



## North Alabama Mental Health Coalition September 13, 2022

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

Daniel Adamak (Little Orange Fish)  
Annie Brasseale (VOP)  
Selena Carter (Huntsville Hospital)  
Stephanie Davis (Wellstone)  
Tiffany Drakeford (VA)  
Jennifer Geist (First Stop)  
Martika Hammel (Wellstone)  
Sgt. Morris Holmes (Sheriff's Office)  
Christa Mader  
Anna McKinnon (Huntsville Hospital)  
Jan Neighbors (HAPC)  
Dianne Pierson  
Randall Stanley (NACH)  
Tim Ward (Sheriff's Office)  
Taralyn Rowell (NOVA center)  
Tioma Carroll (United Way)  
Christy Marks (ARC of Madison Cty)  
Sifa Herady Bandale (FSC)

Terra Barley (Wellstone)  
Laura Burdeshaw (Decatur Morgan Hospital)  
Aubin Cawthon (Ross)  
Woodie Deleuil (NAMI)  
Laura Edwards (Part. for Drug Free Comm.)  
Amy Gillott (Decatur West)  
Lyjah Heddy (Living Life Counseling)  
Travis Jones (Thrive Alabama)  
Pat Mayfield (Wellstone)  
Cathy Miller (United Way)  
Leticia Ogutu (Huntsville Schools)  
Mark Prescott (NAMI)  
Kendra Tatum (Madison County Schools)  
Don Webster (HEMSI)  
Teli Yah Jeter (Wellstone)  
Akilah Brazile (UAB Family Med)  
Michelle Creekmore (ARC of Madison Cty)  
Jan McCurdy

Deisa Bradley (Wellstone)  
Melissa Caldwell (Wellstone)  
Akeem Davis (Huntsville Hospital)  
Denise Draa (Living Life Counseling)  
La'trisha Coats Fletcher (DHR)  
Kelly Goff (ADMH)  
Chaniece Hicks (First Stop)  
Katheryn Lang (Amedisys Hospice)  
Heather McCaulley (VA)  
Krista Moulton (Therapist / NAMI)  
Lisa Philippart (Living Life Counseling)  
Julie Schenck-Brown (Huntsville Police)  
Jamie Vargas (Wellstone)  
Mack Yates (SVDP/VOP)  
Audra Rodutom (Thrive)  
Grace Herady Bandale (FSC)  
Melissa Guest (UAB Family Med)

### **Welcome and Introductions**

#### **Jail diversion -Tammy Leeth**

The jail diversion program has four case managers handling 89 cases. It has been a challenge to visit people once they have left the jail or hospital. There are openings for three more case managers given funding that they have received from an AOT grant.

The ribbon cutting ceremony for the new WES is September 19th at 10 am.

Mack mentioned that there is still not a good long term option for those with mental health issues.

Someone asked if after someone leaves WES, is there an option of inpatient commitment at Wellstar?

Tammy said that if it is needed, they could get an inpatient commitment; however, it would have to go through the probate judge's office. At WES they have a 24 hour, 72 hour, and up to 7 day monitoring, and if a person is still not stable, someone could file a petition to commit them to Wellstar.

Someone asked Paula for a copy of the criteria to get someone into WES.

Don asked about what happens if they cannot find a person after they have left the jail or the hospital. Is an arrest warrant issued? Tammy explained that this depends on which program the person is in. If it is AOT, Judge Barger is notified and the person is out of the program. The city has a mental health coordinator and they get involved, but for the county it is Judge Demos that handles the situation.

In the jail diversion program, housing is provided for women. Judge Demos pays for the program, so she refers the women.

#### **Early Intervention Program – The Arc of Madison County – Michelle Creekmore & Christy Marks**

The Arc has an Early Intervention and Autism Outpatient center which serves children as early as 5 and also serves children on Medicaid. They write grants to offset charges not paid by Medicaid. The occupational & speech therapy need has grown since the advent of COVID. They even provide services for dual diagnosis kids. They opened an autism clinic to help families that couldn't afford to get to Birmingham for treatment. They are able to do a full battery of tests (including autism) and they have a licensed counselor and a doctor on staff. They have a good relationship with pediatricians so that problems can be detected early, because the earlier that problems are diagnosed the better. The ADOS test will open up services to the children who test positive for autism. If diagnosed, they can get in-home treatment until they are three and then get they get out-patient services.

The ARC is a non-profit United Way agency. They have sliding scale of payment for families with insurance. Christy handles the Outpatient center (birth to 3) which provides services (OT, PT and speech) to the family.

They go into the home and work with the whole family. During the pandemic things changed and because they were virtual, they were able to see more children across the state. The Early Intervention Program is seeing large numbers of cases due to COVID. Families didn't realize the extent of the developmental problems their children were having. They are serving 140 families in Early Intervention and about 50 families in Outpatient center. They try to stay on top of the family's needs. Early intervention is a free program. The children have to be 25% delayed to receive services. They try to serve the whole child with individual plans.

Someone asked what services are available for children after 5 years of age. They are taken care of by the school system. Another question asked how does a child transition from ARC to a school system. They work with the schools and the families. The goals for the children at the ARC are set by the parents, but when the child gets into the school system their goals are set by their teachers.

Huntsville has the highest rate of autism in the country. There is not enough autism testing being performed in our area to give a medical diagnosis. The schools can give an educational diagnosis, but it doesn't open up the services that a medical diagnosis would. The Huntsville / Madison County leadership class has taken the ARC as their non-profit to help. Fliers were available at the meeting about the ARC.

Mack asked Amy about progress at Decatur West. She said they are "busting at the seams". They are full on every unit. If they had sufficient staff, they could fill the children's unit.

### **"Here for You" – Daniel Adamek (Little Orange Fish)**

Daniel gave a power point presentation of the shared vision of Little Orange Fish and the coalition. The vision of the coalition is to have mental health treatment access for all of those in need in our community. "Here for You" is a project of Little Orange Fish not just on mental illness but broad scope social services.

Daniel showed a roadmap that he has worked on for six years trying to help people navigate through trying to get help for someone with mental illness. Not everything is fixable, but everything should be maintainable.

He mentioned that the coalition has talked a lot about trying to get the homeless the health care that they need. 26% of sheltered people who are homeless have mental illness. 34% have chronic substance abuse issues. Continued homelessness leads to trauma and possible further mental illness problems.

The Social systems network ("Here for You") tries to map out providers of social services and what they can provide to our community. Daniel demonstrated the system which is live on the Little Orange Fish website. One of the problems is that individuals within the system don't always work together.

The premise of well-being is that individuals have health care, their basic needs are provided, and they have security in their life situation. Homeless impacts access to all the aspects of well-being.

Moving forward, we can figure out where we can solve the gaps in the system. Some of the gaps include lack in quality of care and lack of communication between providers. All of these gaps need to be examined as separate issues and we need to determine the priorities of the gaps.

"Here for You" is working on a map of providers in the Alabama Department of Mental Health database. Daniel is trying to gather info about all providers so we can have a complete system. Hopefully this will provide a "recipe" for each person to obtain the help that they need.

They are trying to get information from the coalition members about their organization and the services that they provide to include in the database. This information will help to better identify and fill the gaps in the system.

The Communications committee has been focusing on messaging. Daniel feels like it is the most important thing we have to do. They list different areas of communication to be addressed: PSAs, getting the website up-to-date with a clear description of the stakeholders as well as monthly summaries of the coalition meetings, and have the Media get the message out of who we are and what we do. Put out a "Call to Action" to help build better lives and make the community stronger. We need to stay on top of what we say we are going to do.

We will bring the issues to the coalition meetings and decide how we are going to solve those issues.

There is a fundraising event for Little Orange Fish on Thursday October 13<sup>th</sup> at Electric Bell at Stovehouse. You can get tickets at the Little Orange Fish website.

Daniel's presentation slides are shown at the bottom of these minutes.

### **CIT Coordinator – Julie Schenck-Brown (HPD)**

Julie gave us an overview of CIT including the history of the start of the program in the 1980s. She described the mission of the program to build community relationships and help end the stigma of mental health illness. In 2018 Huntsville partnered with CIT international and classes began in 2019. Johnny Hollingsworth was the first CIT coordinator and Julie has since taken his place.

There is a 16 hour CIT class for all police officers that teaches them about community resources and de-escalation skills. They are also given information about the service providers in the community.

The 40 hour CIT program is a volunteer program and they go much deeper into of all aspects of mental health. They look at long term issues and do site visits so the officers can see and understand how the community services work. They hope to help the officers grow and understand how to become a better officer by understanding the person having a mental health crisis and what the officer can do to help them.

Julie encouraged all the agencies to partner with the police in helping them understand how they help those with mental illness. They want to grow partnerships and to be advocates for mental health in the community. Huntsville received a national award from CIT International. This was all made possible because HPD was awarded the Bureau of Justice Association Valor Award for CIT. There were only four such grants awarded to police departments in the entire United States.

Someone asked if there is a mechanism for officers to bring their own experiences back to the training of other officers. Julie responded that there is. She also emphasized that the community co-responders have made a big difference. Julie's contact information is: [julie.schenckbrown@huntsvilleal.gov](mailto:julie.schenckbrown@huntsvilleal.gov).

A question was raised about whether CIT is available for school resource officers. They would love to include the school resource officers as well as university security officers. She requested anyone that has a contact with Oakwood University to let her know. The CIT model wants to train anyone in contact with public including Non-profit staff members.

The next training is the second week of October.

### **Open Floor**

Sgt. Holmes thanked Akeem for helping the Sheriff's deputy with a crisis. The Sheriff's office has only had three CIT trained deputies to cover all the shifts. In the county they will now have 9 CIT officers after the next training in October. They will be able to cover all of the shifts. They also have on-call officers and have been able to assist in handling the commitments of 11 people during the past two weeks.

Dep. Tim Ward mentioned that he is still working on the wellness conference for next year.

He talked about a program (an app) to get for the sheriff's office that is anonymous. If you have an emergency situation, the app can provide up to 15 numbers that you can call at once. When one picks up all the others are dropped. You can talk anonymously and find help for an emergency situation. The app also has an educational feature where it helps determine if you are stressed and lists ways to alleviate the stress as well as listing therapists that can help. If we are not helping the first responders, they may not be able to help the community. It is expensive, but it is worth it in the long term. Someone asked the cost of the app and Dep. Ward said it is approximately \$24,000 and works out to be about \$58 per deputy. However, other groups can use it as well including family members of the deputies.

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



**The North Alabama Mental Health Coalition – Here for You**

Daniel Adamak, PhD  
Krista Moulton, LCSW

2022 Orange Fall

# Agenda



- Shared Vision
- Roadmap Framework
- Helping our Homeless
- Social Systems Network
- Organizing for Action

Tuesday, September 13, 2022



## Shared Vision

Ensure unimpeded access to essential care and treatment of mental illness for anyone in need in our community.

**Mission**  
The North Alabama Mental Health Coalition is made up of mental health collaborators who share knowledge, abilities, and resources to identify and fill the gaps the mentally ill and their families face in our community.

**Primary Mission**  
Provide individuals an easy-to-use resource that gives them personally actionable information regarding the resources available for personal health, public health, and public safety.

Here for You

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## Roadmap Framework



### Emergency Room Flow



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## Helping our Homeless

- 29.2 percent of all sheltered persons who were homeless had a severe mental illness.
- 34.7 percent of all sheltered adults who were homeless had chronic substance use issues.
- Of those who experience chronic/long-term homelessness, approximately 30 percent have mental health conditions, and 50 percent have co-occurring substance use problems.
- Most endure traumatic experiences that could potentially lead to mental health struggles, and certain environmental factors may increase the likelihood that they encounter future traumas.

Help them proactively connect to great leaders, resources, and services to help them overcome homelessness and mental health.

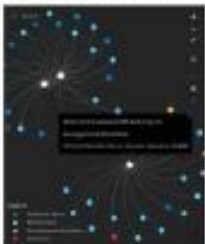

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## Social Systems Network

Goal: Bring greater visibility to the efforts of the NAMHC and engage the community to help understand and address the issues associated with homelessness.

### Visualizing Community Connections

What if we could visualize the connections between all the organizations, individuals, and resources in our community? This tool allows us to see the relationships between all the organizations, individuals, and resources in our community. It's a powerful way to see the connections between all the organizations, individuals, and resources in our community.

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## Communications and Responsive Action

**Goal:** Bring greater visibility to the efforts of the NMHC and engage the community to help understand and address the issues associated with access, availability, and quality of care and treatment for mental illness in our community.

Media (PRA)	Website	Monitor and Measure	Respond
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What the coalition does.</li><li>Who its stakeholders are.</li><li>Accesses of needs to care and treatment of mental illness in CLM community.</li><li>Call to action: "Engage and help build better lives and make our community stronger."</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Clear description of the coalition's mission.</li><li>Clear description of the stakeholders involved.</li><li>Call to action, with a means to engage.</li><li>Panel or Provide a form (Coordinates the website strategy).</li><li>Monthly summaries published and shared.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Monitor all feedback to identify appropriate and addressable issues.</li><li>Develop website analytics to quantify engagement to inform optimization of communications approach and messaging.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bring issues to general meeting for discussion.</li><li>Identify actions and actions to address issues.</li><li>Track issues to close.</li><li>Generate monthly summary of all activities and meeting minutes to be maintained on the website.</li></ul>

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## Thank You

Daniel Adamek  
Daniel@littleorangefish.org  
littleorangefish.org



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