

**Howard County**  
**Opioid Crisis Community Council**  
**May 5, 2021**  
**5:15-6:45pm**  
**VIA ZOOM – COVID-19**

**In Attendance:**

Barbara Allen, Robin Bartko, Theresa Collins, Joanie Elder, Beth Harbison, Sean Hughes, Cindy Johnson, Teron Powell, Roe Rodgers-Bonaccorsy, Joan Webb Scornaienchi, Sean Ford, Mark Donovan, Kim Wireman, Liesele Wood, Kaymisha Knights, Jama Acuff

Barbara Allen called the meeting to order at 5:21pm and asked if any changes to the March and April minutes. No changes were noted. Joanie Elder moved to approved minutes; Robin Bartko seconded.

We welcome Jama Acuff, new HD Detention Center Director: [jacuffg@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:jacuffg@howardcountymd.gov)

**Announcements:**

Roe announced:  
(per the chat)

The Bureau of Behavioral Health and Dr. Robert Evans of Empowerment Counseling will be holding a three-part facilitated conversation called "**Difficult Conversations About Race**". The presenter will offer guidance and structure around conversations addressing racial injustice and confusion, as well as cultural competency, a critical topic that has emerged as more important than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope you'll join us as we explore how to have these conversations; how to include children in these conversations; and how to practice cultural competency and humility. Series dates are April 30, May 21 and June 18, 2021

For more information and to sign up, visit the following: Difficult Conversations About Race Eventbrite Link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/difficult-conversations-about-race-a-discussion-series-tickets-150062834979>

**May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Children's Mental Health Awareness Week is May 2- May 8.** "The Children's Mental Health Matters!" campaign brings together non-profits, schools, agencies, and other partners with the goal to raise public awareness of the importance of children's mental health and substance use. The Campaign also helps reduce the stigma of mental health, lets parents know that they are not alone in caring for children with mental health needs, and connects families throughout Maryland with information and services to help their child. For more info, visit: <https://www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org/>

**We are asking everyone to wear GREEN on May 6th** to recognize this important campaign and week. If you would snap a pic of yourself and send it to us, we'll post here and on social media! Send to Tia Gaymon: [tgaymon@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:tgaymon@howardcountymd.gov)

Other info:

- BBH will work with Communications to revamp 4-6 messages that promote connecting for BH support to be shared on the County Exec's social media platforms.
- Content created to acknowledge April as Alcohol Awareness month will be shared on social media in the coming week.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> RFP coming out for case management for LEAD
- RFP interviews being held for Mental Health Crisis Beds
- Awarded 2 RFPs for Hub and Spoke expansion of Buprenorphine access
- Planning virtual event with **Dr. Doaty through Sage Wellness on 6/23** at noon **Mental Health and Its Impact On Everything: Part 2**. This interactive workshop will examine the importance of understanding emotional wellness and how mental health impacts individuals, families, and communities, and ways to support optimal mental health. This workshop will assist participants in effectively identifying self-care strategies to employ to promote optimal mental and emotional wellness

Joanie Elder thanked Roe Rodgers-Bonaccorsy and the health department for helping some at risk individuals get Covid vaccines. She mentioned the health department was friendly and competent.

**Guest presentation by Kim Wireman, Executive Director, Powell Recovery Center in Baltimore City**

Key takeaways:

- Been in business since 1994
- Takes Medicare only
- The city has approximately 75 fatal overdoses per month
- The typical population age is between late 30's, early 40's, homeless, 10<sup>th</sup> grade education
- Their facility focuses on withdrawal management, telehealth and rapid treatment with 24 hours
- They are open 8am-8pm daily
- They are accredited by the ACHC on a 3-year cycle
- Since 2017, they've seen a high increase in fentanyl use
- Fentanyl with cocaine is extremely dangerous
- Kim thinks fentanyl has increased because it is relatively inexpensive at \$3 per pill (cheaper than a pack of cigarettes)
- Kim's staff carries Narcan with them and makes it available for the local community. Narcan has saved lives and is used approximately 10 times per month
- 507 clients served.

Comments:

Teron mentioned that fentanyl affects the brain very quickly, quicker than some other drugs. On Netflix, there is a show called "Dope" that is very educational. Mark Donovan mentioned that Fentanyl is stronger in the body system, he sees less Fentanyl locally. Theresa mentioned that since the second

Covid-19 stimulus check, she has seen double the overdoses in Howard County. She recommended “Dope” also.

Updates from Barbara:

- per Carl DeLorenzo of the County Executive Office, the delay with new residential centers is due to covenant issues. He will have more information in June.
- The 211 pocket guides, are they being used? There are more available for distribution
- We are encouraged to develop plans for two time frames: 18 months to 3-years
- We need to look what other countries are doing to control drug use. Portugal has legalized drugs. They have a different system in place for drug users and a different relationship with law enforcement. Netherlands handles their drug problems different as well.
- New Telehealth legislation is supported by Medicaid

Meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Robin Bartko

APPROVED