

## **Regional Community, Agency, and School Alliance (RCASA) Minutes- November 13, 2020**

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Presentations:

**Myrla Gibbons-Doxey**

**Deputy Director Niagara County Dept. of Mental Health**

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**SPOA Contacts:**

**Kari Stadtmueller, LMHC**

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**Brandi Abrams, Community Mental Health Aide**

**(716) 439-7527**

**[Brandi.Abrams@niagaracounty.com](mailto:Brandi.Abrams@niagaracounty.com)**

Myrla discussed the various supports and services available to children and families through SPOA (Single Point of Access Program)

Children and Youth Services available in Niagara County:

- Health Home Care Management
- Non-Medicaid Care Management
- Children and Youth Evaluation Service- CYES
- Home and Community Based Services
- Child and Family Treatment and Support Services (CFTSS)
- Community Crisis Intervention
- Mobile Integration Team
- Family Support
- In Home Respite Services (Telehealth currently)
- Multi-systemic therapy (provided through Catholic Charities)
- Residential services
- MH and SUD treatment
- Crisis Services

Myrla spoke about Health Homes Care Management services. Health Homes (HH) can help with care coordination, health promotion, work with child and families with linkage to appropriate

services. There are numerous care management agencies through HH, which allows a choice for families.

Criteria for Children's Health Home:

- Have Medicaid
- Have chronic health, medical, and/or mental health conditions
- Severe Emotional Disturbance/SPMI (Severe Persistent Mental Illness)
- Two chronic medical conditions
- HIV/AIDS
- Complex Trauma

Myrla discussed non-Medicaid Care Management, which is available through SPOA. Niagara County has a set number of Non-Medicaid Care Management slots available to children who do not have Medicaid or private insurance. There are two providers for children in Niagara County: New Directions Youth and Family Service and Pinnacle Community Services.

SPOA manages the non-medical slots and waitlist. Provide the same services as HH Care Management. Can assist with linkage to CYES (for youth only) if needed.

Children and Youth Evaluation Services (CYES) is available for a child that does not have Medicaid but could benefit from higher level of services such as Home and Community Base Services (HCBS) or Child and Family Treatment & Support Services (CFTSS).

CYES can be reached at 1-833-333-CYES. Once an application has been submitted, CYES will review the referral. A nurse will meet with the child and family to assess the need for additional services. CYES can assist the family with applying for Medicaid under family of one in order to obtain HCBS or CFTSS.

Myrla also discussed Youth HCBS Services formerly known as waivers. With recent system changes, NY State allows any child that qualifies for HCBS to access any of the higher level "waiver" services that the child could benefit from. Youth HCBS services include: community habilitation, day habilitation, caregiver/family support and services, community self-advocacy training and support, prevocational services, supported employment, respite services, palliative care, environmental modifications, vehicle modifications, adaptive assistive equipment, and non-medical transportation.

Referrals for SPOA can be found online or you can call the SPOA Department for an application. Children's SPOA referral: <https://www.niagaracounty.com/Departments/Mental-Health-Substance-Abuse-Sevices/Child-Sinle-Point-of-Access>

Adult SPOA referral: <https://www.niagaracounty.com/Departments/Mental-Health-Substance-Abuse-Sevices/Adult-Single-Point-of-Access>

Information for Niagara County Crisis Services:

- 24- hour Crisis phone line (716) 285-3515 (Free, confidential support, information, referral)
- 24 –Our Mobile Crisis Response Team
- Critical incident stress debriefing/defusing. This service is available to individuals, families, or groups who have faced a recent tragic or traumatic event.

**Kristin Miller and Megan Bannister**  
**Mental Health Services Counselors**  
**Orleans Niagara BOCES**  
**4124 Saunders Settlement Rd.**  
**Sanborn, NY 14132**  
**[kmiller@onboces.org](mailto:kmiller@onboces.org)**  
**[mbannister@onboces.org](mailto:mbannister@onboces.org)**

Kristin and Megan offer mental health service counseling for Orleans Niagara BOCES component districts. They can provide a variety of services to assist and support to school districts involving mental health. They spoke about services they provide and trends they are seeing at this time while working with their students and families.

Kristin and Megan provide mental health services for students and help to fill in the gaps with school counselors. They can provide mental health home visits to help provide supports. Kristin and Megan provide weekly zoom sessions with families and students that are struggling during school closures. They can provide community referrals when needed and help to coordinate mental health care.

This year, they are seeing an increase anxiety, parents worried about schools closings, students struggling with two days per week and scheduling.

While on their home visits, they find families that are overwhelmed. They find students will not work on their computer and are not logging in. The increase stress in homes is challenging for families.

During the meeting, Kristin and Megan answered questions about their program and trends they are seeing. They were asked about what ages need more support during this time of COVID closures. Kristin mentioned that she is seeing third and fourth graders needing more support. She also mentioned that juniors and seniors are having an increase in anxiety. For

example, there are questions involving the January Regents being cancelled. People do not have answers to how this will effect students, which increases anxiety. Megan mentioned kindergarteners are having a hard time adjusting in their classroom just two days per week. They both mentioned elementary regression seen with services such as speech and an increase in behavior issues.

If your district is interested in Mental Health Services provided through O/N BOCES, have your building supervisor contact O/N BOCES Special Programs Office. Kristin and Megan can also provide professional development for school districts.

**Kyla Hoffman**  
**PROS Center For Wellness**  
**33 Ontario Street**  
**Lockport, NY 14094**  
**Mental Health Counselor/ Vocational Specialist**  
**(716) 433-1937 ext. 211**  
**[kyla.hoffman@daleassociation.com](mailto:kyla.hoffman@daleassociation.com)**

Kyla presented on the PROS Center for Wellness located at the Dale Association in Lockport, NY. They offer programs for ages 18 and older for individuals with mental health conditions. The PROS Program (Personalized Recovery-Oriented Services), integrates treatment, support and rehabilitation in a manner to facilitate recovery and integration into the community.

PROS supports goals to improve functioning, increase employment, attain higher levels of education, enhance relationships and secure preferred housing.

PROS offers flexible group counseling, individual's sessions focusing on goal setting, dual disorder counseling, treatment planning, sessions for medication management and other health concerns, dual disorder counseling. They also offer vocational counseling sessions that focuses on job preparation, maintenance skills, and volunteer opportunities, etc.

PROS offers many groups, such as career discovery, young adult group, art therapy, music groups and other options as well.

PROS Program hours are 9:45 am-2:30 pm, Monday through Friday. They provide Medicaid transportation for their participants.

#### **Updates:**

**Parent Network:** Tonia Weichmann shared information about trainings that are coming up through Parent Network. There will be a training on holiday stress during time at COVID and other traditional trainings. Tonia mentioned that RCASA and transition groups will be moving from Transition Source to Schoology to share information.

For more information, call Parent Network at 716-332-4170. Or website:  
[parentnetworkwny.org](http://parentnetworkwny.org)

**West Regional Partnership Center-** Liz discussed the shift to their grant to offer assistance to school districts. They provide training for districts regarding transition and special education. They still support school districts for Indicator 13 trainings. West Regional Partnership Center will be offering trainings for Transition for Families and Graduation Pathways. Information regarding trainings can be found on Schoology.

For more information, contact Transition Specialists: Liz at [Eloughran-amorese@e1b.org](mailto:Eloughran-amorese@e1b.org) or Julia at [jduerr@e1b.org](mailto:jduerr@e1b.org).

### **Person Centered Services:**

Alan spoke about several workshops:

- Workshop on Care Coordination for Special Education Staff and Administrators:  
<https://personcenteredservices.com/webinar-on-care-coordination-for-school-personnel/>
- Workshop on OPWDD Eligibility and the Referral Process:  
<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/25903068acd97c15fa8a2729bed80caa2d174c5b713e-bea8ee8be19d640a903d>
- Upcoming Hot Topics Webinar, November 18th 12pm:  
Our experts will discuss what is self-direction, how do you get it, and why? The link to register, <https://bit.ly/334Ealy>
- Save the Date, December 7th 10:30am: Planning for the Future; The Transitioning Student Series Part I, with the Self-Advocates of NYS SANYS

For more information contact Alan at: [avenesky@personcenteredservices.com](mailto:avenesky@personcenteredservices.com).

**New Directions:** Laura Lloyd spoke about their programs offered and she mentioned that not all of their programs need Medicaid to participate. Laura's contact: [llloyd@ndyfs.org](mailto:llloyd@ndyfs.org) or 716-535-1745.

**Next meeting: January 22, 2021**

**Topic: Employment Ready: Trends & Supports related to successful employment.**

