

# Behavioral Health Unit Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2016

### Committee Members

**Lt. Tashia Hager**, PPB; **Sgt. Chris Burley**, PPB; **Ofc. Amy Bruner-Dehnert**, PPB; **Emily Rochon**, PPB SCT; **Shannon Pullen**, National Alliance on Mental Illness; **Bill Osborne**, Multnomah County Behavioral Health; **Cristina Nieves**, Commissioner Fritz's Office; **\*Felesia Otis**, Volunteers of America; **Floyd Pittman**, Community Representative; **Jan Friedman**, Disability Rights Oregon; **Kathleen Roy**, Central City Concern; **\*Beth Epps**, Cascadia; **Maggie Bennington-Davis**, Health Share of OR; **Cpt. Mary Lindstrand**, Multnomah County Sheriff's Office; **Mike Morris**, Oregon Health Authority Addictions & Mental Health Division; **Melanie Payne**, Bureau Of Emergency Communications; **\*Hiroshi Takeo**, Peer Support Specialist; **Janie Marsh**, Mental Health America of Oregon, **\*Cmdr. Chris Davis**, Portland Police Bureau, **\*Sgt. Todd Tackett**, PPB

Guest: **Adrian Brown**, United States Attorney's Office

[\* Indicates Committee Member was absent]

### September Report & September Minutes

In the September minutes the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph page 3, please add "Health" to "mental issues".

Maggie Bennington-Davis moved to approve the minutes with the above changes, Floyd Pittman seconded the motion.

**M/S/P**

The September Report was reviewed. Bill Osborne moved to approve the report as is; Maggie Bennington-Davis seconded the motion.

**M/S/P**

### Updates

Member Amy Bruner-Denherth is moving to a new position and this will be her last meeting.

### Update on Committee recommendations regarding 850.20 Police Response to Mental Health Crisis

There were significant changes to 850.20 from when the committee first looked at it, and when it was finalized. Lt. Hager covered what was accepted into the policy by BHU in the response letter. A significant amount of suggestions made by this committee made it into the policy, despite the year of back and forth changes. There were certain sections that were completely reworked and so some of the specific language changes the committee recommended did not make it into the final draft. However, the spirit of the language is in the policy despite having a paragraph removed. The recommendation to include training for the ECIT officers was also not included primarily because the directive gives direction to the officers and the responsibility for training belongs to the Police Bureau. The BHU is committed to providing continued training to our ECIT officers. The committee should read the DOJ approval letter on

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this subject. It will help clarify the process 850.20 went through. DOJ Attorney Adrian Brown said she would provide the Chair with a copy of the letter.

### **Update on Committee discussions regarding Cultural Diversity in ECIT scenario training**

The BHUAC has had several discussions regarding cultural diversity in ECIT training and specifically in Scenario training. The BHU partnered with the Latino Network to explore adding cultural aspects to a scenario that were both relevant to the Latino community and had training value to officers. There were two questions posed to the representatives of the Latino Network to begin the conversation. “What are the gaps and trends in police response that the Portland Police Bureau needs to address?” and “What cultural relevant information will better inform a police response?” The conversations covered many aspects of both mental health in the Latino community and the interaction with law enforcement. The following work focused on different views the Latino community has about mental health (for example hearing voices is not always considered a negative), the impact on the younger generation which is often bi-lingual and used as interpreters in many different systems and circumstances, the fear experienced by Latino families around immigration status, body language which can be misinterpreted, and a desire to be helpful which may lead to agreement just to end the interaction. Members of the Latino network felt the most relevant of these in relation to interactions with police was the impact on the youth being used as interpreters and how the fear is increased interacting with police due to immigration status. With the help of the Latino Network BHU was able to re-work an existing scenario to incorporate both of these aspects.

Officer Bruner-Dehnert walked the committee through the scenario which will have people playing roles both as a Latino “parent” and a bi-lingual “child”. The BHU is looking internally for members to play these roles as well as contacting a theater group (The Brody Network) we have employed in the past.

Several committee members expressed approval for the work done on this scenario. One of the questions asked was about including other cultures in future scenarios. Lt. Hager told the committee that the Police Bureau is currently providing cultural diversity training at in-service so this one scenario does not represent the only work being done on this topic. Although the BHU is open to looking at other learning points it would be impractical to try and develop a scenario for every culture represented in Portland as they are numerous. A committee member pointed out that the cultural pieces addressed in this scenario are impactful in other communities as well while another was impressed with the complexity added to the scenario. Overall the committee members were pleased with the scenario and had no recommendations for changes.

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### Presentation, discussion, recommendations on BHU outreach efforts

The BHUAC was presented with the outreach efforts the BHU has done since it was created. The list is extensive including presentations to peer and advocacy groups, fundraising events, community group presentations, community training, media efforts, presentation to mental health facilities and social service agencies, outreach to veterans, and attendance/presentation at conferences.

The committee discussed what some of this outreach looked like with several committee members pointing to specific events they had attended. The BHU asked the committee to provide feedback on outreach and what might be missing. Several times a committee member would bring up a specific organization or event and then find it on the list. The committee wanted to ensure the BHU make efforts to include culturally diverse communities. They also discussed providing information to the community on what to expect on having an interaction with the police. Several committee members were impressed with the amount of outreach and the diverse kinds of organizations the BHU had interacted with.

There was conversation around other uniform security and how their interactions could have negative impacts on the perception of Portland Police as they are not as well trained and the general public does not always differentiate between a security officer and a Portland Police Officer. This also led to a conversation about crisis training within Multnomah County Jail and how a person's treatment in the jail could also affect their view of police. Both of these conversations included how the BHU may outreach and/or train in situations like this. The BHU is willing to do outreach which is usually a presentation to any organization that asks. The BHU is also involved in helping with some training. Officer Amy Bruner-Dehnert explained that we do participate in single training events however for organizations attempting to build sustainable training our role is limited to more of an advisory function.

A committee member asked how the City gets briefed on what the Portland Police Bureau is doing. Commissioners have a monthly meeting with the Chief and there are frequent briefings with the City Attorney. There was also a discussion about the role of committee members in sharing the work that has been done. The BHU posts our agenda's, approved reports, and approved minutes online for the public to view. Committee members are encouraged to share the link to these documents with the communities they represent on this committee.

Committee members noted that the BHU had not included the numerous regular meetings that different members attend and felt it was appropriate to add these to the list. The committee did not make any formal recommendations on additional outreach.

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### Discussion on BHU Mission Statement

Previously Jan Friedman has asked to discuss the BHU mission statement, and there was a brief discussion on it last meeting. The current mission statement reads: “The mission of the Behavioral Health Unit is to coordinate the response of Law Enforcement and the Behavioral Health System to aid people in behavioral crisis resulting from known or suspected mental illness and or drug and alcohol addiction.” Jan emailed a version of the mission statement that stated “The mission of the Behavioral Health Unit is to aid people in behavioral crisis – resulting from known or suspected mental illness or drug and alcohol addiction – through a coordinated response by law enforcement with the behavioral health system.” The primary emphasis on the people the police are interacting with and secondary attention on the police strategy used. The PPB is set up primarily to serve the citizens and its strategies are in furtherance of this purpose. This language re-ordering better reflects that the Portland citizens are the focus for the police work.

There was significant energy put into developing the mission statement when the BHU was created. This mission statement was vetted internally as well as with the BHUAC. One of the important pieces of the mission statement is the word “coordinate”. This word was specifically chosen because the BHU is not a mental health provider and it is not the role of the police to provide mental health services. The role is to coordinate between these services and law enforcement. This is the lens that everyone in the unit uses as we do our work and this is emphasized to the community. Any change to the mission statement would need to make this clear and not cause confusion as to what our role is. Several members of the committee stated that the current mission statement did make this clear.

There was further discussion about the word “behavioral” and how it causes some concern in creating a view point that those in crisis have a behavior problem when the real issue is mental illness. There have also been different opinions by members of the community about using the word “mental”. Language is a challenge since it can create different feelings to different members of the community.

The committee members agreed that the task of rewording the BHU’s mission statement should not be taken lightly and would need more time if that was going to be done. Lt. Hager told the committee that we would be discussing the work of the committee in 2017 at our next meeting in December and the committee can discuss if this is something they feel needs to be done during that conversation.

### Mental Health Mask

The mental health mask was recently brought up in the news and a committee member asked to discuss this. Lt. Hager explained that the mental health mask was the latest iteration of the Police Bureau’s attempt to gather data on mental health calls. This replaced the ECIT template that had been presented to the committee at a previous meeting but included much of the same data. It is important to understand that the Police Bureau is attempting to collect data on calls, not on people.

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Data is a challenge facing law enforcement nationwide. Even trying to answer what appears to be a simple question, “how many mental health calls do the police respond to?” has been a challenge. The data gathered in the mental health mask is also required by the DOJ agreement. The DOJ attorney, Adrian Brown, added that the Police Bureau agreed to the Memphis Model which requires CIT officers to respond to all mental health calls. Currently the Police Bureau only requires ECIT officers to respond to specific kinds of mental health calls and the mental health mask was designed to help the Police Bureau gather data to prove its model is working. A committee member asked if there was data to prove the Memphis Model works. The data on the Memphis model is older and there is nothing current. Adrian Brown agreed to send the Memphis data to the BHU Chair to disseminate to the committee.

The mental health mask is completed by an officer on a call if the officer believes there was a mental health component to the call.

### **December Meeting**

In the December meeting we will discuss the work for the next coming year. The BHUAC may not be able to cover every topic and should prioritize the work to be done. This will include a discussion about topics members have requested to cover along with a review of the DOJ report card and the work required by it.

**We will not be meeting in November.**

**December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 2:00 PM at the Portland Police Bureau’s Central Precinct, 14<sup>th</sup> floor Wayne Sullivan Room**