



## North Alabama Mental Health Coalition August 9, 2022

### **Attendees (in person):**

Daniel Adamak (Little Orange Fish)  
Erica Bradberry (ADMH)  
Tiffani Chandler (Rehab Alabama)  
Woodie Deleuil (NAMI)  
Dana Gillis (Village of Promise)  
Chaniece Hicks (First Stop)  
Sgt. Morris Holmes (Sheriff's Office)  
Nick Loftin (Ross/ACE)  
Pamela Millwood (Salvation Army)  
Krista Moulton (Therapist / NAMI)  
Karen Petersen (Wellstone)  
Diane Pierson  
Audrey Smith (HATCH)  
Terre Stewart (Wellstone)  
Jonathan Ware (Huntsville PD)

Jessica Alford (Ross)  
Annie Brasseale (VOP)  
Akeem Davis (Huntsville Hospital)  
Denise Draa (Living Life Counseling)  
Kelly Goff (ADMH)  
Kim Holder (Not One More Alabama)  
Travis Jones (Thrive Alabama)  
Alexis Love (Wellstone)  
Laurin Mitchell (Wellstone)  
Letricia Ogutu (Huntsville Schools)  
Adina Peyton (GRAMI)  
Mark Prescott (NAMI)  
Dr. Sherrie Squyres (Huntsville Hospital)  
Suzanne Sullivan (WAAY TV)  
Don Webster (HEMSI)

Chief David Bailey (Madison Fire)  
Aubin Cawthon (Ross)  
Stephanie Davis (Wellstone)  
Jennifer Geist (First Stop)  
Martika Hammel (Wellstone)  
Johnny Hollingsworth (CIT state coordinator)  
Tammy Leeth (Wellstone)  
Cathy Miller (United Way)  
Cheneka Moss (Wellstone)  
Christina Pannell (Therapist)  
Lisa Philippart (Living Life Counseling)  
Julie Schenck-Brown  
Randall Stanley (NACH)  
Tim Ward (Sheriff's Office)  
Mack Yates (SVDP/VOP)

### **Welcome and Introductions**

#### **CIT Update**

Mack mentioned that Johnny received an award from CIT International for the CIT Coordinator of the Year. Mack thanked Johnny for all of his work. Johnny mentioned that this is not a one person award. He also mentioned that legislators have provided funding to expand CIT within Alabama and hopefully provide money annually go keep CIT running. We are also receiving an award for the best improved program across the US and the award for CIT Executive of the Year is also from Alabama. We are also being recognized internationally for all of the work that we are doing in Alabama.

As we move forward we will try to mimic CIT Wisconsin starting with a program called CIT ASSIST. CIT ASSIST is a program that people can apply and get help with their CIT programs. CIT is growing across the state and Johnny mentioned several areas where the program is expanding such as the Florence, Decatur, Tuscaloosa, Cherokee County, and Mobile police departments.

Captain Ware introduced Julie Schenck-Brown who is the new CIT coordinator for the Huntsville Police Department. Sgt. Holmes encouraged everyone to attend tonight's (8/9/2022) Huntsville Police Citizens Advisory Council meeting where CIT and the co-responder program will be discussed. There will be a brief presentation and then small table conversations with an officer present at each table. The free conversations are to inform the community of what is out there and to identify and discuss needs that should be addressed. Meetings are held in a different district each month. Tonight's meeting is for District One and will be held at the House of Hope and Restoration Church at 5:30 pm.

#### **First Stop – Jennifer Geist**

First Stop is constructing a new building because they have outgrown their current space. The new building will be located at 206 Stokes Street (their current location). While construction is underway, services are provided from two locations. The Living Room at 2820 Governors Dr. provides breakfast, lunch, showers, laundry, and a case manager for walk-ins. 206 Stokes Street has a temporary building and the case management team will continue to work from there. Jennifer handed out cards to show where they are currently offering services along with a map.

They are going to be launching a capital campaign to raise \$800K. The hope is that First Stop will become a one stop place for all of the needs of the homeless. Jennifer will send a link to Annie to share with the coalition about the project.

They hope to be in the building by next summer.

Don Webster asked about the location of the homeless camps. Jennifer explained that there were two homeless camps on Derrick St. The Derrick north camp was shut down (it is private property) and everyone had to be relocated. Since June they have moved 26 people from homelessness to housing. The First Stop Outreach program goes to 10-12 sites per week.

Someone asked how many families with children are homeless. First Stop only handles unsheltered adults so they do not work with families with children. Jennifer suggested trying the shelters for that information or you can check the NACHcares.org website which includes counts that were obtained in February 2022.

Cathy mentioned that school system has a program for homeless families, but it would only have information about school age kids.

Aubin mentioned that a significant number of unhoused people have died recently from drug overdoses and that is a big problem right now.

Mark asked what First Stop does to help people to get a valid ID. The case mangers can help homeless people to get a government ID. Since January they have helped 170 people obtain documentation because you can't get housing if you can't prove who you are.

Mack brought up that it is difficult to get someone to accept help when they are mentally ill. People shouldn't be turned away from treatment because they don't have an ID. They should be treated and then look into their ID situation while they are in treatment.

There are clinical and legal reasons for requiring an ID; it is a hard issue, but needs to be addressed.

Randall mentioned that the state ID works best but you can get a homeless ID at the Downtown Rescue Mission office of NACH - it is a walk-in service.

Mack feels like if it is a mental health crisis situation a person shouldn't be turned away just because they don't have an ID.

Don mentioned a case where the guy didn't have an ID and couldn't go to the rescue mission and he was suicidal but had nowhere to go. It was a success because they got help for him, but Don asked if someone could work up a "recipe" of where to take people if they don't have an ID that emergency responders could use. Jennifer mentioned again that if they are trying to get into a mission, an ID is required because they must run a sex offender check. The Huntsville Police Department can sometimes provide IDs.

Not One More Alabama is hosting an "End Addiction Walk" this weekend (8/13/2022) to raise awareness of the resources out there for drug addiction as well as to celebrate those in recovery.

### **Media and Education Subcommittee Underway – Cathy Miller**

Cathy Miller mentioned that their committee had a great first meeting with lots of ideas. The next meeting they will focus on the research done so they can decide what to do first. WAAY-TV is working on the technical side. They would love for someone from Wellstone to be on the committee.

Their next meeting will be held on August 15<sup>th</sup> and Cathy will email you an invitation if you are interested. They meet at the United Way board room.

Cathy also announced that their Youth Services council is having their annual breakfast social and the speaker is from the NOVA Center at Wellstone. The topic is mental health needs for today's youth. The breakfast is September 9<sup>th</sup> and registration is open. It is a great place to talk about youth mental health services. Cathy is chair of the Youth council and invited coalition members that work with the youth to consider joining them.

### **Alabama Department of Rehab – Tiffini Chandler**

Tiffini had a handout with general information about their programs including transition services. She handles a transition caseload (as well as a general caseload) at Buckhorn High School and New Hope High School. They have transition counselors with all of the local school districts. Any children of high school age who are on IEPs or 504s have the opportunity to work with a transition counselor who can assist them with the transition from high school to either work or college. They have a summer JETS program every year, but the students must be in the transition program to attend. Parents have to sign a release form to receive services in the school program, but there are services that children in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades can get on their own.

In their general services areas, consumers are assigned by zip codes. The main requirement is that they have a disability in order to get help through their program. They must have documentation from a doctor. The ultimate goal is to get them working. Tiffini is encouraging referrals because their numbers have declined since the beginning of the COVID pandemic.

### **NAMCH Survey – Daniel Adamek**

Daniel thanked the people who filled out the survey and said you could still submit a survey. The idea of the survey is to develop ideas and capabilities needed to solve the issues brought up at the meetings. He hopes to develop a database to collect everyone's thoughts, bring more clarity to ideas, and facilitate the collaboration needed to solve the problems. The survey will help get info out about you and which organization you support and what can be done to solve problems aired out here every month. The last part of the survey asked if it is a good idea to have a survey to collect ideas. The response to that was very positive.

Daniel suggested that we could use this survey before each meeting or make a tailored survey to be a suggestion box. All the input from the survey (your recommendations and ideas) goes into a spreadsheet and Mack and Daniel work on it. Mack said this is like developing a roadmap. Daniel mentioned that this is the third time that the issue of IDs has come up and we are still talking about the issue with no solutions or action items. There should be a better approach.

Families really need to know what to do when a loved one has a crisis. There should also be a stop gap when someone does not have an ID but needs help. Everyone should be entitled to help whether or not they have received an ID.

Daniel will create another survey and hopefully add a suggestion box. The first survey still needs to be filled out by the coalition members to get their information into the database.

### **HATCH – Audrey Smith**

Audrey explained about HATCH which is a no cost program for getting a job. HATCH has completed one year of programming and has placed 23 young people in the workforce or going to school. They pay a stipend and teach them life skills and night skills. They have an open house tonight. The next class starts on Tuesday (8/16/22) and it is for young adults ages 18-24. They are a community that helps these people in all aspects of their lives. Audrey is looking for referrals because they have openings in this class. They do five classes per year.

### **CIT Steering Committee Need – Johnny Hollingsworth**

Johnny had to step down as head of the steering committee when he took the job for the state. He needs a steering committee with a core element of people involved including someone from law enforcement, mental health, and NAMI. The committee has three things to work on during the year: 1- evaluate the policies of crisis response, 2- evaluate CIT training, and 3- sit down with someone from Johnny's office and look at CIT program and see where gaps are to create a better program. Johnny needs someone to step up and take over steering committee.

### **Open Floor**

Mack went over the list of people who had volunteered for different committees last month. He mentioned that Dr. Squyres is having challenges in the ER, especially with other hospitals in the State sending patients to Huntsville Hospital. Mack would like to also form a Huntsville Hospital committee.

We come together to identify programs and help solve them.

*Next Meeting*  
*Tuesday September 13, 2022*  
*11:00 am at Wellstone*