

SOUTH CAROLINA MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION
SCDMH Administration
2414 Bull Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201

December 8, 2021

Spartanburg Area Mental Health Center – Virtual Presentation

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members:

Mr. Greg Pearce, Chair, Dr. Elliot Levy, Dr. Alison Evans, and Dr. Crystal Maxwell were present. Mr. Bob Hiott and Mr. Bobby Mann were absent, excused.

Staff/Visitors:

Deborah Blalock	<i>Present virtually via Zoom</i>	<i>Present virtually via Zoom</i>	<i>Present virtually via Zoom</i>
Zina Hampton	Dara Baril	Allison Farrell	Valarie Perkins
Dr. Carl Jones	Janet Bell	Dr. Ebony Gaffney	Jocelyn Piccone
Louise Jones	Dr. Versie Bellamy	Dr. Patricia Handley	Gia Quinones
Paul Morris	Shawn Braille	Elizabeth Harmon	Tamara Smith
Dr. Kenneth Rogers	Jackie Brown	Lavinia Holder	Susan von Schenk
Brett Williams	Mirtha Brown	Nicole Kulick	Lindsay Walker
	Peter Camelo	Tracy LaPointe	Christopher Wells
	Gail Cordial	Bill Lindsay	Roger Williams
	Chandler Cox	Linda Palmer	

A meeting of the S.C. Mental Health Commission was held in Room 320 at the S.C. Department of Mental Health Administration Building on Wednesday, December 8, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. Chairman Pearce welcomed everyone to the meeting and turned the meeting over to Mr. Roger Williams, Executive Director, Spartanburg Area Mental Health Center.

PRESENTATION

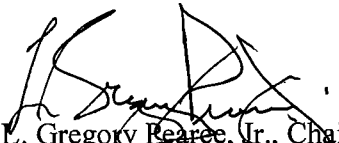
Mr. Williams welcomed everyone and introduced the following team members: Dara Baril, Deaf Services; Lavinia Holder, Peer Support Coordinator; Dr. Ebony Gaffney, Medical Director, Gianella Quinones and Kendall Shelton, Latinx/BIPOC Outreach. Following are highlights from the presentation. A copy of the presentation is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director.

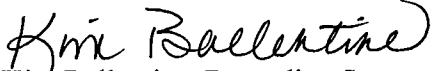
- Spartanburg Area Mental Health Center (SAMHC) has three clinics which provide mental health services in Cherokee, Spartanburg & Union Counties. Currently, SAMHC is providing services to approximately 7,000 patients.
- Eubanks Center – Peer Living Room. The Peer Living Room is designed to reduce the stigma of getting support for mental health symptoms by providing services in a home-like setting. The Eubanks Center is named after retired judge and mental health advocate Ray C. Eubanks, Jr.
- Peer Support staff and services include two peer support specialists who have experienced life stressors and in recovery from a mental illness. They offer hope and support and assist others by teaching coping skills. Two licensed clinicians provide crisis intervention on an as needed basis. One care coordinator links patients to community resources.
- The BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and Latinx Outreach Program goal is to build a trauma informed community by raising mental health awareness in BIPOC, Latinx, and other under-resourced, historically excluded communities in Spartanburg County. The

Program's belief statements include diversity of people, perspectives; equity in policy, practice and position; and inclusion via power, voice and organizational culture.

- Deaf Services is a state-wide program serving deaf and hard of hearing patients in South Carolina. Deaf Services works with patients who use American Sign Language (ASL) or whose deafness has a direct impact on their mental health care.
- Dara Baril, Director of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Program, recently earned recognition for a Community Services Award from the South Carolina Association of the Deaf for her work on the COVID-19 response in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community. SAMHC has a psychiatrist on staff who is a sign language interpreter.
- Anticipate the completion of the new Cherokee Mental Health Clinic by July 2022. SAMHC is in partnership with Converse University with the interior design of the clinic.
- The System of Care (SOC) Expansion and Sustainability Grant award from SAMHSA will provide opportunity to FOCUS (Family Options for Cherokee, Union and Spartanburg) on families and provide services and supports utilizing evidenced-based practices in a full-scale effort to reduce psychiatric hospitalizations, behavioral health emergency room visits, out of home placements and improve the mental health of children and families throughout Cherokee, Union and Spartanburg Counties. The System of Care will work with the already-existing resources, identify service gaps and implement services and supports to fill those gaps. Specific areas of focus include 0-6 year olds, those interfacing or involved with the Child Welfare System, and the Juvenile Justice System, frequent users of the only psychiatric hospital in the area, children in danger of removal from the home schools and community as well as those returning, and the older teens and young adults who need assistance to transition to adulthood.
- In response to Chairman Pearce's question about training for mental health counselors, Mr. Williams talked about the Center's internship opportunities for students.
- In closing, Mr. Williams extended an invitation to the Commissioners to visit the Center any time.

On behalf of the Commission, Chairman Pearce thanked Mr. Williams for their services and for the informative presentation. The center presentation concluded at 10:20 a.m.


L. Gregory Pearce, Jr., Chair
SC Mental Health Commission


Kim Ballentine, Recording Secretary
SC Mental Health Commission