



## **Northwest Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration**

November 18, 2025, 10:00am-12:00pm CST

Virtual via Teams

### **MEETING MINUTES**

**Attendance:** Total 75

**Full Attendee List is Provided in Appendix A**

**Hosts/Facilitators:** Department of Children and Families Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (SAMH) – April Busby, Regional Collaboration Coordinator; Shaleeah Marshall, Regional Operations Manager; Lucas French, Regional Operations Supervisor

**Presenter:** Northwest Florida Health Network (NWFHN)  
Tracie Moorer, Director of Programs  
Shannon Massingale, Director of Care Coordination

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

April Busby called to order the Quarterly Northwest Region Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration meeting at 10:00 am.

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#### **II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Lucas French welcomed the attendees, introduced the SAMH staff NWFHN presenter.

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#### **III. PRESENTATION – NORTHWEST FLORIDA HEALTH NETWORK, MANAGING ENTITY**

Tracie Moorer and Shannon Massingale presented on their Behavioral Health Community Needs Assessment and Plan.

- Review of 2022 Top 5 Identified Needs
    - Outpatient Services
    - Residential/Inpatient Detox
    - Housing/Supported Housing
    - Psychiatric Services
    - Transportation
  - Countermeasures to those needs included utilizing funding to implement the following new programs across the region:
    - Outpatient Detox in Circuit 1
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- Early childhood Care Coordination in Bay and Okaloosa County
- Early CAT in Escambia County
- Family Support Team in Escambia County
- FFPSA Teams in Circuits 2, 3, and 14.
- Overview of Key Findings
  - Positive shift in youth substance use noting a reduction in alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use for high school students. With increased awareness around vaping and binge drinking, middle school trends are stable. Marijuana vaping is being proactively monitored.
  - Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and building resilience is evident as many counties report declines in ACEs, especially in areas of parental incarceration and household substance use. Students are supported through trauma-informed practices and protective community environments.
  - Empowering support in youth mental health is showing that middle schoolers are showing greater self-awareness of emotional needs, which prompts earlier intervention, high school students report a decline in depression and suicidal ideation, and gender-responsive strategies are helping address the unique needs of female youth who report higher symptom levels.
  - Early intervention efforts for children ages 1-5 are strong, with service rates exceeding statewide averages.
  - Adult behavioral health access and engagement are rising, reflected in increased enrollment in substance use and emergency mental health services, timely hospitalization for adults 25–64, and stronger outreach that is connecting more adults to care.
  - Suicide and overdose prevention remains a critical priority, with youth suicide rates improving since 2020 while some counties continue to face elevated adult suicide and overdose rates—prompting targeted, data-driven efforts to reverse these trends.
- Emerging Themes:
  - Youth are making healthier choices, and communities are responding with effective prevention.
  - Trauma-informed care is expanding, especially in rural and high-need areas.
  - Mental health services are reaching more people, especially young children and families.



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- Communities are resilient, adapting to challenges with innovation and compassion.
- Systemic Opportunities:
  - Enhance data collection in rural areas to ensure all voices are heard.
  - Strengthen cross-system collaboration between schools, justice, child welfare, and health systems.
  - Continue investing in culturally responsive, community-based care.
- Overview of consumer satisfaction survey data showing results to all statements about choosing services and the effect of services to be above 90% for mental health and substance abuse.
- Overview of next steps:
  - Community town hall meetings.
  - Researching new data collection opportunities.
  - Reviewing opportunities for program growth or changes in service array.
- **Question and Answer:** No questions from attendees. Shannon Massingale shared the link to the full community needs assessment report in the chat.

### IV. IMPACTFUL MOMENTS

April Busby shared impactful moments provided by Bridgeway Center, Inc. and DISC Village.

### V. NEXT STEPS AND 2026 VISION

Lucas French gave an overview of the 2025 Northwest Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration activities.

- Quarterly Meetings: Two held in-person and two via Microsoft Teams.
- Participant Attendance: Participation has been strong and continues to grow since the kickoff meeting in February which shows the dedication of the collaborative.
- Positive Collaboration: Our goal is to strengthen community networks and cross agency collaboration, so it has been great to see new relationships forming and more networking happening across agencies. We are hopeful this will lead to shared strategies and solutions.



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- Stakeholder Feedback: Participants have provided positive feedback, noting increased communication, coordination, and usefulness of shared resources.

April Busby discussed the next steps for the regional BHIC in 2026.

- Lunch and Learn Series: Next Lunch and Learn to be held December 11, 2025, via Microsoft Teams. The 2026 sessions will be held in March, June, September, and December. These will continue to be statewide educational sessions that will enhance collaboration and continuous learning across agencies.
- Quarterly Meetings: The next meeting will be held in person in Chipley, Florida at the PAEC building. Beginning in 2026, all meetings will be hosted in a hybrid format. Attendees are encouraged to attend in person for the opportunity to network.
  - 2026 Meeting Dates:
    - January 13, 2026
    - April 21, 2026
    - July 21, 2026
    - October 20, 2026
  - Meetings are being moved from a statewide approach to a regionally specific approach. This will allow each region to have regional specific goals and measurable actions. A strategic planning approach will be used to guide our efforts toward achieving short- and long-term goals.
- Survey's:
  - Statewide – End of year wrap up survey. Link provided in the chat.
  - Regional – Will be sent out with the January meeting invite to determine more specific next steps for 2026.
- Reviewed two slides shared during the May in person meeting. This overview included data from survey results on:
  - Future Statewide Topic Ideas
  - Top 3 Identified Needs for the Northwest Region



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### VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

**Dr. Jay Reeve** noted that the survey results indicate a series of presentations from different providers would be beneficial for future collaborative meetings.

- Response – **April Busby** responded stating that the December regional survey results would hopefully give insight on the providers that would like to present and who the collaborative would benefit from presenting.

**Chris Hockman** supported Dr. Reeve's recommendation of having alternating providers, organizations, and agencies present their services and access points during the collaborative meetings.

- Response – **April Busby** responded by sharing the regional [NWR.SAMH.ContactUs@myflfamilies.com](mailto:NWR.SAMH.ContactUs@myflfamilies.com) address and encouraged attendees to go ahead and submit their recommendations for presenters or their willingness for their organization to present.

**Ashley Sellers** asked in the chat if formation of Recovery Community Organizations (RCO) in our rural communities fall within what was suggested over the next year.

- Response – **April Busby** responded by sharing the current RCO's had recently been added to the collaborative distribution list to get more involvement from those organizations.

**Shawn Salamida** shared that the collaborative is an opportunity for us to look beyond our own walls to connect with other organizations across the region. Shawn agreed that presentations are a great idea and recommended categorizing them by service type and determine what program type we would be doing for each meeting. Shawn suggested the in addition to presentations, that the creation of a cumulative list of contacts for the organizations so when we need to reach out to them with questions, we have the most up to date point of contact.

- Response – **April Busby** stated that she had presented an idea to leadership on this type of shared contact list across agencies and that hearing this request solidified the need. April recommended that this shared resource could be one of the first action items for 2026.

**Kelly Faircloth** from NWFHN provided the link to NWF Health Connects in the chat. <https://nwfhealth.org/behavioral-health/community-needs-assessment/>



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**Lisa Bretz** introduced herself as the Executive Director of Advantage Aging Solutions. They serve 14 counties. They are the access point for Medicaid long term care and also for helping individuals navigate other long-term care services and supports and the community based services through contact with the Department of Elder Affairs. Lisa stated that if provided the opportunity to present the role of the Area Agencies on Aging she would be willing to provide resources and referral processes.

**Twanna House** from NAMI Emerald Coast introduced herself and provided her contact information for trainings and resources.

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### **VIII. CLOSING REMARKS**

Lucas French thanked everyone for attending and provided the next meeting date of January 13, 2026, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Meeting will be held hybrid.

Lucas shared regional contact information.

April Busby thanked everyone for their continued participation.

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### **IX. ADJOURN**

April Busby adjourned the meeting at 10:55 am CST.

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### Appendix A

Ali	Stanley	Agency for Persons w Disabilities
Alison	Fulford	Department of Juvenile Justice
Alexis	Thrasher	Florida Department of Children and Families
Allison	Hill	Lakeview Center
Amanda	Hernandez	Gadsden County School District
Amber	Fernbach	Department of Children and Families
Amber	Oconnell	NAMI TALLAHASSEE
Anna	Dyess	Northwest Florida Area Agency on Aging
Ashley	Hudson	Wakulla County Sheriff's Office
Ashley	Sellers	Jackson County Sheriff's Office
Bonnie	Barlow	Bridgeway Center, Inc.
Brad	Hill	Florida Department of Children and Families
Brittany	Boyett	Florida Department of Children and Families
Brittany	Harris	Pensacola Police Department
Byron	Wade	Florida Department of Children and Families
Casite	Ramos	Calhoun County Sheriff's Office
Chandra	Russ	Gadsden County School District
Chris	Hockman	Oxford House Inc
Courtney	Whitt	Florida Center for Behavioral Health Workforce
Cristina	Perez	Florida Department of Children and Families
Dawn	Capes	Bay District Schools
Dee	Evans	Gadsden
Destiny	Tolbert	Gadsden County Schools
Devona	Pickle	Florida Agency for Health Care Administration
Diveka	Anderson	Department of Children and Families
Drew	Hild	PanCare of Florida, Inc.
Emily	Pickens	Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County
Emmanuel	Burks	IRC
Emme	Ledbetter	Florida Department of Children and Families



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Harlee	James	Florida Department of Children and Families
Hope	Ealey	Stewart Street Elementary School
Horace	Paine	Niceville Police Department
James	Weaver	Life Management Center
Jawid	Sultany	Department of Children and Families
Jay	Reeve	Apalachee Center
Jazmine	Varnado	Gadsden County Schools
Jennifer	Werden	The Florida Center for Early Childhood
Jesse	Kemper	Florida Department of Children and Families
Jessica	Deneen	2nd Judicial Circuit Office of the Court Administrator
John	Searcy	Holmes County Sheriff's office
Kelly	Faircloth	Northwest Florida Health Network
Kesandra	Brown	Gadsden County School District
LaKeisha	Randolph	Florida Department of Children and Families
Lauren	Anzaldo	Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System (VA)
Linda	Bullard	Life Management Center
Linda	Macdonald	Florida Behavioral Health Association
Lisa	Bretz	Area Agency on Aging for North Florida, Inc.
Madison	Sketoe	Gadsden County ESE Department
Mariangely	Charlton	Bay District Schools
Mary	Carr	Gadsden County Schools
Melanie	Spoon	Life Management Center
Patrick	Heidemann	Disability Rights Florida
Patti	Hyde	Lakeview Center
Penny	Greene	Life Management Center of Northwest Florida
Roderic	Stovall	Florida Department of Children and Families
Samone	Franklin	Florida Department of Children and Families
Senie	Thomas	Florida Department of Children and Families
Shannon	Massingale	NWF Health Network
Shannon	Wood Williams	Bay District Schools





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Sharron	Washington	NWF Health Network
Shawn	Salamida	Lakeview Center
Sophia	Whaley	NWF Health Network
Stephanie	Cash	Florida Department of Health
Tamia	Hale	Gadsden County School Board
Tim	Potter	Florida Department of Children and Families -
Timothy	Macsuga	Universal Hospital Services, Inc.
Tonya	Harrison	Florida Department of Children and Families
Tori	Woods	Sunshine Health
Tracie	Moorer	NWF Health Network
Twanna	House	NAMI Emerald Coast
Ute	Gazioch	Florida Behavioral Health Association
William	Vaden	Freedom Life Compass