



# **NORTH COUNTRY**

## **COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH**

### **MINUTES OF THE BOARD**

**December 21, 2023, 2:30 PM**

**North Country Community Mental Health  
1420 Plaza Drive, Petoskey, Board Room**

### **BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING:**

Caroline Loper, Michael Newman, Jarris Rubingh, Dana Wingo, David White, Annemarie Conway, Karla Sherman, Edward Ginop, Robert Boyd, Edward Belitz

**MEMBERS ATTENDING VIRTUALLY:** Gary Knapp

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ron Iseler, Dana Wingo,

**STAFF:** Brian Babbitt, Nancy Rhue, Tim Stapp Jr., Amy Christie, Ann Friend, Dominique Cook, Laura Brunmeier (virtual), Michael Wolf, Lauren Doherty (virtual)

**GUESTS:** Tina Belitz

Mr. Ginop called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM

### **ROLL CALL**

Mr. Ginop welcomed Board members and staff to the meeting. There is a quorum present.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** No board members expressed a conflict with any agenda item.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The consent agenda includes the agenda overview, minutes of the previous meeting, privileging recommendations and contracts signed in the past month. Items requiring approval will be placed on the meeting agenda.

**MOTION BY ROBERT BOYD TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA; SUPPORT BY KARLA SHERMAN**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

### **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – BOARD ACTION\***

**Recipient Rights Advisory Council Minutes:** Mr. Babbitt reviewed the minutes of the December 9 RRAC meeting.

**Finance Committee Report:** Mr. White reviewed the Statement of Cash on Deposit and Disbursements through November 2023; Interim Financial Statements as of October 31, 2023 Revenue and Expense by Fund Source; Trending Revenue and Expenses as of October 31, 2023, and a proposal for a wage study.

**MOTION BY DAVID WHITE TO APPROVE THE WAGE STUDY BY MUNICIPAL CONSULTING SERVICES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$43,050.00 (FORTY-THREE THOUSAND FIFTY DOLLARS; SUPPORT BY KARLA SHERMAN:**

**ROLL CALL:**

**AYE: DAVID WHITE, CAROLINE LOPER, EDWARD BELITZ, ANNEMARIE CONWAY, MICHAEL NEWMAN, ROBERT BOYD, KARLA SHERMAN, EDWARD GINOP**

**NAY: JARRIS RUBINGH**

**NOT VOTING: GARY KNAPP**

**ABSENT: RON ISELER, DANA WINGO**

**MOTION CARRIES**

Mr. Ginop requested the financial reports be placed on file for audit.

**PRESENTATION – Recipient Rights Annual Report – Michael Wolf** – Mr. Wolf presented the FY23 Office of Recipient Rights (ORR) annual report. The ORR functions include complaint resolution, monitoring, education, and consultation with complaint resolution, the most prominent part of daily operations. Through FY23 the ORR received 138 complaints containing 170 allegations. They completed 152 investigations and 6 interventions along with 5 No Right Involved (NRI) and 7 Out of Jurisdiction (OJ). This resulted in 89 of the investigations/interventions being substantiated. For each complaint there may be multiple allegations. FY23 saw complaints rise from 136 in FY22 to 138, allegations dropped from 179 to 170, and substantiations dropped from 125 to 89. Staff remains the top source of reporting ORR complaints, compared to FY22 the numbers related to complaint sources are nearly identical. There were 30 Abuse Allegations spread across all 3 classifications with 9 substantiated, 26 Neglect allegations spread across all 3 classifications with 15 substantiated. The top categories for allegations were dignity and respect, abuse, neglect, safe/sanitary/humane, and services suited to condition. These 5 categories represent 78% of all allegations in FY23, they were also the top 5 categories in FY22. For all categories in FY23 the substantiation rate per allegation was 52%, down significantly from 74% in FY22 and is more in line with previous years. 67% of all investigations were completed within 30 days, 13% within 60 days and the remaining 20% were completed within the statutory limit of 90 days. The top 3 remedial actions taken in FY23 were written reprimand, training, and employee termination. The staff of the ORR provided 12 initial training courses conducted through

TEAMS to 108 individuals in FY23. They also authored quarterly articles that help to educate agency and contracted staff on trends and areas of concern related to rights. ORR staff completed 66 out of catchment site reviews in 29 Michigan counties and along with other administrative staff completed 41 additional site reviews within NCCMH's 6 county region. Desired outcomes for FY23 were to develop an external NCCMH website with ORR content, review and improve Rights training, tracking, and compliance, and to establish a site review schedule and adjust procedures to ensure continued compliance. The first outcome was accomplished when the new agency website went live, the second two outcomes remain ongoing. Additional outcomes that the ORR is working toward in FY24 are recruiting additional RRAC members for full county representation and developing training materials and opportunities to educate and inform recipients of their rights.

**ACTION ITEMS WITHOUT COMMITTEE REVIEW:** None

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT/COMMUNICATIONS:** Mr. Babbitt referred to several items in his report. Mr. Babbitt met with the Rural and Frontier Caucus three times since the last board meeting. He explained that the Rural and Frontier Caucus workgroup was started through the board association with the core group being Regions 1 and 2 (Northern Lower Peninsula and the Upper Peninsula). This group was created out of the need for policy and procedures coming from the state to be viewed through a rural lens to make sure that they are achievable in rural areas. Mr. Babbitt shared the document created within the caucus which details the three main issues that the group intends to work on this year. Those issues include conflict free access and planning, residential day vs 15 minute CPT code, and Audio only telehealth delivery. A meeting is scheduled with Kristen Jordan to discuss the barriers these proposed changes pose to delivering behavioral health care to consumers in rural areas. The goal of the Rural and Frontier Caucus is to be involved during development of new policy rather than working on it afterwards. On December 12 Mr. Babbitt met with board members from the Bergmann Center. There has been a high rate of turnover in the program with some leadership positions vacant. The board members were looking for direction in regards to recruitment and also transitioning from an older model day program and revamping the program. Mr. Babbitt drew attention to a response from major health plans regarding the parity bills. Federal Law states that there needs to be parity between behavioral health and mental health services, covering mental health services at the same rates in network as out of network. There is no state law governing that, the parity bills would be inline with federal mandates. The public health plans are heavily against the parity bills passing. He also drew attention to a statement released by Representative Jack Bergman supporting Rural Health care initiatives.

**QUALITY IMPROVEMENT UPDATE** – No update this month

**NORTHERN MICHIGAN REGIONAL ENTITY-** The minutes of the October NMRE Operations committee were included in the packet.

**OLD BUSINESS** – Mr. Babbitt gave an update on the proposed land lease in Kalkaska. We have received it back from legal and no red flags have been raised, there are some things NCCMH would like to add to the language however. The lease is expected to be signed in early January.

Mr. Babbitt gave an update on the MichiCANS soft launch. NCCMH is not going to withdraw as a soft launch site. We explained to the state the reasons for our withdraw and they listened to our concerns and reset their expectations. It is a lot of extra work for our access staff/clinicians but the tool is set to hard launch October 1, 2024 statewide.

Mr. Babbitt spoke about redeterminations for Medicaid, there is a smaller drop in the rate for traditional Medicaid enrollees, larger for Healthy Michigan, however the increase in rate for HAB waivers offsets the rate decrease.

Mr. Babbitt informed the board that the Alpine Crisis Residential Unit was now open and operational.

**NEW BUSINESS** – The flyer for the CMHA Winter Conference, being held in Kalamazoo, was included in the packet. Mr. Babbitt requested that any board members wishing to attend contact Ms. Rhue so she can book rooms and register them.

## **BOARD & STAFF COMMENTS**

Mr. Rubingh asked about the 2 openings in Antrim County, Ms. Rhue explained that Ms. Loper and Mr. Knapp's appointments have ended and that even though they both would like to stay on the board, that the county still has to announce the vacancies and the commissioners will vote.

Mr. White informed the board that Emmet County approved the NMRE funding for the proposed drug court. This initiative is fully grant funded, there have been roughly 20 individuals identified who would benefit from the program, and it is expected to continue to grow.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:56 PM by Board Chair Ed Ginop

  
Ed Ginop, Board Chair