

CommUNITY Adult Mental Health Initiative

Advisory Committee

June 05, 2025

Voting Members Present: 9

Quorum Required: 8

Representative	“X” = Present	Stakeholder	Alternate	“X” = Present
Knowles, Nikki – Vice Chair	X	Benton County	Moscho, Ashely	X
(Vacant)		Benton County Community Advocate	(Vacant)	
Julia Draxten		CBHH	Lange, Mary	
Schultz, Rita		CSP – Stearns/Benton	Sheehan, Meg	X
(Vacant)		CSP – Sherburne/Wright	(Vacant)	
(Vacant)		MHC – Sherburne/Wright	(Vacant)	
Loos, Steven	X	MHC – Stearns/Benton	(Vacant)	
Johannes, Victoria	X	Sherburne County	Magaard, Derek	
Vachel, Melody	X	Sherburne County Community Advocate	Brainard, Susan	
Dwyer, Tyler		St. Cloud Hospital	Fischer, Melissa	
Behm, Casie		Stearns County	Salsness-Tvedten, Jennifer	
Robins, Courtney		Stearns County Community Advocate	(Vacant)	
Jurek, Dr. Kristin		VA Medical Center	Sorenson, Matt	
Elstad, Brienne	X	Vocational Sherburne/Wright	(Vacant)	
Collins, Kayla	X	Vocational Stearns/Benton	Danda, Julie	
Gilb, Jordan		VRS – Sherburne/Wright	Main, Erin	
Fruth, Donna		VRS – Stearns/Benton		
Erkens, Diane	X	Wright County	Pooler, Jill	
(Vacant)		Wright County Community Advocate	LaCroix-Kinniry, Deb	X

		Ex- officio members
Oberg, Bethany	X	Initiative Coordinator

		Other attendees
Flack, Leon		UCare
Gibbons, Jacey		Solutions Behavioral Health
Nordlie, Ashley		Functional Industries
Rocheleau Dorholt, Jennifer	X	SCSU
Wiebe, Michelle	X	Central MN Council on Aging
Sprynczynatyk, Gary – Chair		BCBS
Yussuf, Noor		Bestwood IRTS
Freyholtz-London, Jode		Wellness in the Woods
Loehlein, Stephanie	X	SCSU
Fuchs-Hoeschen, Susan		CMMHC
Yeadon, Monica		Wellness in the Woods
Lindberg, Cheryl	X	Refractions
Adan, Shirwa		Credent Care
Brown, Jimmie	X	Credent Care
Johnson, Lance	X	Credent Care
Wegner, Sheri	X	ConnectAbility
Warren, Andrew	X	Charlie Health

Call to order:

Nikki K. called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. The mission statement was read. Everyone introduced themselves and the area they represent.

Current Agenda:

Diane E. made a motion to approve the agenda; Victoria J. seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Minutes – April 2025:

Diane E. made a motion to approve the April 2025 meeting minutes; Steven L. seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Highlighting Area Providers/Services:

- a. ConnectAbility of Minnesota: Sheri Wegner, Executive Director and Amanda Brunotte, Senior Manager-Community Engagement
ConnectAbility is a non-profit organization. They have offices in Duluth, Rochester, and Waite Park but serve all 87 counties in MN. People donate equipment that they have either outgrown or no longer need. ConnectAbility cleans and refurbishes the equipment for others to use. They offer pop-up events at no cost for people to see the equipment that is offered.

They also have an Assistive Technology Lab for people to test before investing in the equipment. ConnectAbility does not sell the equipment but can assist people in obtaining the technology and help them through the waiver process.

They also have inclusive and adaptive events like sensory friendly “Touch A Truck,” bowling,

Halloween party, and others. Communities can work with ConnectAbility to learn how to create more inclusive events.

b. Charlie Health: Andrew Warren, Clinical Outreach Manager

Charlie Health is an intensive outpatient program connecting the world to life-saving mental health treatment. Charlie Health was founded in Montana in 2019 and have expanded to 38 states nationwide with over 65,000 clients served. In July 2024 they expanded to Minnesota.

They offer solutions to mental health barriers like access to care, waitlists, inflexible schedules, transportation, location outside of clients' safe space, and curriculum not being specialized to marginalized populations. They offer immediate help with virtual intensive outpatient programs. Charlie Health has flexible scheduling Monday through Saturday from morning until evening.

They offer specialized care and individuals participating in support groups will be with others in their same age range and with the same types of trauma/issues. They also offer support groups for parents, guardians, siblings, spouses, etc. of loved ones who are clients. Spanish speaking groups are also available.

They accept Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Medicaid, and other insurances. If someone does not have remote technology, Charlie Health can provide devices, but they are unable to offer connection (WiFi). www.charliehealth.com

Financial Report: *Ashely M.*

Ashely M. shared the financial report through May 2025.

Open Community Advocate Positions: *Bethany O.*

We currently have open Community Advocate positions: two in Benton, one in Stearns, and one in Wright. A stipend and mileage reimbursement are offered.

Joint Powers Board Opening: *Bethany*

There is an opening for Consumer Advocate on the Joint Powers Board. Melody V. expressed interest in serving on the Board.

Diane E. motioned to have Melody V. serve as the Consumer Representative on the Joint Powers Board; Meg S. seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Advisory Discussion: *Gaps and Barriers for Clients*

No discussion.

CommUNITY Mental Health Initiative Committee and Grant Updates:

- a. Housing Coordination:* Meg S. shared updates for April-May.
- b. Vocational Grant:* Kayla C. will share Q2 updates in August. They see a lot of interest in digital literacy and career readiness.
- c. ARMHS Non-MA:* Erin W. with Solutions shared updates. Jimmie B. with Credent Care shared updates.
- d. Peer Support Service Non-MA:* Bri E. shared updates.

- e. *Anti-Stigma Workgroup*: Bethany O. shared they were busy in May and expect that to continue through summer.
- f. *Training Workgroup*: Bethany O. shared updates.

Community Based Mental Health Services:

- a. *IRTS*
 - i. Refractions: Cheryl L. shared updates. Little Falls and St. Augusta are full. St. Cloud has female openings, but male beds are full. Referrals can be sent through their website: [Referral Form – Refractions](#)
 - ii. Bestwood Agency: No one in attendance
- b. *ACT*: Steven L. shared updates, they should be fully staffed by June.
- c. *Crisis Response Team*: Steven L. shared updates.
- d. *Crisis Bed Program*: Steven L. shared updates.
- e. *Inpatient*:
 - i. St. Cloud Hospital: no one in attendance.
 - ii. Buffalo Hospital: no one in attendance
 - iii. Monticello Hospital: April S. shared updates, they are full all the time.
- f. *V.A.*: no one in attendance.
- g. *CBHH*: no one in attendance.
- h. *V.R.S.*: no one in attendance.
- i. *Website*: Bethany O. no updates. Be sure to share the website with new coworkers: [Home - Minnesota Mental Health](#)

Advisory Discussion: Recent Wins

Meg S. shared that with the increase in funding they will be able to serve a lot more people.

Melody V. shared she tabled an event as part of the Central MN Suicide Prevention Committee and was also able to be a closing speaker for another conference.

Sherburne County hired a 2nd co-responder. They also have a therapy dog named Peach who will be going to outreach events.

Bri E. shared they partnered with local business to “Chalk about Mental Health” for Mental Health Awareness Month in May.

Open Forum:

Deb L.K. shared the Larry R. Hill Act passed. It requires county jails to provide medication to inmates who were prescribed it prior to incarceration. This includes individuals with a Jarvis order.

Next Meeting:

- a. August 7, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, Benton County Board Room, Foley, MN and via Zoom

Adjourn:

Victoria motioned to adjourn; Courtney seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 2:18 p.m.