



North Alabama Mental Health Coalition

Meeting minutes for July 14, 2026

Attendees (in person):

Daniel Adamek (Little Orange Fish)
Randy Barbour (City of Huntsville)
Erica Bradberry (ADMH)
Rodolfo Chavez (SVDP)
Traci Harris (Elm Foundation)
Stephanie Jennings (Best Life Recovery)
Cheryl McClendon (The PDFC)
Taralyn Rowell (Wellstone)
Scott Thompson (ALC)
Brittany Williams (NSSC - AL)

Sarah Bailey (UAH RAN)
Edward Becher (Invisible Warriors)
Annie Brasseale (VOP)
Roxanne Crawford (Bradford at Madison)
Zack Harris (Holder Construction)
James Linderholm (HD Candidate)
Jessica Nall (PDFC)
Julie Schenck-Brown (Huntsville Police)
Don Webster (HEMSI)
Mack Yates (SVDP/VOP)

Tammy Ballentine (Advocate/parent)
Nancy Becher (Invisible Warriors)
Darlene Burton (Salvation Army)
Tonya Hardy (UAH Nursing)
Linda Howe (Just Serve)
Lucy Lollar (Best Life)
Leigh Oliver (Thrive AL)
Audrey Smith (Grow Our Village)
Darrell White

1. Welcome and Introductions – Mack Yates

Introductions are important because you can find out who you need to talk to. Roxanne from Bradford mentioned in the near future they will have mental health primary residential services.

2. Coalition Updates – Daniel Adamek

Daniel has made updates to the website recently. He mentioned that we will try to only include email flyers with the agenda or the minutes. He is trying to lessen intermediate emails so people don't get too many from the coalition. Please send calendar events to Daniel (daniel@littleorangefish.org) and he will put them on the website immediately.

If there are any corrections to the minutes, we will make them at the following meeting. Stephannie Jennings wanted to correct the minutes from June. She wanted to let people know that Best Life Recovery is a substance use disorder house and not a mental health care facility. She needed a resource to give people if they came to her and needed mental health help and not substance abuse help.

Daniel showed us on the website where all of the minutes (Stay informed) and calendar events are located on the website. A blue dot indicates a recurring meeting, an orange dot indicates community related events, and green dots indicate support groups. The more information you give to Daniel, the better he can make the calendar.

Someone asked if the resource tab could include all member organizations of the coalition. Daniel said that currently the icons on the resource page go to the websites of the organizations. He would like to continue to update it, but he hasn't received any new information. If you want your organization included, please send the information to Daniel.

Daniel announced that GRAMI (Getting Real About Mental Illness) shut down a few weeks ago. Invisible Warriors has lost the facility that they had been using. They were given use of a temporary location a year ago where women could come to get help and to hold events. They are looking for a new location (around 2000 sq ft) with a kitchen so they can have meals.

Partnership for a Drug Free Community has been working with the homeless at Derrick Street camp (the project is called Homeless Service Team with the city of Huntsville). They are trying to create a better continuum of care for the homeless. We have a massive need in the city for more assessments. People are needing assessments to get into treatment. They are needing state funded beds because a lot of the people are uninsured. In the city of Huntsville, there has been an increase (at least 20%) of people needing addiction help. A lot of drugs are moving into the city.

In September, Partnership will be having their 6th annual Truck Pull. This is their biggest fund raiser for the year. The end of July is the deadline for participating sponsorship and vendors. There will not be a charge for vendors.

Contact Cheryl McClendon (Cherylmc31@gmail.com).

Sarah Bailey reminded us that RAN is hosting Temple Grandin on October 8th. Tickets are available through Future Horizons and she had flyers on the table.

The Den IOP is no longer offering night IOP. It is only available during the day. They still provide transportation and the program is free for uninsured individuals.

The River Act language has been updated by the representatives. Tindra introduced it to Idaho representatives this week. They are looking for testimonies of how the River Act could have helped individuals. Brittany Williams is trying to start a South Alabama Mental Health Coalition in September. They are also doing a Crisis to Care pilot to close a gap where there would be intermediate coordination (medical treatment, intervention, family advocacy kits, etc.). This is one of six pilot programs in the nation and will be walking with the families that are going through a crisis. They are hoping to start in the next month and need 3 families that are in crisis. Please let them know.

They received funds for the Alabama NSS website and hopefully will get it going within the next month. There were River Act pamphlets available at the meeting. Please add stories to website.

Mack mentioned that between now and November, the legislature mental health task force is doing a study about mental health. They mentioned that the stories are very important. If you know anyone who has had trouble accessing care, please encourage them to submit their story. We can go to them and record it if they are shy; we would still like to hear their stories. Contact Mack (mackwmy1941@gmail.com) or anyone in Shattering Silence Coalition (hstrayer@nsscoalition.org).

Women veterans are twice as likely as non-vets to become homeless. 9 out of 10 have PTSD. Invisible Warrior's picnic will be on Sunday, July 19th from 11-4 at Monte Sano Club for you to come and show your support. Hot dogs and burgers will be provided. In September (24th – 27th) they will be having their third retreat for ten women veterans. They still have some openings. For more information, see www.Invisiblewarriors.org

Adolescent IOP (ages 13-18) is available through Bradford online, so it is available statewide.

Daniel is going to try to keep a summary of stats and numbers and post them along with the minutes on the website. We will try to provide this information to our policy makers and others who make decisions.

3. Featured Presentation – UAH Neighborhood Nursing – Dr. Azita Amiri, PhD, Executive Director and Tonya Hardy, MA, Community Based Outreach Manager

Dr. Amiri could not be here. The UAH Neighborhood Nursing program is trying to reach out to underserved communities. Tonya Hardy is the program manager. They connect care and screenings making things easier for those who need care. They are trying to make relationships and build trust. Their goals are: outreach, engagement and increasing access to health care. They focus on education for the community and the student nurses who are doing some of these screenings.

They started in January and February and have seen around 100 neighbors seen so far. There are a lot of community organizations that are partnering with them, including Wellstone. The program is operating in the following communities: Bob Harrison wellness center, Johnson Towers, Triana, Northwoods community, and

the historic community of Edmonton Heights. Their partners include: Wellstone, HAPPI Health, Huntsville Hospital, The Heart Center, as well as others.

The feedback they have gotten is that these Wellstone referrals are immediately helpful. For people who don't have transportation, coming into their neighborhood has been extremely helpful. The Riley Center has been helpful for those being assessed with autism.

People have been requesting support for care givers. The program also helps those who are trying to reconnect to their lost resources, for example, if they lost transportation and couldn't make it to appointments or get medicine. Many people are unfamiliar with their insurance coverage and the program provides a resource to help them.

Tonya mentioned several ways to get involved. Community partners that could help with screenings or support are important. They also can use community volunteers of all sorts. They have an Amazon wish list and would also appreciate monetary donations.

They are sponsoring a Shine (Spotlighting Health Innovation and Neighborhood Engagement) Symposium at UAH Thursday, November 12th from 8-11am. The theme is "*The power of us*". Here is the link to information about the program: https://beacons.ai/uah_neighborhoodnursing . They will be expanding to Jackson County in the spring of 2027.

Someone asked what are some of the areas that people are struggling to find support. Tonya explained that mental health is a big one and Wellstone has been helpful with that. Also, lots of people with diabetes need support. Trust is an important factor and it takes time to build trust. They do community events to help build trust.

Don asked if they have considered going to some of the facilities that take care of the homeless such as First Stop or Downtown Rescue Mission. Tonya said they are looking into it. It is a hope.

A question was asked about the diabetics. Are they lacking supplies, or do they not have the insurance to get supplies. Tonya felt like many of them don't know how to manage the disease. They are working on education and nutrition.

Someone wanted to know how many people they are seeing who have disabilities. They don't have a specific person for disabilities, but it would be a great resource to have a social worker to handle it. A suggestion was made to use social work students from A&M.

Tonya was also asked about case managers. She said Wellstone and HAPPI Health are always there.

Someone asked how often they are visiting the neighborhoods. Their aim is to be there every week because they want to be consistent and regular; however, some places only receive visits twice per month.

A question was raised about how involved are home health agencies, in order to get consistent care. Huntsville Hospital is one of their partners and has a large home health care system. Tonya felt they could expand on that.

Someone else asked if they followed up with substance abuse clients. Are they referring them to detox? Tonya explained that because UAH is an educational institution, they are not tracking the data points because of HIPA. When clients come in, they receive a card that records their care; however, the card goes home with them. They are only tracking the number of people they have seen. They are getting approvals with the university to better track that kind of information.

Someone else asked about the possibility of a mobile clinic. Tonya said that is a wish for them in the future, but currently, they lack the funds cover it.

Randy Barbour mentioned that A&M has a wonderful social work program and might be able to collaborate. He said he would reach out to them.

Someone was concerned about outcomes – how many of the clients are following up? Tonya said the many people are coming back to give feedback; however, they don't have the data yet to track the outcomes. They are hoping to get something online by the fall. The point was made that this would help identify gaps.

The VA (in Birmingham) has a mobile clinic. Jennifer (from VA) has been a part of the screenings. The comment was made that a mobile clinic from the VA would only serve veterans; however, a lot of the clientele here are not veterans or spouses of veterans.

There was a suggestion that the partner organizations could keep track of the number of follow-ups they were aware of and that would not be against HIPA. The program could get the outcome information they could use.

Krista is excited about the program because decentralized care is a good idea. Meeting people in their home location helps build community. They spend the time to listen to people's stories. Narrative therapy has a great value to the whole community. Community and mental health class students are the nurses that are participating in the clinics and they are seeing the benefit of the program.

4. Recap and Adjournment – Daniel Adamek

*Next Meeting
Tuesday August 11, 2026
11:00 am at Wellstone*