



Southeast Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration (Hybrid)

April 15th, 2026, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Mandel Public Library of West Palm Beach

411 Clematis Street, West Palm Beach, Florida 33401

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance: Total 111

In-Person 28

Virtual 83

Full Attendee List is Provided in Appendix A

Hosts/Facilitators: Department of Children and Families – Laurinda “Lala” Andujar, Regional Collaboration Coordinator; Jessica Durant, Southeast Region SAMH Director; Idell Gayman, Southeast Region Operations Supervisor

Presenters: Lisa McWhorter, Chief Executive Officer, and Doreen Clancy, Community Outreach Specialist, at Wayside House; Natasha Osilaja, Founder and Director, Prodigy’s House.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Laurinda “Lala” Andujar called to order the Southeastern Regional Behavioral Health Interagency Collaboration Meeting at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday April 15, 2026.

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jessica Durant, Southeast Region SAMH Director, welcomed attendees. The following individuals were introduced:

Laurinda Andujar, Regional Collaboration Coordinator, Department of Children and Families

Idell Gayman, Southeast Region Operations Supervisor, Department of Children and Families

Lisa McWhorter, Chief Executive Officer, Wayside House

Doreen Clancy, Community Outreach Specialist, Wayside House

Natasha Osilaja, Founder and Director, Prodigy’s House



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III. PRESENTATIONS – WAYSIDE HOUSE AND PRODIGY’S HOUSE

PowerPoint presentation was provided by Doreen Clancy, Community Outreach Specialist and Lisa McWhorter, Chief Executive Officer of Wayside House.

Presenters shared the history of Wayside House, outlined the range of services offered across the continuum of care, including aftercare and post-treatment supports, and emphasized the organization’s long-term commitment to each woman’s recovery and success.

Wayside House has over 50 years of experience serving women with substance use disorders through a holistic, trauma-informed, and inclusive approach. Wayside House provides a full continuum of care, including residential treatment, partial hospitalization, and outpatient services, as well as family counseling, career support, and peer engagement. Emphasis is placed on long-term recovery through the development of sobriety skills, employment readiness, and housing stability. Services are individualized and accessible regardless of ability to pay, supported by strong community partnerships and a robust alumni network that promotes ongoing recovery and sustained outcomes.

Jessica Vazquez, South Florida Wellness Network, inquired as to what insurances Wayside House accepted. Doreen Clancy advised that they accepted many, however she would provide her contact information to verify which plans were accepted. Tammie Sellman, Chief Development Officer at Wayside House, directed individuals to the [Wayside House](#) website and advised them on where to locate insurance information.

Dean Pasquale, Fellowship Recovery Community Organization, commended Ms. Clancy and Ms. McWhorter on their presentation.

Paula Silvestri, FLMHAC, expressed appreciation for Wayside House, noting that its emphasis on dignity, respect, peer support, and individualized care sets it apart. They highlighted that the supportive atmosphere fosters accountability, resilience, and hope, qualities critical for long-term success.

Kimberly Singer, Department of Education Head Start, inquired about outreach efforts around pregnancy related matters and stated that she would be interested in partnering with Wayside House for maternity and family related services. Ms. Clancy stated that they would be very interested in engaging with the Department of Education and their Head Start program to reach the underserved community.



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PowerPoint presentation was provided by Ms. Natasha Osilaja, Founder and Director of [Prodigy's House](#).

Ms. Osilaja shared her journey as founder of Prodigy's House and provided an overview of the history of Prodigy's House, support services offered, and how to refer a potential resident.

Prodigy's House recovery housing program supports men in recovery by providing a structured, accountability-based environment focused on reintegration and long-term stability. It offers sober living for up to a year, along with case management, peer support, employment and GED assistance, life skills education, mental health services, and transportation. Serving individuals transitioning from treatment, incarceration, or homelessness, including those with co-occurring disorders—the program emphasizes independence, employment, and rebuilding identity. By addressing critical housing gaps, it helps reduce relapse risk and supports successful community reintegration.

Ms. Osilaja also responded to questions regarding eligibility and insurance coverage at Prodigy's House, explaining that services are self-pay and offered on a sliding fee scale based on income, with scholarships available for eligible individuals. Ms. Osilaja also went on to share that the recommendation is for a participant to stay a minimum of one year based on the program's structure, in order for participants to be successful.

Participant inquired about whether considerations were in place to ensure fathers stayed connected with their children. Ms. Osilaja stated that Prodigy's House understands that this is an area for opportunity and shared the challenges that displaced fathers face when trying to connect with their children and having a safe space to interact with their children and would be open to discussing a partnership with the Early Childhood program.

Carl Gauck, Oxford House, inquired as to their protocol at Prodigy's House if someone were to relapse and or leave the program prematurely. Ms. Osilaja advised that the course of action would depend on the circumstances, and they would always be welcome to return to the desired site.

Jessica Vazquez, South Florida Wellness Network, asked if they also accepted those who were on methadone. Ms. Osilaja responded yes, they accept individuals participating in medication assisted treatment and individuals on methadone.

IV. PRESENTATION – RESOURCES, TRAINING AND WORKGROUP

Jessica Durant, Southeast Region SAMH Director with DCF, presented on workgroup selection, upcoming events, and training opportunities. Ms. Durant initiated the facilitated



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group discussion by welcoming both returning participants and first-time attendees and providing a reminder of the objectives and vision of the regional collaboratives. The regional collaboratives aim to strengthen interagency communication and collaboration, while also developing regional strategies to address community-specific behavioral health challenges. Their vision focuses on identifying and addressing local system gaps and improving the accessibility, availability, and quality of behavioral health services.

To support this vision, Ms. Durant shared the launch of the Peer Support and Community Connections Workgroup and Housing Access and Support Workgroup. Guided by the voices, experiences, and insights of both past and present participants, in addition to a thorough review of survey responses, peer support and housing emerged as high-priority issues across the Southeast region. As part of the workgroup selection and planning process, Ms. Durant and team reached out to individuals who previously expressed interest in leading or participating in these efforts, recognizing the passion and commitment that exists within this community. Ms. Durant went on to state for those who have not yet had the chance to get involved, the post-event survey will offer another opportunity to express your interest.

The Peer Support & Community Connections Workgroup will begin on May 14th at 9:00 a.m. and the Housing Access & Support Workgroup will launch on June 11th, 2026, at 1:00 p.m., Participation remains open, with opportunities for additional work groups to form as needs evolve. These workgroups represent an important step toward collaborative, solution-focused action and sustained community impact.

On the topic of upcoming events, trainings, and resource sharing, Ms. Durant emphasized their continued commitment to strengthening communication and collaboration across agencies. In the Southeast region, the goal is not only to convene partners on a quarterly basis, but to maintain consistent, ongoing communication that keeps everyone informed and connected between meetings. In collaboration with our Managing Entities and community stakeholders, planned initiatives include exploring regional resource fairs and prioritizing areas such as children's behavioral health and crisis continuum services. These efforts aim to ensure that resources are tailored to the unique needs of each county within the region.

Additionally, Ms. Durant highlighted several training platforms and opportunities to support workforce development, including [My FL Learn](#) and [Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association](#). While many free training resources are available, they are often underutilized; therefore, the collaborative aims to improve awareness, accessibility, and engagement with these tools to strengthen the behavioral health workforce.

During group discussion, stakeholders highlighted the importance of building partnerships with organizations such as [CareerSource Broward](#) and [Florida's Vocational Rehabilitation program](#)



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to better support both job seekers and employers, strengthening the overall workforce pipeline.

In Medicaid managed care, participants identified persistent challenges related to coverage, billing, and reimbursement processes. To address these issues, there was a recommendation to host forums or panel discussions with Medicaid plans, creating opportunities for direct dialogue, clarification, and problem-solving.

Ronald Voltaire, DCF, inquired if it be possible to have a speaker present from a Baker Act facility or someone who specializes in Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT).

Andrew Wilson, Recovery Oriented Quality Improvement Specialist with DCF, shared in response to Mr. Voltaire, the SER MAT Workgroup Subcommittee continues to meet monthly in a virtual, open forum format to identify gaps, address barriers, share best practices, and connect stakeholders with resources. Contact information for Mr. Wilson and the meeting details were shared via chat and will also be included in the recap email for today's meeting.

Improvements to crisis services, particularly those related to the Baker Act, were also emphasized. Participants noted the need for more resources for youth, especially children under 12, along with increased treatment capacity and stronger system coordination.

Jeff Lefton, Delray Medical Center, shared the success of Palm Beach County's Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program, which achieved platinum-level status. This recognition underscores the importance of CIT-trained law enforcement and reinforces the value of continued investment in crisis response training and collaboration.

VI. SUCCESS STORIES

Laurinda "Lala" Andujar, DCF, shared a success story submitted by Broward Behavioral Health Coalition featuring a video presentation highlighting impactful, community-based behavioral health services. The video showcased Memorial Healthcare System's [Rebel's Drop-In Center](#), which supports individuals with behavioral health needs through peer support, group activities, and a welcoming space for connection and recovery.

Additionally, success story submitted by Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network featured a powerful video presentation focused on youth mental health, including creative therapy programs that use art and poetry as tools for expression and healing. These



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presentations demonstrated the real-world impact of services and reinforced the importance of accessible, community-based approaches to behavioral health care.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

The floor was opened for public comment, and the following questions were submitted via Microsoft Team's chat or by those attending in-person.

Jeff Lefton, Delray Medical Center, congratulated both presenters and inquired about updates on the availability of beds for youth in Baker Act receiving facilities in Palm Beach and the Treasure Coast.

Ann Berner, Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network, shared in response to Mr. Lefton, news of upcoming renovations at NeuroBehavioral Hospitals of the Palm Beaches, a Baker Act receiving facility. Renovations are currently underway and will result in the expansion of their adult unit and the addition of beds for children.

Ms. Durant will follow-up with the Health Care District of Palm Beach County to gather information on funding secured for the development of a Centralized Receiving Center in Palm Beach.

Carl Gauck, Oxford House, inquired about faith-based and holistic resources. Ms. Durant offered to meet with Mr. Gauck following today's meeting to discuss how we can assist and explore what resources currently exist through our Managing Entities, and other community stakeholders. Ms. Durant committed to ensuring faith-based and holistic resources are incorporated into future resource sharing by the Regional Collaboration Coordinator.

Additional topics included the need to address system gaps affecting individuals with repeat crisis cases, and the importance of improved data sharing and coordinated care pathways. Announcements highlighted the upcoming regional [11th Annual South Florida Behavioral Health Conference](#) shared by Aisha McDonald, Director of Training Initiatives at United Way, with resource materials and event flyers to be distributed via email.



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VIII. CLOSING REMARKS

Ms. Andujar encouraged attendees to continue networking after the meeting to strengthen relationships and foster ongoing collaboration.

Ms. Durant reminded participants to complete the post-event survey, join and actively engage in workgroups, and continue sharing resources to support collective efforts across the region.

Additionally, Ms. Andujar shared contact information for DCF representatives, including the Regional Operations Manager, and was provided with open lines of communication and continued support.

X. ADJOURN

Laurinda “Lala” Andujar adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday April 15th, 2026.

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APPENDIX A

Aisha	McDonald	United Way Broward
Ali	Farrah Haniff	UCF
Alyssa	Plaske	Evolutions Treatment Center
Andrew	Wilson	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Angelyn T.	Coombs	Centene /SSHP
Ann	Berner	SEFBHN
Antoinette	Gonzalez	South Florida Wellness Network Inc.
April	Busby	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Asta	Trinh	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Benson	Bernard	Department of Juvenile Justice
Caren	Longsworth	Broward Behavioral Health Coalition
Carl	Gauck	Oxford House
Caroline	Romero	Broward Behavioral Health Coalition
Charlotte	Mather-Taylor	Area Agency on Aging of Broward County
Christopher	Austin	Department of Children and Families
Clara	Alevy	Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Connie	Reese-Tucker	SEDNET - FLDOE IDEA Funded State Project
Corbette	Stafford	Department of Juvenile Justice
Cristina	Perez	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Danica	Mamby	Broward Behavioral Health Coalition
Dawn	Liberta	Healthy Mothers, Healthy Brothers Coalition of Broward County
Dawn	Mitchell	Footprint to Success Clubhouse Inc
Dean	Pasquale	Fellowship Recovery Community Organization
Debbie	Acevedo	Larkin Community Hospital Behavioral Health Services
Diveka	Anderson	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Doreen	Clancy	Wayside House
Eleanor	Weeks	Broward Behavioral Health Coalition (BBHC)
Elisa	Cramer	Palm Beach County Youth Services Department



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Elizabeth	Lombardo	Area Agency on Aging of Broward County
Emily	Kluckowski	Rebel Recovery
Esther	Jimenez	Broward Behavioral Health Coalition (BBHC)
Gayle	Giese	NAMI Broward and FLMHAC
Giovana	Aristazabal	All Agencies
Grace	Jimenez	Baptist Health
Grace	Marquez	Broward Health
Guillermo	Suarez	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Harlee	James	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Heather	Gelety	Department of Children and Families
Heather	Pennington	Henderson Behavioral Health
Holly	Hannah	Pathways
Idell	Gayman	DCF SAMH
Isis	Williams	Department of Children and Families
Jade	Cook	Department of Health Palm Beach
Janelle	Falcon	Baptist Health
Jasmine	Remy	New Hope CORPS
Jay	Bumgarner	Port St. Lucie Hospital
Jeff	Lefton	Delray Medical Center
Jemima	Reed	Department of Children and Families/BHC
Jennifer	Robinson	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Jesse	Kemper	Department of Children and Families
Jessica	Durant	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Jessica	Vasquez	South Florida Wellness Network Inc.
Jill	Sorenson	Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network
John	Novy	Adult Protective Services
Jon	VanArnam	Health Care District Palm Beach
Jordyn	Muller	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Katherine	Alonzo	Public Defenders office - 19th
Katrina	Forman	Taskforce
Kofoworola	Lawson	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Kimberly	Singer	Department of Education Head Start



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Kristen	DeSimone	Office of Criminal Conflict
Kristen	Guerrise	National Youth Advocate Program Inc.
Larry	Rein	ChildNet
Latonya	Freeman	Memorial Health Rebel's Drop in Center
Laurinda	Andujar	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
Lindsey	Shatters	New Horizons
Lisa	Baird	Humana
Lisa	Dipasquale	South Florida Wellness Network
Lisa	Fonteyn	Public Defenders
Lisa	McWhorter	Wayside House
Lisa	Vreeland	Department of Health Palm Beach
Manuela	Rodiguez	Baptist Health
Maria	Dominguez	Memorial Health Rebel's Drop-in Center
Marina	Viola	National Youth Advocate Program Inc.
Mayra	Reimer	Henderson Behavioral Health
Maxine	Sonnenschein	Health Care District Palm Beach
Megan	Rhoades	Sunshine Health
Melanie	Kranker	Communities Connected for Kids
Melissa	Reesor Martin	Archways/ South Florida Wellness Network Inc.
Mellissa	Stenquist	South Florida Wellness Network Inc.
Michelle	Thomas	Florida Palms Academy
Milory	Senat	Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Mimose		Pathways To Wellness Foundation
Natasha	Osilaja	Prodigy's House
Natalie	Kenton	Department of health
Neiko	Shea	Child Net
Nicole	Pontrelli	Agency for Health Care Admin
Patrick	Heidemann	Disability Rights Florida
Paula	Silvestri	FLMHAC
Philip	De Veronica	Memorial Healthcare System
Priscilla	Ortiz	Oxford House
Rose-Lissa	Regnier	Department of Juvenile Justice
Ronald	Voltaire	Department of Children and Families



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Sarah	Foster	FAME
Shaina	Joseph	Agency for Health Care Administration
Shahinah	A Major	CAA BC
Shanel	Manning	Flite Center
Silvia	Quintana	Broward Behavioral Health Coalition (BBHC)
Sophia	Wetmore	Banyan Treatment Centers
Stephanie	Cairns	South Florida Wellness Network Inc.
Sue	Glasscock	The House of Hope, Inc.
Tammie	Sellman	Wayside House
Tammy L. PSYD	Tucker	Memorial Healthcare System
Tiffany	Lawrence	Broward Behavioral Health Coalition (BBHC)
Tiffany	Schillaci	Broward Health
Timothy	Macsuga	UHS INC.
Tonya	Harrison	Department of Children and Families
Ute	Gazioch	Florida Behavioral Health Association
Valoria	Thomas	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
William	Hardin	Department of Children and Families/SAMH
William	King	Broward Behavioral Health Coalition (BBHC)