

North Carolina Mental Health Planning and Advisory Council (NCMHPAC)

Meeting Minutes | Friday, August 1, 2025, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Present: Peg Morrison, Maryann Dantone, Jeffrey Mcloud, Stacey Harward, Susan Hertz, Tracy Boggiano, Diane Krisanda, Marcia Gibson, Nina Leger, Thea Craft, Stacy Morgan, Pachovia Lovett

DMHDDSUS Staff: Stacey Harward, Badia Henderson, Crystal Dorsey

Mission: To make recommendations on the State Behavioral Health Plan(s) for services and programs for children and adults with serious mental health needs and their families.

Vision: A mental health system that works for everyone

	Agenda Item/Presenter Discussion	MHBG Plan Relevance Resources/Data Sources/Indicators	Action
1.	Welcome / Approval Minutes Peg Morrison, Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of Agenda and Minutes • Motion made to approve June’s meeting minutes 	Minutes approved
2.	Public Comment Peg Morrison, Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A student recently reached out with interest in starting a NAMI chapter at their high school, which is exciting news. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are currently four high schools with chapters, and efforts are also underway to expand into community colleges. 	
3.	DMH/DD/SUS Update Lisa DeCiantis, Chief Clinical Officer for MH, Wellness, Treatment, and Recovery Division of MH/DD/SUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa provided the Division update on behalf of Director Crosbie. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impact of Congress passing HR1, which includes federal funding cuts to programs like Medicaid and SNAP. ○ Cuts are expected to affect health services and increase the workload related to eligibility redetermination and recertification. ○ The Division is preparing to manage the impact and will continue to provide updates as more information becomes available. 	See PowerPoint for additional information

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	988 Crisis Line, LGBTQ+ Youth Support, and Awareness Campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LGBTQ youth support option on the 988 crisis line ended on July 17 due to funding cuts.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ North Carolina averaged 1,500 youth contacts to this line over the past six months.○ Despite the change, collaboration with the Trevor Project continues, and callers can still be referred as needed. 988 call centers remain committed to supporting LGBTQ callers through training and resources.• Since June 2024, 988 has received over 150,000 calls, with the highest volume from youth ages 13–17.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Free bilingual (English/Spanish) educational materials are available for schools and organizations, with orders due by August 4.• The third anniversary of 988 was marked on July 16, and 988 Day will be recognized on September 8 during Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.• Back-to-school campaign is underway to support youth and families with mental health resources.	
	Black Youth Suicide Prevention Action Plan Launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first strategic Black Youth Suicide Prevention Action Plan has been completed, developed through collaboration among multiple agencies, divisions, and community stakeholders.• The plan addresses the increased suicide risk among Black youth due to systemic barriers, cultural stigma, and limited representation among providers, and emphasizes the importance of culturally responsive prevention strategies.• A kickoff event is scheduled for late September to raise awareness and engage community organizations.	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADA anniversary was celebrated on July 24 in North Raleigh, highlighting both progress made and ongoing work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ADA-related resources and toolkits are available at ADAanniversary.org. 	
	<p>Unashamed NC Campaign and Substance Use Stigma Reduction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Unashamed NC Campaign was launched to reduce stigma around substance use disorder and promote evidence-based treatment, particularly medications for opioid use disorder. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The event featured key state leaders, including Director Crosby, First Lady Anna Stein, and the Secretary. • The campaign aligns with state and national strategies and highlights personal recovery stories from across North Carolina. • With 57% of North Carolinians knowing someone affected by opioid use disorder, the campaign aims to reduce overdoses and improve access to support services. 	
	<p>MHBG Application Alicia Hess, MS, APR, Grant Manager, Contract and Grant Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redetermination for eligibility is planned for 2027 or 2028, with federal cuts to Medicaid and mental health grants expected after the midterm elections. • DHHS is preparing timelines and workload plans to manage these changes. The state acknowledges the potential loss of resources for youth and young adults and is emphasizing community support. • The application for the state plan is due August 29, 2025, and must address specific populations, including children with SED, adults and older adults with SMI, and individuals in rural or homeless settings. 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan must also allocate at least 10% for early SMI intervention and 5% for crisis services. • North Carolina will submit separate plans for mental health and substance use, aligned with the 2024–2029 strategic plan. • The council will review the draft by August 21, with a support letter required for final submission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A review meeting is scheduled for August 20 at 2:00 p.m., with prior documents available for reference. 	
4.	<p>Initiatives for Transition-Age Youth (Health Transitions and First Episode Psychosis) Kelly Shusko, MSW, Family Services Team Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Healthy Transitions program supports youth ages 16–25 as they move from child to adult mental health services, addressing needs like mental health, housing, education, and employment through a holistic, team-based approach that includes peer and family support. • A pilot from 2018–2024 informed the current effort, which aims to serve 260 youth over five years with more than \$1 million in funding. • Key deliverables include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creating an advisory council ○ Workforce training ○ Interagency agreements ○ Developing a Medicaid service definition for youth peer support • The First Episode Psychosis (FEP) program, targeting ages 15–30, is federally mandated to receive 10% of block grant funds but is no longer supported by ARPA funding. • Programs face challenges such as high youth unemployment, housing instability, justice involvement, 	

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		and reluctance to seek help, although access is improving through low-barrier services like 988.	
6.	2025-2026 MHBG Planning Peg Morrison, Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to COVID-19, activities shifted from in-person to virtual formats, which improved outreach and convenience for participants across various locations. • Hybrid model for meetings combining virtual and in-person options is now being proposed to better accommodate individual preferences, family commitments, and personal circumstances. 	
7.	Adjourn	The next meeting to be held Hybrid	

2025-2026 Meeting Dates:

October 3, 2025
December 5, 2025 February 6, 2026
April 3, 2026 June 5, 2026 August 7, 2026
October 2, 2026 December 4, 2026