



State of Maryland

Advisory Council on Mental Hygiene/Planning Council

Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D., Secretary, DHMH

**House Appropriations Committee
House Health and Human Resources Subcommittee
Thursday February 6, 2014, 1:00 pm
Room 150, House Office Building
Budget Hearings – DHMH – Behavioral Health Administration**

This testimony is being respectfully submitted on behalf of the State and federally mandated Maryland Advisory Council on Mental Hygiene/ P.L. 102-321 Planning Council.

This council, referred to as the Joint Council, is composed of consumers, family members of persons with psychiatric disabilities, mental health professionals, provider organizations, advocacy organizations, representatives of other State agencies, and other interested citizens. We meet monthly with MHA leadership, assist in the development and review of the State Mental Health Plan; and also contribute to the development of Maryland's Mental Health Block Grant applications and implementation reports. We are in the process of developing, in conjunction with members of the State Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council, a combined Behavioral Health Advisory Council. Although our concerns in the past have centered around mental health issues, we are looking forward to fully-funded services in the new Behavioral Health Administration and are focusing on issues of behavioral health with components that impact the delivery of quality care.

c/o Mental Hygiene Administration

Spring Grove Hospital Center – 55 Wade Avenue – Dix Building – Catonsville MD 21228 – (410) 402-8473

TDD for Disabled – Maryland Relay Service (800) 735-2258

Healthy People in Healthy Communities



State of Maryland

Advisory Council on Mental Hygiene/Planning Council

Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D., Secretary, DHMH

Senate Health and Human Services Subcommittee

Friday February 7, 2014, 1:00pm

Amoss, Miller

Budget Hearings – DHMH – Behavioral Health Administration

Thank you for allowing me to speak in support of full funding of the Maryland FY 2015 Behavioral Health budget. My name is Dennis McDowell; I am a member of the State and federally mandated Maryland Advisory Council on Mental Hygiene/ P.L. 102-321 Planning Council. This council, referred to as the Joint Council, is composed of consumers, family members of persons with psychiatric disabilities, mental health professionals, provider organizations, advocacy organizations, representatives of other State agencies, and other interested citizens. We meet monthly with MHA leadership, assist in the development and review of the State Mental Health Plan; and also contribute to the development of Maryland's Mental Health Block Grant applications and implementation reports. We are in the process of developing, in conjunction with members of the State Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council, a combined Behavioral Health Advisory Council. Although our concerns in the past have centered around mental health issues, we are looking forward to fully-funded services in the new Behavioral Health Administration and are focusing on issues of behavioral health with components that impact the delivery of quality care.

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Healthy People in Healthy Communities

On behalf of the Advisory Council, we urge you to maintain access to behavioral health care and resist further cuts to mental health and co-occurring services. The mental health system itself is currently serving an increased number of individuals (more than 148,000) while maintaining the average cost of services per consumer. The projected level of funding does not provide sufficient resources to serve an anticipated increase in numbers of persons with mental illness and substance use issues entering the Behavioral Health System as a result of increasing Medicaid enrollment and improved access through health care reform.

We appreciate the supplemental budget appropriation issued by the Governor last April which included \$3.5 million for crisis response services and crisis intervention teams, establishment of a Center for Excellence on Early Intervention for Serious Mental Illness, and expansion of Mental Health First Aid (a low cost high impact public education program that teaches lay people methods of assisting someone who may be in the early stages of developing a behavioral health problem or in a mental health crisis situation).

Additional funding would further enhance

- Expansion of crisis services to divert individuals from unnecessary hospitalization and criminal justice involvement
- Programs for persons dually diagnosed with mental health and substance use disorders
- Availability of mental health and addiction services for children and transition-age youth
- Availability of behavioral health services for service members and veterans

- Recovery through increased development of affordable housing through projects such as the Rental Housing Works and Weinberg Initiatives which have gained the Governor's support in the past

We also support the work of the MHA, the psychiatric facilities, ADAA, the local Core Service Agencies (CSAs) and the Local Addiction Agencies (LAAs) in their work to coordinate a continuum of care as they move toward behavioral health integration. MHA and its CSAs continue to explore initiatives to increase diversion from psychiatric facilities, promote suicide prevention, and further enhance community-based services such as crisis response systems. ADAA has worked to develop initiatives to reduce incidents of overdose deaths in the community and has partnered with MHA on education and development of services for individuals with co-occurring disorders and trauma-informed care needs. For the CSAs and the LAA's, we ask that you limit cuts to their budgets as many of them struggle, despite staffing shortages, to maintain their statewide role of efficiently managing access to behavioral health services and coordinating contracting choices that impact those services on the local level.

In closing, the Joint Council urges you to support full funding for the Mental Hygiene and the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administrations' FY 2015 budget for inpatient and community systems of care and services.

Attachment: Joint Council Membership List

The Joint Council Membership List

This membership information has been updated as of January 2014

THE MARYLAND ADVISORY COUNCIL ON MENTAL HYGIENE

Name	Type of Membership	Agency or Organization
Sarah Burns, Chair	Consumer Advocate	
M. Sue Diehl, Vice Chair	Citizen Advocate	
Gerald Beemer	Mental Health Provider	Shore Behavioral Health
Mike Finkle	Consumer Advocate	On Our Own of Maryland
Joshana Goga	Medical Profession	
Dennis McDowell	Citizen Advocate	
Joanne Meekins	Mental Health Advocate	Consumer Quality Team of Maryland
Livia Pazourek	Citizen Advocate	
Robert Pender	Citizen Advocate	
Charles Reifsnider	Consumer Advocate	
Anita Solomon	Provider of Mental Health Services	
John Turner	Clergy	Shore Health System

THE PL 102-321 PLANNING COUNCIL

Name	Type of Membership	Agency or Organization
Lynn Albizo	Citizen Advocate	
Robert Anderson	State Employee	Department of Juvenile Services
Thomas E. Arthur, Coordinator	Mental Health Advocate	
Naomi Booker	Mental Health Advocate	
Michael Bluestone	State Employee	Developmental Disabilities Administration
Eugenia W. Conolly	State Employee	Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration
Chicquita Crawford	Family Member/Child	
Herb Cromwell	Mental Health Provider Organization	Community Behavioral Health Association of Maryland

PL 102-321 PLANNING COUNCIL – CONTINUED

Name	Type of Membership	Agency or Organization
Jan Desper	Advocacy Group Representative	The Black Mental Health Alliance
Kate Farinholt	Advocacy Group Representative	National Alliance on Mental Illness
R Terence Farrell	Core Service Agency Representative	Maryland Association of Core Service Agencies
Nancy Feeley	State Employee	Maryland Department of Education
Vira Froehlinger	Citizen Advocate	
Ann Geddes	Family Advocate	MD Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health
A. Scott Gibson	Consumer Advocate	
Victor Henderson	State Employee	Maryland Department of Disabilities
Julia Jerscheid	Consumer Advocate	
Frank Kolb	State Employee	Maryland Health Exchange
Alexis Moss	State Employee	Medical Assistance, Office of Health Services
Michael J. Lang	Consumer Advocate	
Sharon Lipford	Family Advocate	Harford County Government
George Lipman	Judicial System	
William Manahan	State Employee	Department of Housing and Community Development
Dan Martin	Advocacy Group Representative	Mental Health Assoc. of Maryland, Inc.
Cynthia Petion	State Employee	Mental Hygiene Administration
Jacqueline Powell	State Employee	Department of Human Resources, Placement and Support Services, DSS
Linda J. Raines	Advocacy Group Representative	Mental Health Association of Maryland, Inc
Sarah Rhine	Advocacy Group Representative	Maryland Disability Law Center
Sheryl Sparer	Consumer Advocate	
Michelle Stewart	State Employee	Division of Rehabilitation Services

PL 102-321 PLANNING COUNCIL – CONTINUED

Name	Type of Membership	Agency or Organization
Jane Walker	Family Advocate	MD Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health
Kathleen Ward	State Employee	Department of Human Resources, Adult Services
Phoenix Woody	State Employee	Maryland Department of Aging