



North Alabama Mental Health Coalition

Meeting minutes for June 9, 2026

Attendees (in person):

Daniel Adamek (Little Orange Fish)
Edward Becher (Invisible Warriors)
Annie Brasseale (VOP)
Tiffany Cantrell (Wellstone)
Laura Damewood (NCAC)
Traci Harris (Elm Foundation)
Marilyn Lands (State Rep. District 10)
Kathleen Leonard (ALCPC)
Amy Nix (NCAC)
Alyssa Perry (Wellstone)
Jared Sluss
Don Webster (HEMSI)
Hannah Willoughby (Project Transition)

Max Auburtin (NACH)
Nancy Becher (Invisible Warriors)
Amy Bryan (Alliance Huntsville)
Tiara Carter (DHR)
Abigale Garrigan (NACH)
Linda Howe (Just Serve)
Daniel Lappert (PDFC)
Laurin Mitchell (Wellstone)
Letricia Ogutu (Wellstone)
Karen Petersen (Wellstone)
Julian Waddell (S7 North Hampton)
J'Nada Williams (ADRS)
Mack Yates (SVDP/VOP)

Sarah Bailey (UAH RAN)
Erica Bradberry (ADMH)
Melissa Caldwell (Wellstone)
Deione L. Crutcher (ADRS)
Tindra Hammett (SSCA)
Stephanie Jennings (Best Life Recovery)
Tammy Leeth (Probate Judge's Office)
Krista Moulton (Therapist)
Carol Pepe (SSCAL)
Taralyn Rowell (Wellstone)
Barbara Wallace (Thrive AL)
Kendall Williams (First Stop)
Beth McAnally (Not One More Alabama)

1. Welcome and Introductions – Mack Yates

Introductions are important because you need to be able find out who can help you.

2. Coalition Updates – Daniel Adamek

Since last month, Daniel has updated website. He still hasn't received any new calendar dates for the coalition website. Please get in touch with Daniel if you have something that needs to be put on the calendar and include all the details, please. The coalition AI ChatGPT was also updated by Daniel. He went through all the agendas from the beginning of the year and created a table from the data that we have collected and also from the structural items we have talked about that need improvement (the table was attached to the agenda for this meeting). Daniel, in future meetings would like to narrow down the focus areas. If your needs are not being met at the meeting, please let Daniel know.

NACH is looking for housing for unhoused clients with substance use issues. There are a lot of dual diagnosis patients. Max is looking for sober living housing where the clients can possibly have a job but also obtain mental health support. They have the funds to pay the entry fee and a month's worth of rent. Please notify them if you know of any options. Max Auburtin – max.auburtin@nachcares.org

Stephanie Jennings received 3 calls from families with adult children with schizophrenia. They need housing for their children with mental health as the first diagnosis. If anyone can help, please let her know. Stephanie Jennings - stephanie.jennings@bestliferecovery.org

There was a meeting yesterday about crisis services for those with autism. Often times, if autism is the primary diagnosis, a person is unable to receive mental health care at our local emergency services.

The Children's Policy Council's needs assessment survey was analyzed. Mental health is the top need for children. They are meeting today to look at what is going to be reported to the state on needs assessment for children. If you are interested in future meetings, go to their website and join their mailing list. <https://www.alcpc.org/madison> .

Krista asked if this council is related to the mental health task force. Kathleen mentioned that every county is required to have a Children's Policy Council. Judge Demos has taken over as the presiding juvenile court judge and as such, is the chair of the Policy Council. They are working to become more active in our county.

Marilyn Lands mentioned an upcoming Health and Wellness resource fair on September 19th. She had flyers available. There will be a planning meeting on Tuesday June 23rd. This is being put on by a group that Marilyn

formed to look at mental health in schools k-12 and encourage prevention programs. They organize what is currently being done in the schools and look at the gaps in the system. The fair is for all the schools, but the Huntsville City Schools system is hosting a resource fair in September at the Center for Technology (2603 Memorial Pkwy).

Shattering Silence Coalition will be having a meeting on the 4th Tuesday of the month (June 30). Michelle Sherman, an award-winning psychologist, will be speaking. It will be a Zoom meeting starting at 7:00 pm. Give Tindra your email address if you would like to attend.

A new counseling center (Strive Behavioral Counseling) will be starting up in August. They have openings for 3 therapists. Their website is not available yet.

There is a day treatment program at Wellstone. They accept children of ages 3 to 5. It is a half day program (8:30 to 12:30). The children need to have Medicaid or All Kids and it will be covered. They handle situations from trauma to behavioral challenges. There were fliers available.

Any client of Thrive (kids or adults) is eligible for mental health care. To become a part of Thrive, come in and fill out our paperwork and see a medical provider.

Don gave an update on emergency calls to the homeless. In May, there were 68 calls from Downtown Rescue Mission, 13 calls from Salvation Army, 12 calls from First Stop, and the Slab had 8 calls. He did not have the number on the ODS.

3. Review of Action Items - Daniel Adamek

Mack and Krista went to the first meeting of the Mental Health Task Force in Montgomery that is being put together by the DMH (Dept. of Mental Health). The purpose of the meeting was to evaluate and recommend long term policies and solutions for mental health care in Alabama. In attendance was the Chair (Rex Reynolds), Co-Chair (Pebblin Warren), Sen. Linda Coleman, Comm. Kim Boswell, Collier Tynes Dixon, Dr. Amanda Williams, and several others. Items to be addressed were: access to care, focus on serious mental illness, stigma, public awareness, inclusivity (in all respects). They want to collect data from the current mental health system and evaluate resources and gaps in the system. They are going to explore impact of mental health on education, employment, and public safety. They also plan on a review of the mental health workforce. Finally, they plan on developing long term goals. They are supposed to submit their findings to the legislature by November 1st of this year. Mack hopes this will lead to change.

Attending the meeting from North Alabama was Tindra Hammett (National Shattering Silence), Leigh Oliver (NSSC), Krista, and Mack. They were able to speak personally to Rex Reynolds and Sen. Colman. They are going to concentrate on the River Act being passed and trying to increase the number of beds. Currently the number is 10 beds per 100,000 people and they want to increase it to 30 beds per 100,000.

Daniel asked what was the impediens behind starting this group and what action are they planning on. Krista told the group about the meeting. Besides electing a chair and co-chair, they are trying to understand what the mental health needs are across the state of Alabama. They did say that funding is limited, however, child and adolescent mental health is a priority. This is the first time they are organizing a task force like this in Alabama. Crisis services are also a priority.

There is really not a good handle on the information that is currently available. It was encouraging that there was a psychiatrist on the task force, as well as those with lived experiences. They did not set a date for the next meeting, however, Krista will try to let us know when it is planned.

Someone asked if this is a task force for the legislators. Krista explained that it was put forth by one of the legislators. Krista mentioned that our coalition has already addressed the location of resources for North Alabama and will be able to provide that information. She feels like the coalition can provide some of the data needed by the task force.

Krista mentioned that there is probably going to be discussion of extending the deadline beyond Nov 1st. There were also attendees of the meeting on Zoom. She feels like our coalition could be very helpful in getting information to this task force.

Daniel will get a copy of this document on the website and Mack has asked the chief of DMH to let them know when next meeting will be.

4. Featured Presentation – Psychiatric Urgent Care of Huntsville – Julia Klug, PA-C, Physician Assistant

Julia grew up in Birmingham, and is now a professional in Huntsville. She is a PA for the Psychiatric Urgent Care of Huntsville. They want to provide a walk-in option for psychiatry. In March, they started seeing patients. You can just walk-in, get an appointment online or they can also provide Tele-med options.

Their goal is to provide quick access to care. They deal with people who just moved to the area, whose provider has retired, or who needs immediate care. They also do return to work evaluations. They don't want to replace emergency services (they will send people to WES if needed).

PUC of H doesn't take insurance. They will do assessments and get background medical history before prescribing. They feel like a major benefit of their clinic is that you get to see a prescribing provider from the beginning. Visits cost \$195. Clients can file for reimbursement. They are just starting up and will look into insurance in the future.

She sees people that have appointments in the future, but need help now. They are not affiliated with Huntsville Hospital. They are looking into sponsorships from the community.

They do not have therapists in the office – people are referred out. Julia is welcome to take information of therapists that they could use for referrals, especially if they can see people quickly.

Someone asked about what kinds of clients they would refer to emergency providers. Julia explained that those clients with a higher risk, suicidal ideation or substance abuse are sent onto Huntsville Hospital or WES because they need closer monitoring. If they don't have the funds, they are referred to Wellstone.

Don asked if they have admitting privileges at the hospital. They have connections with the psychiatric staff at the hospital, but the clients sent to Huntsville Hospital do have to go through the ER.

They accept ages 8 and older and are open 8 am to 6 pm Monday thru Friday. They stopped opening on Saturdays for now because there was insufficient business. They will they provide services for underage clients without a parent if the legal guardian is able to sign the consent forms.

They do genetic testing but only to account for how someone's body metabolizes the meds. They have an outside source for labs (GeneSight). Julia Klug – jmklug95@gmail.com (personal email)

5. Recap and Adjournment - Daniel Adamek

Daniel emphasized again to please let him know about anything that belongs on the coalition calendar. He tries to pull things from the minutes, but it is time consuming.

The more we can discuss making connections to get things done, the better. That is our mission to get things done.

*Next Meeting
Tuesday July 14, 2026
11:00 am at Wellstone*