



Central Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration

November 6, 2025, 10:00am-12:00pm EST

Virtual via Teams

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance: Total 70

Hosts/Facilitators:

Department of Children and Families - Diveka Anderson, Regional Collaboration Coordinator;
Morgan Schell, Regional Operations Manager

Presenters:

Central Florida Behavioral Health Network - Luis Rivas, Vice President of Behavioral Health Services

Central Florida Cares Health System, presented by Jeff Feller, Chief Executive Officer,
WellFlorida Council

Lutheran Services Florida / LSF Health Systems - Dr. Christine Cauffield, Chief Executive Officer
Shelley Katz, Chief Operating Officer

Full Attendee List is Provided in Appendix A

I. CALL TO ORDER

Diveka Anderson, called to order the Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Quarterly Meeting at 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, November 6th, 2025.

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Morgan Schell, welcomed attendees and introduced the following:

Morgan Schell, Department of Children and Families (DCF), Substance Abuse & Mental Health (SAMH)

Diveka Anderson, Department of Children and Families (DCF), Substance Abuse & Mental Health (SAMH)



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Housekeeping reminders were provided regarding microphone muting, Q&A procedures, and the use of the chat feature.

Morgan Schell noted participation from Central Region's Managing Entities (MEs):

- Central Florida Behavioral Health Network (CFBHN)
- Central Florida Cares Health System (CFCBS)
- Lutheran Services Florida Health Systems (LSFHS)

III. PRESENTATION I – CFBHN TRIENNIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

PRESENTER: LUIS RIVAS, VICE PRESIDENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES, CFBHN

Summary Highlights:

- Conducted a triennial needs assessment across 14 counties, including Judicial Circuit 10, to guide strategic planning and enhancement initiatives.
- Focus on streamlined system coordination and warm handoffs between services; ongoing monitoring of residential bed capacity and high-acuity cases; expansion of Family Intensive Treatment (FIT) teams; alignment with Heartland Community-Based Care (CBC) for Circuit 10 service strategies.
- Expansion of Community Action Teams (CAT); launch of Family Well-Being Treatment Teams and Family Support Teams to address frequent Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) admissions among youth; emphasis on a whole-family approach.
- Expanded boys' residential treatment program offering 12 beds and 24/7 care for statewide referrals.
- Forensic and Family Therapy Models: Functional Family Therapy (FFT) program in Polk County (implemented through the North American Family Institute (NAFI)) exceeded targets; Forensic Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) supporting re-entry and reducing recidivism.
- Opioid and Coordinated Opioid Recovery (CORE) Investments: Combined opioid settlement and CORE network funding increased regional collaboration, resulting in 40% growth in substance misuse funding over three years; expanded peer linkages, Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) access, and pain-management pathways.
- Peer Support and Workforce Development: Conducted 37 peer support training sessions, with 150 individuals trained and 48 certifications earned across Recovery Community Organizations (RCOs), National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) programs, and Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) initiatives.



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- Identified primary barriers including stigma, transportation challenges, costs, and geographic limitations; 94.4% of 175 respondents reported improvement after entering services.
- Highlighted the Jersey Commons model as an example of high-quality supportive housing integrated with behavioral health and recovery services.

After the presentation concluded, the Question and Answer portion of the presentation began. Microphones were unmuted, and open discussion with Mr. Rivas discussed the following:

Jeff Feller, WellFlorida Council, asked about variability of CORE implementation across counties with differing resources.

Luis Rivas, CFBHN, responded, stating resource-rich counties launch faster; rural areas require education, return on investment (ROI) framing, and frequent engagement to sustain partner participation. Emphasis on what can be done, linking CORE participation to access to MAT, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC's), and broader supports.

Tina Beaulieu, Carelon/Simply Healthcare, requested contact for resource coordination.

Luis Rivas, CFBHN, responded that contact information will be provided on slides; invited follow-up.

PRESENTATION II – CFCHS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

PRESENTER: JEFF FELLER, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, WELLFLORIDA COUNCIL

Summary Highlights:

- Mixed-method assessment using both secondary data (demographics, Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data, vital statistics, Baker Act and Marchman Act data, and opioid-related indicators) and primary data CORE roundtables, and No Wrong Door/Recovery-Oriented System of Care (ROSC) focus groups).
- Key Needs: Affordable housing, cost and transportation barriers, workforce shortages, policy and legislative shifts, and inconsistencies in referral and linkage processes.



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- Trends: Increased demand for behavioral health services in both urban and rural areas, with the highest requests for counseling, case management, and medication management services.
- Promising Practice: The first regional CORE convening strengthened cross-county collaboration and established a recommendation for ongoing regional coordination meetings.
- Emerging Signal: Rising behavioral health risks among young women, potentially linked to disparities in healthcare coverage and service access.

After the presentation concluded, the Question and Answer portion of the presentation began. Microphones were unmuted.

No audience questions were raised during this segment.

PRESENTATION III – LSF HEALTH SYSTEMS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

PRESENTERS: DR. CHRISTINE CAUFFIELD, CEO, LSF HEALTH SYSTEMS & SHELLEY KATZ, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, LSF HEALTH SYSTEMS

Summary Highlights:

- Service Area: 23 counties across five circuits (focus on Circuit 5); 100 providers serving indigent, uninsured, and underinsured residents.
- Key Data: High poverty and youth risk indicators; declining Baker Act rates with Mobile Response Teams (MRT)/co-responder teams; fentanyl remains top concern; overdose deaths down sharply (2021 - 2023).
- State & System Context: Florida ranks #44 nationally in mental health access; workforce shortages persist.
- Uncompensated Care: Large unpaid mental health and substance use disorder volumes for adults and children; LSF uses year-end funds to ease provider deficits.
- Stakeholder Themes: Workforce, housing, rural access, funding flexibility, admin burden reduction, youth focus, transportation, and insurance barriers.
- Investments Since Last Cycle: Staff rate increases, recovery housing, high-utilizer care coordination, expanded co-responder teams, Uplift Communities faith initiative, peer/Recovery Community Organizations growth.
- Current Top Needs: Workforce, housing, flexible and sustainable funding (post-COVID grant loss), more residential beds; concern over limits on carry-forward funds.

After the presentation concluded, the Question and Answer portion of the presentation began. Microphones were unmuted.



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Joe Dmitrovic, Floridians for Recovery urged expanding peer-run RCO's, and renewing SAMHSA aligned "Building Communities of Recovery" efforts.

Dr. Christine Cauffield and Shelley Katz, LSF Health Systems expressed appreciation; alignment with peer expansion and ROSC reaffirmed.

IV. IMPACTFUL MOMENTS (SUCCESS STORIES)

Diveka Anderson highlighted stories from the following Network Service Providers on behalf of the Managing Entities:

- CFBHN: Peace River Center, Club Success (20 years). Over 1,200 individuals supported with skills, housing, and employment; CFBHN funding/leadership (advisory board) cited as key to sustained, recovery-oriented outcomes.
- CFCHS: Partnership with Devereux to expand services into Brevard County; monthly provider calls, transparent learning culture; improved access for high-risk youth and strengthened wraparound.
- LSF: Operation PAR collaboration, agile contracting, streamlined amendments, and oversight of opioid settlement funding (e.g., Hernando County mobile MAT unit) converting dollars to lifesaving, compliant, community impact.

V. 2025 RECAP & 2026 DIRECTION

Morgan Schell presented information on the following:

- Quarterly Meetings: Four in 2025 (two in-person; two virtual) with 70–92 attendees per session; increased communication, coordination, and resource sharing.
- Top Regional Priorities (from surveys/stakeholder input):
 1. Cross-system collaboration (DCF, MEs, law enforcement, schools, providers)
 2. Communication & follow-up (clear objectives, resource lists, contacts)
 3. Training & education (Baker Act procedures, peer services integration, LE collaboration; use of small group/workgroup formats)
 4. Access & capacity (housing, childcare, service availability).



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- 2026 Approach: Region-specific, project-management style sub-collaboratives (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis (SWOT) short/long-term goals, measurable outcomes) to drive actions under the focus theme: Strengthening Community Networks & Cross-Agency Collaboration.
 - Meeting Location: Hybrid at Summit Church Orlando, 735 Herndon Ave, Orlando, FL 32803 (centralized access based on survey preferences).
 - Topic & presenter suggestions due by November 30th to CNR.SAMH.SUPPORT@myflfamilies.com.
 - Identifying providers to spearhead action-oriented workgroups aligned to survey-identified needs.
 - Lunch & Learn Series continues in December 2025 (details to be sent via Central Region mailbox) and through 2026 to sustain learning between quarterly meetings.
 - Success Story Submissions: Send to Managing Entity who will send to RCC Diveka Anderson, DCF, SAMH or directly to the Central Region mailbox
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VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Diveka Anderson opened the floor for public comment; no attendees offered remarks.

VII. CLOSING REMARKS

Diveka Anderson thanked attendees for their engagement and participation, encouraging continued communication for any follow-up questions or input. She noted that the next Central Region Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration Meeting will be held on January 22, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., with details to follow.

Morgan Shell requested that participants submit presentation topic suggestions by November 30, 2025, to CNR.SAMH.SUPPORT@myflfamilies.com, and reminded attendees to complete the post-meeting survey once distributed.

Both Diveka and Morgan expressed appreciation for the ongoing partnership and collaboration, emphasizing excitement for continued progress in 2026. Helpful resource



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links, including the updated Baker Act Manual, Florida Behavioral Health Workforce website, and ESS SNAP page were shared in the chat.

VIII. ADJOURN

Diveka Anderson adjourned the Central Region Behavioral Health Interagency Quarterly meeting at 11:18 A.M. on November 6th, 2025.



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Appendix A

Alison	Fulford	Department of Juvenile Justice
Angela	Miller Royal	Hernando County School District
Angela	Gambino	Aetna Better Health of Florida
Angela	Burdue	School District of Osceola County
Anna	Kesic	IMPOWER
April	Busby	Department of Children and Families
Autumn	Rudolph	Central Florida Behavioral Hospital
Barbette	Barnes	Department of Children and Families
Brad	Hill	Department of Children and Families
Caedon	Saltis	Lakeland Police
Carlos	Ortiz	Department of Children and Families
Carolyn	Hix	Department of Children and Families
Carrie	Norman-Taldock	Sumter County School District
CHANA	SPEIR	Brevard Public Schools
Chelsea	Poff	Marion County Sheriff's Office
Cheryl	Bello	STEPS, INC.
Danielle	Borieo	Housing for Homeless
Diana	Cardona	Department of Children and Families
Diveka	Anderson	Department of Children and Families
Earl	Hunt	Department of Children and Families
Emily	Garten	Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health
Gabriel	Berio	School District of Osceola County
George	Margoles	Recovery Connections of Central Florida
Harlee	James	Department of Children and Families
Heather	Kaufmann	Tri-County Human Services
Hillary	Grondin	Florida Department of Education
Hunter	Denmark	STEPS, INC.
Idris	Gaines	Department of Children and Families
Jacqueline	Roe	Sumter County School District
Jean	Tucker	Department of Children and Families
Jeff	Feller	Health Council of East Central Florida
Jesse	Kemper	Department of Children and Families



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Joe	Dmitrovic	Floridians for Recovery
John	Cornett	Department of Children and Families
Julie	Hardin	Mental Health Resource Center
Julie	Hardin	Mental Health Resource Center
Julie	Smythe	Sunshine Health
Katelyn	Lee	Department of Children and Families
Kent	Runyon	Central Florida Behavioral Health Network Inc.
Kyle	Helfritz	Citrus County Sheriff's Office
Larry	Williams	Peace River Center
Linda	Macdonald	Florida Behavioral Health Association
Lisa	Moser	BayCare Health System
Lucas	French	Department of Children and Families
Lucien	LaRoche	Optum
Magge	Gonzalez	Project EMPATH, INC. / EMPATH Care Partners, LLC.
Maria	Bledsoe	Central Florida Cares Health System, Inc.
Mark	Miller	Department of Children and Families
Mark	Dainty	Polk County Sheriff's Office
Megan	Lietzau	UF Center for Autism and Related Disabilities
Melissa	Counts	Windermere Police Department
Michele	Cooper	AdventHealth
Michelle	Norman	Ocoee Police Department
Morgan	Schell	Department of Children and Families
Nicole	Sainz	Chrysalis Health
Nikaury	Munoz	Central Florida Cares
Patrick	Heidemann	Disability Rights Florida
Raegan	Waugh	Charlie Health, Inc.
Royce	Leggett	Hernando County Sheriff's Office
Sandra	Marrero	BayCare Behavioral Health
Stephanie	Boyd	Department of Children and Families
Tara	Bryant	Optum
Teresa	Even	BayCare
Tia	Llewellyn	Advent Health
Timothy	MacSuga	UHS, INC.
Tina	Beaulieu	Carelon/SimplyHealth
Tonya	Harrison	Department of Children and Families



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Traci	Klinkbeil	Department of Children and Families
Yabercia	Perez-Cubillan	Aspire Health Partners
Yehuda	Green	Orange County Sheriff's Office