

Meeting Minutes: Behavioral Health Planning Council

Date: June 1, 2026

Minutes prepared by: Keith Koegler

Meeting Location: Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)
Elmer L. Andersen Building
540 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55101; Room C2222

Attendance

Members Present:

- Charlie Mishek-Chair, Parents/Guardians of a Child/Youth/Young Adult in Recovery from or at Risk of Substance Use Disorder
- Sarah Costello-Fedje-Advocacy Organizations: Substance Use Disorder
- Anessa DeGroat-Peer-Led Substance Use Recovery Community Organization (RCOs)
- Marissa Lang- Parents/Guardians of Child/Youth/Young adult in recovery from or at risk of SUD
- Krysia Weidell-Family Members of an Adult with Lived Experience of Mental Health #1
- Tara Brown-Adults with Lived Experience of Mental Health - # 1
- Ellie Skelton-Family Member of an Adult in Recovery from or At-Risk of Substance Use Disorder #2
- Melodie Garcia- Peer-Led Mental Health Consumer / Survivor Organizations
- Rahma Adem-Advocacy Organizations - Mental Health
- Lori Thorpe-State Economic Development Authority (DEED)
- Tanya Carter-State Health Authority
- Lauren Webber-State Criminal Justice Authority
- Ellie Miller-State Housing Authority
- Mary Rogers-Minnesota Office of Ombudsmen
- Tom Delaney-Minnesota Department of Education

Non-members Present:

- Kristine Preston-DHS, BHA, Deputy Assistant Commissioner
- Keith Koegler- DHS, BHA
- Tim Pilcher- DHS, BHA
- Kari Irber- DHS, BHA
- Johanna Hernandez- DHS, BHA
- Rea Smith- DHS, BHA
- Sam Robertson- DHS, BHA
- Jeff Campe- DHS, BHA
- Tamir Elnabarawy- DHS, Director of Federal Relations
- James Xiong- DHS, BHA

Agenda items and minutes

Roll Call

- Charlie Mishek, Chair took roll call by asking BHPC members to type their names in the chat.
- Other non-members introduced themselves.

Welcome:

Charlie Mishek, Chair

Behavioral Health Administration Update

Presenter: Kristine Preston, DHS, BHA, Deputy Assistant Commissioner (on behalf of Teresa Steinmetz)

Kristine provided an update on the revalidation process of high-risk Medicaid providers. This included an overview of the reasons for this process and how it relates to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) corrective action plan. Council members shared provider experiences, challenges, questions, and thoughts related to the revalidation process. Kristine acknowledged the feedback and provided additional information about the process and future steps.

Council Duties Overview

Presenter: Kristine Preston, Deputy Assistant Commissioner

Kristine presented an overview of the federal requirements related to the Mental Health Block Grant (MHBG) and council duties to inform planning. This included an explanation of how the block grant dollars are part of a larger mental health funding landscape and the work of the Minnesota State Advisory Council on Mental Health. Kristine asked the council if the work of this other council can inform the Behavioral Health Planning Council

(BHPC) duty to monitor, review, evaluate, not less than once each year, the allocation and adequacy of mental health services within the state.

Council members provided their feedback on this question, expressed support, and offered additional thoughts and ideas.

Kristine offered to share the Minnesota State Advisory Council on Mental Health report as soon as it is published.

Review of Federal Fiscal Year 2027 Block Grant Application

Presenter: Tim Pilcher, BHA Federal Grants Team

Tim presented about the MHBG requirements for the BHPC to review Minnesota's applications, plans, and annual progress reports for the Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Block Grant (SUPTRS BG) and MHBG. A summary of the components of the upcoming application to be submitted by September 1, 2026, was also presented, along with a timeline of recent and upcoming annual report and application submissions. This included:

- Overview of federal requirements for the BHPC including that the MHBG plan must be reviewed but the SUPTRS BG plan review is optional according to federal standards.
- SAMHSA uses a 2-year cycle for the block grants. Year one is a full application, year two is only an abbreviated "Mini-Application" with updates to the budget and workplan as needed.
- Important dates in the current two-year block grant cycle.
- Key components of the upcoming 'mini-application':
 - State Information section with general state information and agreements
 - Planning Tables section with general anticipated budgets
 - Environmental Factors and Plan section, outlining planned activities for Early Serious Mental Illness (ESMI) and Crisis services and BHPC activities
 - Process for BHPC review
 - Public comments and next steps for the application process.
- MHBG and SUBG Websites and Resources

Kristine Preston, Keith Koegler, and Tim Pilcher provided additional information about SAMHSA'S application and report review process and new requirements regarding federal executive orders and strategic priorities.

State Opioid Response (SOR) Grant

Presenters: Sam Robertson and Jeff Campe, DHS BHA SOR Team

The team provided an overview of the federal State Opioid Response (SOR) Grants that assist states to address the opioid epidemic. Minnesota programs that receive this grant funding provide overdose prevention resources, such as the State Naloxone Portal, and other activities. Highlights included:

- SOR Grant awarded to Minnesota DHS since 2018 through SAMSHA.
- Addresses the opioid overdose crisis by increasing access to medications for the treatment of opioid use disorder (MOUD), and for supporting the continuum of prevention, risk reduction, treatment, and recovery support services for opioid use disorder (OUD) and other concurrent substance use disorders.
- 3-year grant with total award of \$33,891,783 for this period (\$11,297,261 each year)
- **Priorities and goals of the current Minnesota SOR grant include:**
 - **Prevention**-Increase awareness and education to the public about the dangers of opioids and stimulants.
 - **Overdose Prevention and Response:**
 - Decrease fatal opioid overdoses by providing overdose education and naloxone training and distribution.
 - The State Naloxone Portal, a DHS-administered web portal, that supplies naloxone kits to community organizations and select legislatively mandated groups.
 - The SUPTRS BG also funds this portal.
 - **Treatment:**
 - Increase access to evidence-based MOUD for underserved communities
 - Increase MOUD provider capacity
 - Expand justice-involved and adolescent treatment services
 - **Recovery Support**-Expand justice-involved and adolescent recovery support services
- **Upcoming SOR Initiatives-Increasing Access to MOUD:**
 - Increasing Access to MOUD Grants
 - Low-barrier and non-traditional settings
 - Mobile Medical Units
 - Remote Fixed Methadone Units and Mobile Methadone Units
 - Buprenorphine Locator Map Grant

Women's Substance Use Disorder Services

Presenter: Rea Smith, MPA, Women's Services Project Coordinator, DHS BHA

This presentation included an overview of the women's substance use disorder services funded through the SUPTRS BG. The presentation included:

- An overview of the following types and providers of women's substance use disorders programs and activities:
 - **Women's Recovery Services (WRS):** Family residential, outpatient, peer recovery, community services: 7 grantees
 - **Women's Culturally Responsive Recovery Services (WCRRS):** Spirituality-based engagement and community education: 8 grantees
 - **Evaluations:** 1 grantee, Wilder Research
- **Family Residential Treatment:**
 - Description and benefits of the services
 - Eligibility to qualify

- Additional services provided, including: mental health or counseling, parenting, physical/dental health, transportation, relationship issues, housing, wellness or recreation, and public benefits.
- Average length of stay
- Number served
- Services for children
- Positive impacts of services.
- **Additional WRS settings:**
 - Outpatient treatment (with or without housing)
 - Transitional housing
 - Peer recovery service-community based
 - Public Health Nursing-community based
- List of WRS Service types available to mothers and children
- Positive impact to parent's mental and physical health after receiving services
- **Women's Culturally Responsive Recovery Services**
 - Objective is to provide Substance Use Disorder (SUDs) services and education that are culturally responsive, family-centered, and trauma-responsive for pregnant and parenting women, their children, and families in spirituality-based communities.
 - Approach and content
 - Education and support to women who may not otherwise access services in formal treatment settings
 - Overview of programs providing these services
- Family treatment programs are financially burdensome for organizations due to rate reimbursement and spacing issues.
- New grant to provide funding to build or expand family treatment
- Federal SUPTRS BG requirements and DHS compliance monitoring process

Council member provided positive feedback for father's treatment program idea, the need for this type of program, and need for whole family treatment approach.

Rea Smith let the council know that a new cycle of grants will be starting soon and there was an increase in proposals received to provide this service.

Federal Funding & Policy Update

Presenter: Tamir Elnabarawy, DHS, Director of Federal Relations

Tamir provided a summary of recent federal budget actions, including:

- President Trump's FFY 2027 proposed federal budget request was introduced, including a decrease in funding.
- Proposed Health and Human Services (HHS) specific reductions include block grants being consolidated into a new Behavioral Health Innovation Block Grant.

- Congress is developing an interest in a third reconciliation bill potentially later this year that may fund additional \$1 trillion in military spending by overhauling safety net programs and may pursue new health care policies. Might occur later this year after the mid-terms.
- The last reconciliation bill, HR 1 or the One Big Beautiful Bill Act was reviewed and DHS issued this report: [Minnesotans, Medicaid, and the Implications of the 2025 Federal Reconciliation Law \(P.L. 119-21\)](#)

Council members asked about the likely timing of the next reconciliation bill. Tamir provided additional context.

Council Updates

Presenter: Keith Koegler

Keith provided updates regarding:

- Changes to internal per diem reimbursements
- Need for members to update any changed contact information on Secretary of State website
- New council member appointments are nearing completion

Closing & Adjourn

Charlie Mishek provided thanks to everyone and closed the meeting.

Next Meeting

Date: August 3rd, 2026

Time: 1:00-3:00 PM

Location: **In person** meeting is at Minnesota Department of Human Services, Elmer L. Andersen Building, 540 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55101 Room C2222 and **virtually via Teams**