



**Tompkins County
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD**

**Tompkins County Whole Health
201 East Green Street
Ithaca, New York 14850-5635**

Jan Lynch, Chair

Sheila McEnery, Vice Chair

Frank Kruppa; Commissioner

**Harmony Ayers-Friedlander,
Deputy Commissioner/Director of Community Services**

**Larry Roberts, Chair,
Mental Health Subcommittee**

**James Beaumont and Jeff Boles, Co-Chairs
Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee**

**Marley Brooks and Jacob Parker Carver, Co-Chairs,
Substance Use Subcommittee**

**Tompkins County Community Mental Health Services Board
55 Brown Road, Ithaca NY 14850
Monday, July 1, 2024, 5:30 p.m. Meeting Minutes**

Minutes Approved
October 7, 2024

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkpJNVbpLLbEbhoDbTIEgSQ>

Present: Jan Lynch; Mary Hutchens; Sheila McEnery; Jessica Conner, PsyD; Anna Tamis, PhD; Nicole Zulu, PhD; Stu Bergman; Dr. Auguste Duplan; Sally McConnell-Ginet; and Khaki Wunderlich

Excused: Larry Roberts; Travis Winter; Howard Reid; and Alaina Zapf, PsyD. and Deb Barber

Legislature:

Guests: Sandra Sorenson, Executive Director of NAMI

Staff: Frank Kruppa, Commissioner; Harmony Ayers Friedlander, DCS; and Karan Palazzo, LGU Administrative Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Ms. Lynch. Introductions were made. Ms. McEnery moved to approve the May 6, 2024, minutes, seconded by Mr. Bergman; all were in favor.

Privilege of the Floor & Announcements: Ms. Wunderlich referred to the bylaw update on members affiliated with contracted agencies. The bylaw template and draft resolution will be forwarded to Ms. Wunderlich.

NAMI Finger Lakes Update– Ms. Sorensen gave an overview of the history of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). NAMI is the largest grassroots mental health organization in the nation with over 600 affiliates but unfortunately has nothing in the Southern Tier to accommodate the many calls they receive. NAMI Finger Lakes serves Tompkins and Cortland Counties and hosts virtual classes, support groups, and, community educational events which anybody can join. They also have helplines, hospital programs, newsletters, and an active website.

NAMI supports advocacy and education for people who are caregivers for people who have mental illness. NAMI Finger Lakes has taken on programming and office programming for caregivers and works closely with the Mental Health Association of Tompkins County and cross-refers to each other. NAMI is a membership organization, and all facilitators must be members. NAMI is about lived experience and she openly shared her personal experience of losing her husband in 2021 to suicide. She knew six of the 48, 183 who died of suicide including her husband.

NAMI Programs

Programs include the Family to Family Educational Program, NAMI Basics, and Homefront.

Family to Family Educational Program is free for family and friends of people with mental health conditions and is offered 2 to 3 times a year relative to volunteer recruitment and training which can take up to a year to complete. This popular program has a waitlist.

NAMI's Basics educational program is for parents, and caregivers who provide care to youth 22 and younger who experience mental health symptoms and the program is on-demand online or in person.

The Homefront program is free and is designed to address the unique needs of families, and caregivers who have served or are currently serving the country taught by trained family members of service members/veterans with mental health conditions in They partner with TC3 and local VAs.

The Overwatch Peer Support (OPS) program is a new, free, confidential, community-based, inter-agency, peer-certified support network for first responders and their families which launched in 2024 and recently received a grant from Legacy.

NAMI Support Groups

Support groups include Family, Partner and Spouse, and Psychosis Support (for caregivers of loved ones who have experienced psychosis as part of their mental health journey). All are free, and no specific medical therapy or treatment is endorsed, confidential, and for adults 18 and older.

NAMI Community Education

NAMI Ending the Silence is free and has presentation for students, school staff, and families. It is a 50-minute presentation, (online or in-person), for middle and high school students with an emphasis on mental health. In conjunction with Huddle Together for Mental Health, they offer week-long programming initiatives at colleges and high schools to promote mental health and mental wellness through athletics. The presentations include two leaders: one who shares an informative presentation and a young adult with a mental health condition who shares their journey of recovery.

NAMI Helpline

The NAMI Helpline is a free peer-support service providing information, resource referrals, and support for people closest to those living with mental health conditions. Thanks to the 988 service, their helpline calls have decreased tremendously but will maintain helpline service.

Advocacy

NAMI advocates nationally and statewide with a lot of support from local advocates.

Q&A

- Support groups are mainly virtual
- The Helpline is more of a warm line providing referral resources with a response time of 24 hours
- School presentations require a teacher and a social worker to be present
- Popular student feedback: Students having mental illness, but parents don't believe them and deny them help
- Educating parents
- Resources and volunteers are needed most. They collaborate with the Sophie Fund and Suicide Prevention Coalition

2025 Budget – Mr. Kruppa stated the CSB has policy-making authority over the budget. He gave an overview of mandated accounts and of the budget submission process.

Mandated Accounts are programs that the county must pay for. Estimations for mandated accounts for the next year are submitted to the County Administration in April. The Mental Health Department's only mandated account is for CPL 730 examinations ordered by courts for hospitalizations of individuals under CPL 730 who are deemed unable to aid in their defense.

Two psychiatrists will examine individuals to report if the individual does or does not as a result of mental disease or defect lack the capacity to understand the proceedings against him or to assist in his defense. Individuals who as a result of mental disease or defect lacks the capacity to understand the proceedings against them or assist in their defense will go to a hospital where they do not receive traditional mental health treatment but only receive services to help them aid in their own defense. He stressed that the hospitalization is not for treatment.

The State previously paid 50% of the costs five years ago but changed it to where counties pay 100% of the total costs. Tompkins County Whole Health Mental Health Department (TCWHMHD) is responsible for 100% of the costs of hospitalizations, regardless of how long individuals are hospitalized. TCWHMHD is advocating a reduction in the costs as it has drastically increased from \$500k to \$1.5 million annually.

Estimations for mandated accounts are submitted in April to County Administrators who will meet with the legislature to make a recommendation for the target goal for the tax levy for the maintenance of effort. This year's number for maintenance of effort was a 5.9% tax levy increase and through the Legislature the County Administrators recommended a 2% tax levy increase initiating cuts to the County's share of the budget. In June all County Departments will submit budgets to the County Administrator for consideration.

TCWHMHD was directed to submit two budgets: Maintenance of Effort at 5.9% and Maintenance of Effort at 2% (amounting to a 5% reduction in the county contribution to each department and totaling \$300k for Tompkins County Whole Health. Mr. Kruppa stated that these cuts would be made without impacting currently filled or anticipated positions or any reductions in any programs by the two long-time vacant community health nurse positions that were a challenge to be filled, re-organization of the Maternal Child Health Program and other lines including travel. He noted that there is no cost of living adjustment for county-sponsored programs. The two budgets will be submitted on Monday to the County Administrator for review and will submit a budget to the legislature in early September where it will become public on the County's website for review.

The Legislature will hear presentations from departments, go into a voting meeting, and propose a new budget which will go to a public hearing, to complete the process with a legislature vote in November.

Mr. Kruppa noted that there were Over Target Requests which include Suicide Prevention, the Outreach Program, and CARE Teams in the budget.

The three Request For Proposals (RFP) (*formerly ADC's services*) for prevention, outpatient, and detox stabilization services were approved by OASAS and are with County Finance and the RFPs will be posted shortly. The RFPs' funding is solely from State funding.

Dr. Conner suggested inviting Tompkins County Mental Health's billing department to discuss how they optimize billing. Mr. Kruppa can accommodate and ask that she send questions for the discussion.

Ms. Lynch asked for clarity on the Rainy Day Fund. Mr. Kruppa explained that the "Fund Balance" is unallocated resources that the county has either collected through taxes or received in some other way that has gone unspent. He noted that it is one-time funding. The Legislature has had many discussions on what are the appropriate levels for the funds to be spent with many different opinions.

Ms. Lynch reminded the CSB that the September 2024 CSB meeting agenda will include a panel discussion on homeless services in our county.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

.....
**The Next Community Mental Health Services Board Meeting is
Monday, September 9, 2024, at 5:30 pm.**