

# Board Update

Mental Health & Recovery Services (MHRS) Board  
Serving Coshocton, Guemsey, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble & Perry Counties  
1500 Coal Run Road, Zanesville, Ohio 43701  
Phone: 740-454-8557

Regular Board Meeting  
Highlights  
May 11, 2023



Randi Earnest, Chair of the MHRS Board's Partners Workgroup, presented to the full Board of Directors a recap of a presentation about the Muskingum-Perry-Morgan Project Ready Re-Entry Program given to committee members prior to regular board meeting by Project Director Joe Frash.

Project Ready was created to reduce repeated incarceration of returning citizens, especially among those with issues of poverty, mental illness, and/or substance use disorders. Project Ready staff assist incarcerated and formerly incarcerated clients from local jails and Ohio prisons by coordinating services to help with their successful transition back to the community. The program fills service and communication gaps for clients pre- and post-release by identifying a re-entry plan that addresses housing, behavioral health treatment, education and training opportunities, job readiness, employment, and social integration. Staff works with returning citizens to establish an action plan, overcome barriers, and access the services and supports needed for their successful reintegration home.

The mission of Project Ready is to build a stronger, safer, and more productive community and reduce recidivism by improving the quality of life of returning citizens through a collaborative effort of case management, services, and resources.

The Project Ready office is located at Allwell Behavioral Health, 2845 Bell Street, Zanesville – 740.454.9766.

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Misty Cromwell

**Board of Directors**

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Randi Earnest  
Megan Gee  
Jennifer Hanson  
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**Board President**

William Johnson

**Board Vice President**

Sue Hoover

***The mission of the  
MHRS Board is to  
facilitate a Recovery-  
Oriented System of Care  
that promotes mental  
health and supports the  
recovery of each person  
who needs services for  
mental illness and/or  
addiction.***

## FinancialMatters

Under the guidance of Finance/Audit Committee Chair Dr. Dan Scheerer, board members reviewed and approved the April 2023 Reconciliation Report that shows deposits, checks written for MHRS Board operations, payments to in-network contract service providers and out-of-network community partners, and journal entries.

Below is a breakdown of April payments for the provision of treatment and support services for persons with mental illness and/or addictions:

<i>Accounts Payable</i>	<i>In-Network Providers</i>	<i>Out-of-Network Partners</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<b>April 10, 2023</b>	<b>\$286,858.32</b>	<b>\$326,091.41</b>	<b>\$612,949.73</b>
<b>April 24, 2023</b>	<b>\$169,720.21</b>	<b>\$179,008.70</b>	<b>\$348,728.91</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$456,578.53</b>	<b>\$505,100.11</b>	<b>\$961,678.64</b>

Board members also addressed the following issues:

- ▶ ***Other Financial Reports:*** Reviewed the MHRS Board’s April Financial Reports that included: 1) Contract Service Expenses; 2) Balance Sheet as of April 30, 2023; 3) Network Funding Reserves; 4) a ‘Year-to-Date’ Status Report for the MHRS Board’s CY 2023 Operating Budget; and 5) a Dashboard Report that provides a high-level overview of key fiscal indicators.
- ▶ ***CY 2024 Budget for the Entire MHRS Board System:*** Approved the MHRS Board System’s Calendar Year 2024 Budget in the amount of \$11,241,678.00. The majority of this budget is for payments to contract organizations and community partners for the provision of mental illness and addiction recovery treatment and support services totaling \$9,978,008.00.
- ▶ ***Special Allocation — Community-Wide Behavioral Health Collaborative:*** Approved a special allocation in the amount of \$223,549.20 to Guidehouse Consulting (the remainder of their fee for leading the work of the Community-Wide Behavioral Healthcare Collaborative (with members being the MHRS Board, Muskingum Valley Health Centers, the Genesis Healthcare System, and Allwell Behavioral Health). All partners expressed a commitment to improving the region’s behavioral healthcare continuum and executing the blueprint that is developed through Guidehouse. The goal is to provide better care and sustainability and to achieve better outcomes at lower costs.
- ▶ ***Special Allocation — Coshocton County Family Resource Center:*** Approved a special allocation of \$31,200.00 (\$15,600.00 per year for two years) to support rental expenses for the newly-established Coshocton County Family Resource Center. This support will allow for the reallocation of the remaining grant award to focus on staffing and equipment to adequately provide services to youth and their families. The Resource Center is designed to do early assessments and screenings of youth and families to direct them to appropriate service providers or give them other options for addressing their problems. One of the Center’s goals is to deter children and families from having formal involvement with systems if they don’t need it.
- ▶ ***Special Allocation – Allwell Behavioral Health Services:*** Approved a special allocation of \$75,000.00 to Allwell Behavioral Health Services to support costs for the preparation of a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) ‘Look-Alike’ application. The money will be used to hire a consultant to work on the

application process to attain FQHC ‘Look Alike’ status. The continued development of a primary care practice and the agency’s designation as an FQHC ‘Look Alike’ organization will initially increase access to medical care and 340B pharmacy benefits and will eventually also enhance Allwell’s behavioral health services and help the organization to become more competitive in the recruitment of clinical staff.

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## *Strategic Plan “Refresh”*



Board members approved the organization’s Strategic Plan ‘Refresh’ for the period June 2023 to May 2028

▶ **Vision:** *We envision a world in which all citizens of our six-county service area have timely access to quality mental health services that reflect their needs and provide support in breaking unhealthy cycles and moving toward recovery.*

▶ **Mission (Role):** *Our mission is to distribute federal, state, and local funding to community mental health providers in response to community need and in a way that facilitates the existence of—and access to—high quality mental health and substance use recovery services.*

▶ **Values:** *We believe that quality mental health and substance use recovery services are recovery-oriented, person-centered, and responsive to the diversity of identities and lived experiences of persons served; accessible; built on evidence-based practices; and dependent upon effective coordination among partners.*

▶ **Strategy:**

- ◆ GOAL 1: Ensure and Increase the Availability of — and Access to — Quality Services
- ◆ GOAL 2: Foster a Healthy and Coordinated Field of Provider Organizations
- ◆ GOAL 3: Secure the Ongoing Health and Effectiveness of the MHRS Board

▶ **What Success Will Look Like:**

We expect to see less unmet needs in our community through increased availability, diversity, and access to services. Providers will be able to offer evidence-based, person-centered, and culturally competent care to an increasingly diverse clientele with a more stable workforce, and will participate in an active and highly interconnected community of provider organizations who work together to fill gaps and meet needs through partnerships and partner referrals. Provider organizations will have strengthened their financial and nonprofit management practices—experiencing fewer organizational crises, scoring higher in the MHRS Board’s application process, and trusting the MHRS Board as a source of support if they need assistance. The MHRS Board will distribute level or increased funding through local levies and will be known in the community as a resource when individuals find themselves in crisis.

## *Biennial Budget Priorities – State Fiscal Years 2024-2025*

*(Source: Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities)*

Am. Sub. HB 33, as passed by the Ohio House of Representatives, makes several changes that would be detrimental to critical community mental health and addiction services. If enacted, the funding amounts included in the legislation would severely limit MHRS Boards' abilities to meet the existing and growing demand from individuals and families for treatment services and supports.

The House-passed version of the budget bill includes hefty cuts in the Continuum of Care line item amount allocated to MHRS Boards. If unchanged, the total real-dollar cut from MHRS Board allocations would be over \$11 million per year. MHRS Boards use these funds to invest in community crisis, prevention, treatment, and recovery supports. The state's proposed reductions would force MHRS Boards to make cuts to crisis services, in-jail services, prevention services, housing services, and other recovery supports. We are asking the Ohio Senate to restore this line item to its as-introduced amount.

Restorations to as-introduced amounts are also needed in the Hospital Services Line, Medicaid Community Behavioral Health Services, Criminal Justice Services, Residential State Supplement, and Prevention and Wellness.



As demand for care continues to surge, communities must ensure the existence of a full scope of care within the local continuum of care. In recent years, the mental health and addiction challenges have become more visible, and in some cases, more pronounced.

OhioMHAS Director Lori Criss notes that the people she hears most from on a regular basis are moms and sheriffs. Mothers are desperate to find help for their children who are living with mental illness or addiction. And sheriffs, because people with untreated behavioral health disorders too often end up in local jails, having been arrested and incarcerated in a setting that is not appropriate for someone dealing with mental illness and/or substance use disorders. Please send letters to our service area State Senators, advocating for the above funding restorations to as-introduced amounts. The Senators are Tim Schaffer, Frank Hoagland, Al Landis, and Andrew Brenner. The address would be: Ohio Senate Building, 1 Capitol Square, Columbus, OH, 43215. For more information, contact Director Misty Cromwell at 740.454.8557 or at [mistyc@mhrs.org](mailto:mistyc@mhrs.org). Thank you!



### *Annual Suicide Awareness Banquet*

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Suicide Awareness Banquet was held on April 27 at the Coburn United Methodist Church in Zanesville. The event was focused on offering hope to Military, First Responders, and Law Enforcement, with the theme being “*Connect, Communicate, Care.*” Eighty-two people attended the banquet, with 37 of them being First Responders and/or Veterans. Jason Hughes from the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation (OSPF) was the keynote speaker, who stressed the importance of reducing the number of deaths by suicide. He noted that OSPF offers courses focused on the evidence-based ‘Question, Persuade, Refer’ (QPR) method of initiating conversations about suicide, instilling hope, and referring at-risk individuals to appropriate mental health resources. Also presenting was Dirk Harkins (Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation Program) and Amy Workman (Narcan Educator for Guernsey Health Choices).

### *Spring Meeting of the Muskingum County Criminal Justice Collaborative*



On May 2, over 40 Muskingum County criminal justice professionals, community leaders, and behavioral healthcare service providers met to discuss many issues of mutual concern. Presenters included ZPD Police Chief Scott Comstock; Muskingum County Sheriff Matt Lutz; Highway Patrol Post Commander Lt. Kristi Mistovich; Maureen Montgomery-Christian, Educational Administrator for the Juvenile Detention Center; Sarah Batteiger and Brad McHenry from Allwell Behavioral Health; Kasi Stewart, DART Coordinator for the Muskingum County Prosecutor’s Office; Ryan Weaver from the Muskingum County Board of DD; Joe Frash from the Project Ready Re-Entry Program; Mary Beth Holler from Appalachian Behavioral Healthcare; and James Shaw, Regional Director from the Ohio Attorney General’s Office.

This was a wonderful opportunity to share concerns and learn more about local initiatives that will help persons with mental illness who come into contact with the criminal justice system. Note: Several criminal justice professionals expressed concerns about the growing need for in-jail behavioral health assessments and support groups and a need for adequate civil beds at the Appalachian Behavioral Healthcare State Hospital in Athens.