



Southern Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration

February 11, 2025, 10:00am-12:00pm

Visionary Room, 401 NW 2 Avenue, Miami, FL 33128

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: **Department of Children and Families SAMH-** Asta Trinh, Lourdes Dorado-Rubio, Melanie Castro, Cristina Perez, Joquetta Batista **Department of Children and Families CCDA -** Violet Ryland, Gilda Fernandez **Department of Children and Families SAMH Licensing-** Yamile Diaz **Agency for Healthcare Administration-** Kirk Hall, Arlene Mayo-Davis **Agency for Persons with Disabilities-** Tajat Rivers, Hillary Jackson, Silvia Zayas **Florida Department of Health-** Candace Williams **Department of Education- Miami-Dade County Public Schools-** Lianie Cuba **SEDNET-** Dolores Vega **School Districts- Miami-Dade County Public Schools-** Sally Alayon **Area Agencies on Aging- Alliance for Aging-** Barbara Suarez **Community-Based Care Lead Agency- Citrus Family Care Network-** Marg Whebley, Ashton Sanchez **Thriving Mind South Florida ME-** Laura Naredo, Stephen Zuckerman **Behavioral Health Service Providers- The Village South/West Care-** Leonard Ross, Islem Pardinas **Banyan Health Systems BH-** Jordan Guedes, Orestes Garcia **AGAPE Network -** Gabriela Vargas **Citrus Navigate-** Mary Distasio, Silvio Padilla **Community Health of South Florida-** Mariacarmen Soto **Catholic Charities -** Sandra Valdes **Fellowship House-** Cristina Martinez **New Hope C.O.R.P.S-** James Dougherty **South Florida Wellness Network -** Susan Nyamora, Michelle Fernandez **Hospitals- Jackson Behavioral Health Hospital-** Patrice Tilson **Nicklaus Children's Hospital-** Leyden Diaz, Suzy Castro, Miosotis Falcon **Southern Winds Hospital-** Ana Bovo **Mount Sinai Medical Center-** Mary Jaramillo Mangia **Medicaid Managed Medical Assistance Plans-Molina Health Care MMA-** Carmen Perez Valenzuela **Sunshine Health MMA -** Monique Peele **United Health-** Joe Rogers **Police-City of Miami Police Department -** John Blackerby **Miami Dade School Police -** Jandro Suarez **Miami Shores Police Department-** Martha Tejera **Sheriff's Office-Miami Dade Sheriff's Office-** Maria Barosela, Heather Winters **Department of Corrections-** Sonia Dennis Ortiz, John Thompson, Valarie Wtchard, Arnia Perpignand, Sunny Ukenye **Florida Community Care-** Alina Orozco **Florida Internal University Embrace-** Mayte Capo **Miami-Dade County-** Brenda Lampon **NAMI Miami-Dade -** Denice Frieden

I. CALL TO ORDER

Cristina Perez called to order the Kick-Off for the Southern Region Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration at 10:03 am on February 11, 2025.

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS



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Lourdes Dorado-Rubio, Regional Director for the Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (SAMH) welcomed the attendees. The following individuals provided introductions:

Asta Trinh, Chief of Regional Operations and Initiatives

Melanie Castro, SAMH Human Services Program Director

Cristina Perez, Regional Collaboration Coordinator

Kirk Hall, Agency for Health Care Administration, Government Analyst

III. OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL COLLOBORATION COORDINATOR POSITION/ROLE/ OBJECTIVES/

HB7021 allocated funds for Statewide Regional Collaboration Coordinator positions. Cristina Perez provided an overview of their roles, objectives, and vision.

IV. IMPACT OF REGIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INTERAGENCY COLLABORATIVES

Lourdes Dorado Rubio provided an overview on the impact of the Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboratives and the importance of sharing and collaborating on Gap Analysis among agencies. The Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaborative will result in quarterly meetings with an annual report to be completed and presented to the Florida Legislature. The Collaborative contained required members as part of Chapter 394, F.S. as well as appropriations for the Regional Collaboration Coordinator position. These Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboratives "Kick Off" Meetings are occurring throughout the State for the month of February 2025.

The Regional Collaborative Project Charter was shared with the meeting invitation and briefly discussed. The Charter details the Statewide Regional Collaboration Coordinator position, markers, and deadlines for required reports. A public webpage will be announced by the end of the month which will hold meeting agenda, minutes, and required reports which are published after approval by the members of the Collaborative.



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V. MANAGING ENTITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Laura Naredo, Vice President of Thriving Mind South Florida, Southern Regions Managing Entity (ME), discussed their needs assessments, recent required plans, and how they can assist in the Collaborative. Thriving Mind provided an overview of their annual Enhancement Plan and their Children system of care plan following SB 945. The Managing Entities needs assessment are completed every 3 years. For Southern, Thriving Mind will be completing their needs assessment by October 2025. They will begin with conducting surveys in March and April that will be distributed to the community. In the summer, they will begin their Focus Groups. Varied locations and times are scheduled to accommodate feedback. Attendees requested for Thriving Mind to distribute information on the surveys and focus groups.

After the ME needs assessment concludes, legislature dollars are then utilized to target the identified needs.

Previous Needs Assessment indicated:

1. Increase Affordable Housing
2. Increase children's CSU Services.
3. Increase Residential Services

VI. REVIEW OF KEY FOCUS AREAS

Lourdes Dorado Rubio provided overview on the 4 key areas.

1. Strengthening Community networks and gross agency collaboration.
2. Enhancing Crisis Care Continuum.
3. Improving Data Collection and Management Processes.
4. Optimizing the financial management of the Behavioral Health system of care.

VII. OPEN DISCUSSION

Open Discussion

Attendees were asked to provide responses to the below questions.

1. Tell us about your organization GAP Analysis process and if it is public facing.
2. What other Collaboratives or Workgroups are you attending, and items being addressed.
3. What are opportunities for improvement?



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MDCS: Sally Alayon – discussed current relationship with the ME and previous experience in participating in GAP analysis. Through a gap analysis, allocation of funding was provided to create Department of Mental Health which now has 140 Mental Health coordinators who are available to service every school and provide education on prevention programs, life skills and coping skills.

Mount Sinai Medical Center, Mary Jaramillo Mangia – provided an overview of their large continuum of care as a private Hospital, including an Autism clinic. Provided a brief description of an internal Gap Analysis: more supportive services for parents, more Outpatient services, more Trauma Informed Services, assisting families and individuals who have an Autism diagnosis with no previous history before 18, Aftercare recommendations for housing services and warm handoffs, in addition to a statewide peer support team would be useful. Reported that prior to the pandemic, they had partnered with Douglas Gardens Community Mental Health Center, who would have their peers visit the behavioral health unit. Also suggested educational and mental health resources for first responders, law enforcement, and physicians.

MDS Police, Jandro Suarez- provided a brief description on the role of School Police. Stationed at every school and utilizes mentoring /coaching to help build rapport with students. School Officers are CIT trained.

Dept of Corrections, John Thompson – stated that even though department of Corrections is not required by Statute to participate, they are eager to, due to serving the same population. Shared that a potential gap is a lack of communication between the departments, as neither is aware of what the other offers or that they are serving the same individual. Emphasized the importance of not wanting these individuals to return or enter the jail and how collaborating among departments could ameliorate those concerns. Department of Corrections requested education on services available in the community.

APD Silvia Zayas – shared the diverse and challenging population that they serve among their collaboration with Law Enforcement. Stated communication between Agencies is a current Gap and had been interested in providing a training to Law Enforcement via CIT Collaboration. Suggested to create a workgroup to identify how to best support employees working through more hands-on trainings such as role playing.

City of Miami PD John Blackerby – CIT officer, mentioned the current systems gap where law enforcement is often the first responder and first to interact with an individual, when they are at their most vulnerable and law enforcement does not know what's, services exist and how they can assist the individual. Stated the inception of monthly CIT Collaboration meetings which occur between law enforcement and Baker Act



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Receiving Facilities to discuss any concerns have assisted in remedying issues that have existed in the past. Shared their optimism about these collaboratives stated, "this how we will start to see change".

SEDNET Dolores Vega- provided an overview of their function which includes assisting students with emotional disabilities using a grant from the department of education. Through the grant they: Assist parents to prepare children to acclimate returning to school following residential treatment, educate teachers on de-escalation techniques and trauma informed care. Stated they are a liaison between the community and the school. They also conduct resource fairs to allow schools to become familiar with community services.

Dept of Health Candace Williams – provided insight of their function in the health & planning department. Shared their annual community health assessment is being updated and currently there is a wellbeing survey taking place. Goal is to make Florida the healthiest state.

Jackson Behavioral Health Hospital Patrice Tilson- provided data on total of patients seen a month which is 600 along with an average length of stay of 5-6 days. Shared that they are dependent on follow up and community services to fill the gaps. Recidivism rates continue to rise. Concern over State Hospital admission rates and wait times as well as an increase in costs of managed care plans. Acknowledged crisis response has come a long way but a diversion from the State Hospital and long inpatient stays needs to be explored.

Alliance for Aging Barbara Suarez – provided and overview of their function and shared an annual aging assessment is updated every year by the Agency. Long Term Care (LTC) program has a high volume. They have meal sites (66) to help avoid social isolation. Their program SHINE educates individuals on Medicare bills. A grant was provided to the Agency to provide education on community resources, but providers did not bid.

South Florida Wellness Network Susan Nyamora - provided insight on what is done at SFWN as a Recovery Community Organization along with her lived experience. SFWN employs 85 Peer Specialist across Miami-Dade and Broward County. Will be delivering 30,000 naloxone kits to be distributed for spring break and during music festival week. Stated observed gaps were the lack of youth peer support services which are established in Broward (12 youth peer specialists) but are not established in Miami-Dade. Medicaid also does not allow an RCO to bill as a standalone service yet. Funding basic needs can stop recidivism rates. Housing is considered Harm Reduction. SFWN



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was asked to provide a brief overview of an RCO as the audience was not familiar with their services.

New Hope James Dougherty provided overview of their function and the services offered by RCO. Shared that they have a Drop-in center, residential services, outpatient services, dental, and housing services. Mentioned partnering more closely with the Homeless trust. Homeless Trust will reportedly repurpose a La Quinta Inn Hotel to permanent housing options for individuals 55 and older.

VIII. MEETING FREQUENCY/NEXT STEPS

Lourdes Dorado-Rubio and Cristina Perez provided next meeting date of May 15, 2025, at 10:30am in person at the Visionary room 401 NW 2nd Ave Miami, FL 33128.

Asta Trinh discussed future quarterly Collaborative Meetings to include Agency specific presentations. Survey development to gather information on potential presenters.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

An opportunity was provided for Public Comment.

No public comment

X. MOTION TO ADJOURN

A Survey code was provided to attendees for feedback. Asta Trinh and Lourdes Dorado-Rubio provided closing remarks thanking the group for attending. Cristina Perez adjourned the Southern Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration at 11:15 am.
