, not necessarily a needs assessment and looking at the capacity needs with more of a focus on individual perspective rather than a system perspective. Below are key themes facing the SunCoast Region as shared during today's meeting by those that attended:

Housing – Attendees discussed the lack of availability of affordable housing.

Staffing – Attendees discussed current and future staffing shortages and how this is impacting the region.

Tampa General Hospital - Doug Leonardo - Waitlists – Waitlists can be a critical tool in identifying population needs in the region.

Respite – Attendees discussed for youth and adults as we are limited in options for caregivers to have any breaks and this may help sustain placements.

Charlotte Behavioral Healthcare - Vickie Scanlon - Assisted Outpatient treatment and working with the public defender - This is a level of treatment that can assist from transition from the CSU.

Charlotte Behavioral Healthcare - Amy Hood - Placement for elder with Bx. health Dx and housing options – Lack of placement for the elderly.

Flexibility to use funds – Attendees discussed increasing the flexibility of funding, breaking down funding silos.



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Early Dx. For 18 y/o for Agency of Persons with Disabilities - For adults to have benefits and supports through APD they must be Dx. with autism, and development delays and other qualified Dx. Before they turn 18 y/o for the Agency of Persons with Disabilities.

Florida Department of Children and Families - Kelly Kelley - Guardians for incompetent adults - Adults with limited capacity needs a guardian to sign off on documents if they qualify (think about elderly and SPMI). At times they are limited to find.

Charlotte Behavioral Healthcare - Amy Hood - Hurricane response and CCP – As health care providers work to navigate their response after a major storm, there are challenges to those efforts in meeting the needs of local constituents along with balancing the recovery response of staff trying to recovery from major storms in their personal lives.

American Addiction - Karen McGinnis- Peer support – Expanding the valuable insights into the behavioral health system to identify areas where current services are lacking and leading to a more comprehensive understanding of gaps in care via the lived experience of the peer specialist. Increased wages in order to keep qualified individuals for better outcomes.

American Addiction - Karen McGinnis - Medicaid billing – Would allow patients to have longer treatment stays as opposed to 30 days which is too soon in order to improve the quality of behavioral health care outcomes, reduce readmissions and leading to significant cost savings due to greater sustained long-term outcomes.

Operation PAR - Jim Miller - Circuit level collaboration – To better identify the needs to then funnel into the regional meeting. Such as I have 4 circuits and therefore 4workgroups to have focus and intentionality.

VIII. MEETING FREQUENCY/NEXT STEPS

Melissa Leslie provided next meeting date May 29th, 2025 and that the meeting will be in person at a more central location for greater convenience of attendees. Asta Trinh discussed future quarterly Collaborative Meetings to include Agency specific presentations. Survey development to gather information on potential presenters.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

An opportunity was provided for public comment.

No public comment



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X. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Asta Trinh and Melissa Leslie provided closing remarks thanking the group for attending. Jason adjourned the SunCoast Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration at 12:27 P.M.
