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### MINUTES of March 8, 2021

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Andy Bateman, Jacki Block, Carrie Brown, Karen Conrad, Dorothy Glancy, John Kelly, Patty Lawrence, Greg Varner

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Kelley Costello, Laura Esslinger, Erica Koe-Krompecher

**MEMBERS UNEXCUSED:** Katie Shepherd

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER PRESENT:** Raymond Bailey

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER EXCUSED:** Richard Chaney

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Heather Cokl, Alicia Fine, Amy Foley, Susan Graham, Patty Hassel, Pamela Lindeman, Emily Neal, Jeff O'Neil, Laura Stith

**STAFF PRESENT:** Cindy Knoblauch, Erica Pursley, Karen Scherra, Lee Ann Watson

1. The meeting was conducted on video conference via Zoom due to the State of Ohio "Shelter at Home" order and the changes in the Open Meetings regulations due to the coronavirus. Chairperson Karen Conrad was having technical difficulties; therefore, Vice-Chairperson Andy Bateman stepped in as the Chair. Andy welcomed the Board members and the meeting proceeded.
2. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the Agenda for the March 8, 2021 Board meeting. (Motion-Jacki Block, second-Patty Lawrence).
3. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2021 Board of Directors' meeting. (Motion-Jacki Block, second-Dorothy Glancy).
4. Executive Director's Report: Executive Director Karen Scherra shared a few highlights from her report. Regarding Opioid/Drug Issues, Karen stated that overdose deaths across the country due to fentanyl-related substances continue to rise, which is causing a significant impact on communities. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 81,000 drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States in the 12 months ending in May 2020, the highest number of overdose deaths ever recorded in a 12-month period. Karen believes the increase in overdose deaths could bring more addiction services funding to the behavioral health system, possibly through federal CARES funding.

Regarding the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OMHAS) related activities, Karen Scherra said she has continued to participate in all ENGAGE Team and Board Representatives meetings. Karen said there is also a monthly local Mobile Response and

Stabilization Services (MRSS) meeting led by Child Focus staff to discuss how the program is going and any changes that may be happening. The group is beginning discussions on sustaining the MRSS program under Mobile Crisis when the grant ends. MRSS is supposed to become a Medicaid billable service when the OhioRISE program is implemented in January 2022. OMHAS has indicated that they will continue to fund the ENGAGE MRSS programs once the grant ends in September 2021 until OhioRISE is implemented. The Department of Medicaid has an OhioRISE Advisory Board which formed four committees. One is focused on MRSS, and both Cathy Krieg from CFI and Karen, are on that committee. In addition, Laura Stith from CFI is on the Intensive Home-based Treatment (IHBT) Committee and Gretchen Behimer, the FCF Coordinator, is on the Advisory Board.

Regarding Criminal Justice Related Activities, Karen said she met with Judge Kramig and Chief Probation Officer Joe Ellison from Municipal Court on February 19 to discuss the Indigent Driver Alcohol Treatment (IDAT) funds for FY21, as well as the Probation grant funds previously provided to the Board to offset costs of programs focused on Municipal Court clients involved with Clermont Recovery Center/Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services (CRC/GCB). The Board will again receive the IDAT funds for FY2021 in the amount of \$75,000, the same as last fiscal year. They also shared with Karen some issues that the Court has had with services in the behavioral health system in Clermont County, and Karen is working with the agencies to address those issues.

Karen Scherra also mentioned several items from the Federal Activities/Legislation section of her report. Karen stated that in a recent letter to state governors, Acting Secretary of Health and Human Services Norris Cochran signaled the US Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS's) commitment to "predictability and stability" in the ongoing response to the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE). The acting secretary informed governors that HHS's current PHE declaration, issued under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act, "will likely remain in place for the entirety of 2021." The likely extension of HHS's PHE declaration through 2021 will keep important flexibilities, such as telehealth waivers, in place as states and providers continue to plan for response efforts in 2021.

Karen also stated that the Medicaid Reentry Act has recently been reintroduced. This bipartisan bill would allow states to restart Medicaid coverage for health-related services for eligible incarcerated individuals up to 30 days before their release from jail or prison, improving access to critically needed services for one of the most vulnerable populations in the country. In addition, Congress is being asked by many advocates to include the Medicaid Reentry Act in the COVID-19 relief bill.

Karen also gave an update on the Biden Administration's plans for Medicaid work requirements. Karen stated that President Biden is expected to wipe out one of the core health policies of the Trump era, taking actions that will immediately rescind permission for states to compel low-income residents to work in exchange for receiving Medicaid benefits. In addition, the Centers for Medicare, and Medicaid Services (CMS) last week sent letters to states with previously approved Medicaid work requirement waivers informing them that the Biden Administration will commence a process to determine if the policy should be withdrawn, giving states 30 days to submit information contesting the decision. Further, the Supreme Court announced it would hear oral arguments on March 29 concerning the validity of the Trump administration's Medicaid work requirement waivers.

Karen Scherra also shared other Biden Administration priorities. Karen stated that the priorities outlined by the Office on National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) on February 3 for the administration's first 100 days are historic. For what appears to be the first time in history, harm reduction and racial equity are explicitly included among the ONDCP's aims.

Moving on, Karen stated that she had participated in two zoom meetings held by the West Clermont School District, one in the evening at the West Clermont School Board meeting and the other for all the local partners of the district. Superintendent Natasha Adams presented on the Strategic Plan developed by the school district and some new priorities for the schools to benefit the students. When she acknowledged partners, the Board and Child Focus were mentioned several times for the important services provided by Child Focus through funding from the Board to West Clermont students.

Karen wrapped up by mentioning the articles/documents attached to her report. The first was a copy of the testimony given by Cheri Walter, CEO of the Ohio Association of Behavioral Health Authorities (OACBHA), to the Ohio House Finance Subcommittee on Health and Human Services regarding HB 110, the State Budget Bill. In the testimony, Ms. Walter emphasized the importance of continued funding for behavioral health services. Ms. Walter also outlined her funding and language recommendations to be included in HB 110. The second article discussed how the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, which was recently passed by the House, could provide significant enhancements to health insurance coverage if enacted. The final article was titled "The People Who Care: How Harm Reduction Strategies for Those Who Use Drugs Bloomed in the Region" (Cincinnati). The article reports on the importance of harm reduction strategies such as clean syringe exchange programs. The article also mentioned Clermont County as a participant in harm reduction in the Cincinnati region.

5. Action Items: The first and only action item was the FFY 2021 MOU with the Clermont Board of County Commissioners for State Opioid Response (SOR) 2.0 funding for the Clermont County Community Alternative Sentencing Center (CASC). The Board received notice of the SOR 2.0 funding award for FFY2021, and some of the funds will be allocated to the County, for the operation of the women's CASC program. The Board needs to enter into an MOU with the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to allow the Board to provide SOR 2.0 funds to the BCC to cover the expenses of operating the CASC program for women and some parts of the men's program. The BCC holds the contract with Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services (GCB) for its operation of the CASC program. The Board is billed monthly by the County for the covered expenses for the men's CASC program. Karen Scherra had just received a copy of the MOU that day from the County Administrator for her review. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the FFY21 MOU with the Board of County Commissioners for SOR 2.0 funding for CASC and to authorize the Executive Director to sign the MOU on behalf of the Board. (Motion-Dorothy Glancy, second-Carrie Brown).
6. Discussion Items: The first discussion item was the State Budget FY22-23 Update. Karen Scherra stated that the ADAMHS Boards have requested an additional \$15 million in state funding for behavioral health services, as well as changes in statutory language in HB 110. Our One recommendation for \$15 million in the primary funding line item was revised after input from legislators. The new proposal involves moving \$9 million from the Student Wellness and Success funds allocated to schools into the boards' allocation, and along with that shift of

funding, boards are requesting an additional \$6 million be appropriated in the Continuum of Care allocation. ADAMHS Boards have also recommended language changes including: clarification of the role of the ADAMHS Boards as the community mental health and addiction planning authority and to modernize authority related to contracting for services, including the authority to ask for Requests for Proposals (RFPs) in contracts with provider agencies; more access to data for boards to improve planning and client and community outcomes; and changes or removal of the mandated 120-day notices for any changes in contracts with agencies. Leadership of OACBHA, OMHAS, the Ohio Council and Recovery Ohio are all supposed to meet and to discuss the new requests further. Karen said she will discuss the budget requests and Board member advocacy in more detail at the Board's retreat on March 13.

The second discussion item was the MRSS/OhioRISE Update. Karen Scherra said she discussed this during her Executive Director's report earlier in the agenda. Karen added that OhioRISE is moving forward toward its scheduled start date of January 2022. OhioRISE will be a key funding source for the continuation of MRSS and Mobile Crisis programming. Karen said another service that could become a Medicaid billable service is Wraparound. However, in Clermont County, Family and Children First (FCF) provides wraparound services. In order for a service to be Medicaid billable, the agency must be a Medicaid and OMHAS certified agency, which FCF is not, unless the rules are changed. Karen mentioned she is also concerned that under OhioRISE, the services of the clinician and peer will be bundled into one rate, meaning that the Peer Support Partners will have to be employed at the treatment agency, in our case CFI, not Hope Community Center. As mentioned earlier, Karen Scherra, Cathy Krieg from Child Focus, and two other Clermont County representatives are on state level committees for OhioRISE planning. Karen will discuss the planning in more detail at the retreat.

The third discussion item was the Board Retreat Agenda. Karen Scherra shared with the Board members the draft agenda for the retreat. The agenda items will include a review and discussion of the Gillette presentation from the Board in-service training in February, a grid organizing and outlining the Board's funding and mandated services, priorities for FY22 services that the Program and Finance Committees will be discussing, and succession planning for Karen's 2022 retirement. Board member Patty Lawrence stated she thought the grid outlining the Board's funding was a great idea.

7. Agency Directors' Reports: Susan Graham of Child Focus said her report stands. Susan added that Child Focus had that morning experienced the death of a student who was enrolled in the Wasserman program. CFI is organizing the Crisis Response Team to be available at the school for anyone, including Wasserman staff, needing help dealing with this traumatic event.

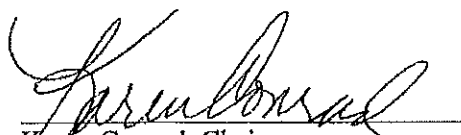
Jeff O'Neil of Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services (GCB)/Clermont Recovery Center (CRC), a division of GCB, said his report stands. Jeff also thanked Karen Scherra, Lee Ann Watson, and the Board for all of their efforts with the SOR 2.0 project. Jeff said SOR 2.0 will help cover some very critical services. Jeff also said that GCB/CRC staff have received 600-700 COVID-19 vaccines, 200 of them being at the Clermont County locations. Jeff closed by stating the behavioral health system is slated for funding relief through the upcoming stimulus bill in Congress.

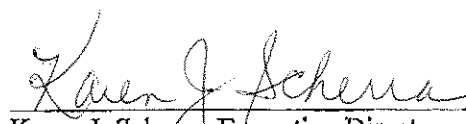
Heather Cokl, also of GCB/CRC, provided some additional updates. Heather said CRC received its annual audit and review of its Seven Challenges program last week. The review was done virtually with a national reviewer who evaluated leadership, curriculum, and programming. Heather said the preliminary report was "glowing" and GCB/CRC was highly commended. Heather added that all Quick Response Team (QRT) jurisdictions were back running in-person in the community. Heather also stated that Melissa Cole of the GCB/CRC Prevention Team is partnering with United Way to participate in another food drive on March 25 at Lakeshore Apartments in Goshen. Goody bags will contain drug prevention and suicide prevention materials and free Narcan.

Emily Neal of Nami SW Ohio said her report stands. Emily added that NAMI continues to offer its family and peer support groups virtually with good attendance. Emily added that the Hope for Recovery class is scheduled for March 13, 2021. Emily also reported that NAMI had a successful presentation of "Ending the Silence" at West Clermont High School. The presentation was done in health classes rather than an assembly setting as it was done in the past. Emily said the presentation was much better when it is broken down into smaller groups, and 300 students participated in the training.

Amy Foley of Hope Community Center (HCC) said her report stands. Amy added that HCC is still open on Tuesdays from 10am-12pm for in-person mental health peer groups. Amy said she hopes to have more open hours soon. Amy added that HCC's Parent Support Partners (PSPs) each have 15-16 cases. The PSPs, as part of the MRSS program, are receiving more referrals. Amy closed by announcing she had been asked by the Miami Township Fire Department Chief to present on peer support on a panel at the Fire/EMS Winter Symposium.

8. Comments from Public Attendees: There were no public attendees at the March 8, 2021 Board of Directors' meeting.
9. Adjournment: There being no further business, a motion was made, and unanimously approved, to adjourn the March 8, 2021 Board of Directors meeting. (Motion-Dorothy Glancy, second-Greg Varnner).

  
Karen Conrad, Chairperson

  
Karen J. Scherra, Executive Director