

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

October 6, 2023

Lexington Community Mental Health Center – Virtual Presentation

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members:

Dr. Elliott Levy, Chair, Dr. Carl Jones, Mr. Bobby Mann, and Mr. Greg Pearce were present.
Dr. Crystal Maxwell was absent, excused.

Staff/Visitors:

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| Dr. Robert Bank | <i>Present virtually via Zoom</i> | <i>Present virtually via Zoom</i> | <i>Present virtually via Zoom</i> |
| Deborah Blalock | Janet Bell | Paul Koch | Shawnta Reeder-Locks |
| Dr. Ralph Pollock | Melanie Gambrell | Sarah Main | Dr. Kimberly Rudd |
| Tracy Richardson | FerTasia Green | Wanda McMichael | Kellie Silveira |
| Brett Williams | Natalie Guenther | Margaret Meriwether | Susan von Schenk |
| | Charice Jones | Dr. Lynelle Reavis | Lindsay Walker |
| | Alicia Kearse | Vicki Redding | Kevin Woods |

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 Friday, October 6, 2023, at 9:30 a.m. Chairman Levy welcomed everyone to the meeting and turned the meeting over to Ms. Sarah Main, Executive Director, Lexington Community Mental Health Center (LCMHC).

PRESENTATION

Ms. Main welcomed everyone and introduced the following members of her leadership team: Ms. Natalie Guenther, Intensive Family Services Supervisor, and Ms. Fertaisa Green, Mental Health Professional.

Ms. Main gave a presentation on Uplift Lexington County (Uplift). Uplift is a program funded by a Duke Endowment grant to provide a framework to assess and expand existing behavioral health resources in the community and deliver mental health care support and training for first responders. Community partners work together to increase access to mental health care in Lexington County and establish a comprehensive and coordinated system of care delivery. A copy of the presentation is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director. Following are highlights from the presentation.

- Uplift officially launched in November 2021. Two community partners joined the effort: Lexington County Sheriff's Department and the Lexington/Richland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council (LRADAC).
- Community Partners meetings are held quarterly.
 - Community Partners established three subcommittees:
 - Law Enforcement and Healthcare Worker Support,
 - Resource Guide Committee to develop a comprehensive listing of resources and plans on how to get the resources known in the community, and
 - Youth subcommittee to develop effective ways to engage youth.
 - There are discussions about adding another subcommittee to help those that are experiencing homelessness.

- Mental Health Pop-Up Events have been held at all Walmart stores in Lexington County. The team included a Lexington mental health center staff, someone from community paramedics, and local law enforcement. Ms. Main recognized Tiera Brown, Supervisor, LCMHC Justice Involved Programing, for all her outreach efforts.
- LRADAC is joining LCMHC in community outreach. Cards with all the crisis line numbers, Narcan distribution sites, and medication take back sites have been developed to share in the community.
- First responder support to include a 30-60-90 day follow up.
- Boots on the Ground. As part of the grant, EMS hired two community paramedics and LCMHC hired a mental health professional, Ms. Green. Referrals are received from law enforcement, emergency rooms, and EMS with a goal to engage and connect the individual to services for both physical and mental health that will be helpful to them. Ms. Main recognized Willow, a retriever found by one of the EMS partners on the side of the road. Willow had a broken paw that is now fully healed and through the Uplift grant has started therapy dog certification.
- Ms. Green, who joined LCMHC in June 2023, shared experiences with Boots on the Ground working with Uplift Lexington County.
- Next steps:
 - LRADAC will be adding a part-time therapist to the Community Team.
 - Discussions about a street medicine team and/or deploying a multi-agency team in the Center's new RV.
 - Exploring joint wellness activities for first responders such as a kickball or baseball team.

Ms. Main recognized Ms. Guenther for a presentation on Multi-Dimensional Family Therapy (MDFT). A copy of the presentation is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director. Following are highlights from the presentation.

- MDFT serves families with at least one youth between the ages of 10-26; youth with mental health and/or substance use challenges (co-morbidity); youth and families are seen in the community where it is most viable: school, work, home or clinic; youth with at least one parent/guardian or parental figure are able to participate in MDFT treatment program.
- MDFT has 30+ years of research supporting it. MDFT programs are in over 100 public and private settings throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe.
- MDFT is consistently identified as exemplary among evidence-based practices, and strives to keep kids at home and to make changes in their environment.
- LCMHC's MDFT program was the first in the state to become certified in February 2020 and has served more than 110 at-risk youth and their families since launch in August 2019. 92.63% of the youth served remained in their home after completing MDFT treatment. 95.79% of cases started in MDFT complete the intensive community-based program.
- LCHC has four certified MDFT therapists.
- MDFT in South Carolina August 2019 – July 2023:
 - 606 at-risk youth and their families have been served with MDFT since inception in 2019.
 - Families receive an average of 5.38 months of intensive community-based family and individual treatment.
 - 88.78% of at-risk youth remained in their home after completing MDFT (vs. incarceration, DJJ, DSS or PRTF placements).
 - 93.31% of families saw improvement in reducing family violence.
- MDFT Goals Across Domains:
 - Youth Domain: improve self-awareness, enhance self-worth and confidence; develop meaningful short-term and long-term life goals; improve emotional regulations, coping, and problem-solving skills; and improve communication skills.
 - Parent Domain: strengthen parental teamwork; improve parenting skills and practices; rebuild parent-teen emotional bonds; enhance parents' individual functioning.

- Family Domain: improve family communication and problem-solving skills; strengthen emotional attachments and feelings of love and connection among family members; and improve everyday functioning of the family unit.
- Community Domain: improve family members' relationships with social systems such as school, court, legal, workplace, and neighborhood; and build family member capacity to access and actualize needed resources.
- Ms. Guenther shared success stories from each of the four domains.

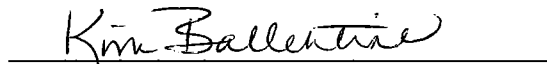
Ms. Deborah Blalock, Deputy Director, Mental Health Services, announced that Ms. Guenther has been recognized internationally as a champion of MDFT. She will join their annual trainer and leadership training in Miami, Florida, later this month. Ms. Guenther also represents MDFT at all the DMH mental health centers and helps to monitor fidelity and coordination of the program.

Chairman Levy noted the presentations highlight the collaborative work being done to help the patients. He thanked Ms. Main for hosting his recent visit at LCMHC.

On behalf of the Commission, Chairman Levy thanked Ms. Main and the leadership team for their continued services and for the very informative presentations. The center presentation concluded at 10:25 a.m.



Dr. Elliott Levy, Chair
SC Mental Health Commission



Kim Ballentine, Recording Secretary
SC Mental Health Commission

