



## Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Region 4 Regional Advisory Council Called Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 12, 2019

SWS Campus, Business Office Conference Room ♦ 400 S. Pinetree Boulevard | Thomasville, GA 31792

### Attendance:

**Members Present:** Carla Heard (Baker), Landra Lane (Calhoun), Bryan Arwood (Colquitt), Debra Richardson (Dougherty), Gail Davenport (Dougherty), Billy Zorn (Irwin), Virginia Herring (Seminole), Robin Schofill (Terrell), James Parrott (Thomas) and Sandra Cosby (Worth).

**Members Absent:** Reg McCutcheon (Brooks), Debra Robinson (Cook), Angela McVey (Early), Bobby Walker (Echols), Amy Griffin (Lanier), Kelley Saxon (Lowndes) and Deanie Campbell (Mitchell).

**DBHDD:** Jackie Davis (R4 BH), Jennifer Dunn (R4 BH), Tim Hester (R4 DD) and Kristy Whitaker (R4 DD).

**Guests:** Heather White (Decatur County citizen)

**Call to Order and Welcome.** Ms. Sandra Cosby called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Meeting attendees introduced themselves.

**Agenda Approval.** Billy Zorn made a motion to accept the Agenda as printed. Bryan Arwood seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**Minutes Approval.** Bryan Arwood made a motion to accept the minutes from the February 12, 2019 Regional Advisory Council (RAC) meeting as printed. Debra Richardson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**Meeting Purpose** (Ms. Cosby). The called meeting is solely for the purpose of seeing where the Region 4 Regional Advisory Council (RAC) is and where it needs to go with the RAC survey (“Identifying Independence and Recovery Needs in Georgia”).

### Survey and County Updates

<b>Worth</b>	<b>Sandra Cosby.</b> Ms. Cosby attended and participated in a <i>Phoebe Worth Community Needs Assessment</i> on February 12. The primary needs identified were mental health, local mental health services and all three disabilities. This was the theme throughout and in the end; local mental health services that people know about are needed. As an example, in Worth County a person comes from Aspire BH&DD on Thursdays, but people don't know that he is there. They don't know where he is, they don't know when he comes; so they don't know anything. There is need to raise awareness there regarding this. On February 19 Ms. Cosby went to Turner County and talked with the Assistant Clerk in the Clerk of Courts office. She left the flyer about the RAC and palm cards with her. On February 26 Ms. Cosby went to the district probate judge advisory committee meeting in Camilla. During this meeting Ms. Cosby shared the RAC and survey information. A probate judge from Worth County who was in attendance commented that when families come in they often ask about 1013s or Orders to Apprehend. This particular judge will ask those families to do the survey. She asked her clerk to pull from the file and contact people that had come in previously looking for help and ask them to complete the survey. Ms. Cosby attended the <i>South Georgia Regional Commission</i> meeting on February 28th. A total of 14 counties and 43 cities participate in the Commission
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	meetings. Ms. Cosby shared the RAC information, palm cards and a copy of the paper survey. Two people at the meeting completed the paper survey and handed them to Ms. Cosby on their way out of the meeting.
<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>Ms. Cosby for Kelley Saxon.</b> Ms. Saxon is working on the survey and promoting it. One of her contacts forwarded the survey to <i>Head Start Center supervisors</i> in Baker & Mitchell Counties for promotion. Ms. Saxon also forwarded the survey to the other <i>16 DCS Community Coordinators</i> in the state to share with their contacts. Ms. Saxon suggests contacting the school systems and having school teachers and staff complete the survey. Also suggests sharing it with parents, PTO, larger churches, major radio stations, newspaper contacts, and parks/recreation departments to help get the word out.
<b>Irwin</b>	<b>Billy Zorn.</b> Mr. Zorn had approximately 15 – 16 survey filled out. He went in the hospital in January for surgery and then on to the rehab hospital. Has been unable to locate the completed surveys since returning home. Believes that the people who filled them out were glad to fill them out and that they learned something about services by completing the survey. Attended a <i>Chamber of Commerce Industrial Authority</i> meeting on Monday, February 4. Now realizes that this is another source for getting the survey out. Also handed out surveys to <i>The Council on Aging</i> . He is not certain if these have been turned in.
<b>Colquitt</b>	<b>Bryan Arwood.</b> Spoke to <i>Colquitt County commissioners</i> on February 19 and gave them an update on what is going on with the survey. Asked the County Manager to challenge the department heads to spread the word about the survey. Mr. Arwood spoke to and sent emails to the Sheriff's Assistant challenging the Sheriff's Office to complete the survey. Colquitt County is hosting a <i>Community Collaborative</i> on March 21 at South Regional Technical College in Moultrie. The purpose of the Collaborative is to talk about what resources Colquitt has as a county and what is needed. The survey will be promoted at the Collaborative. As of today, participants from Turning Point and Colquitt Regional will be there in addition to other providers in the community who will serve as panelists. Turning Point has a large drug rehab center in Colquitt county. There is a need to have a place for people who complete drug rehab to go after completing the program. Mr. Arwood has also spoken to R.J. Hurn, Interim Executive Director of Georgia Pines. Georgia Pines has a Team Lead in every county except for Colquitt. They are in the process of rolling out an opioid addiction program. The program will be located in Thomas County, but will also serve Colquitt County. Occasionally when people come in the hospital (Colquitt Regional), they don't know just where to turn. They are not sure and they are uninsured. They may have insurance, but then they are worried about the cost of trying to go somewhere. Many of Mr. Arwood's co-workers are taking care of their grandchildren because their children are strung out on drugs. Ms. Dunn shared that <i>Aspire BH&amp;DD</i> had the grand opening of the Change Center on February 12 in Albany for this service. Two complimentary services are offered at the center. The services are methadone treatment (medication with treatment) and a recovery support center. The Center's soft opening was held in December. Georgia Pines is waiting on the contract to have the funding to get a lease on a building in Thomasville. Additional resources in Region 4 include <i>The Oasis Recovery Community Organization</i> in Tifton. Judge Herbert Benson is the founder. DBHDD also contracts with Turning Point for eight mental health beds.  Mr. Arwood has also sent the survey to EMS. The only place that he has not gone to is the Fire Department and the Police Department. Mr. Arwood also sent it to his church. Mr. Arwood reached out to the Chairman of the Board of Education in Colquitt County. Some of their staff Nurse Advisory Council at the hospital put the survey on their ER group page. Mr. Arwood has called the EMS Director and sent the link to her. Mr. Arwood sent an email to the Executive Assistant for the two nursing offices. The purpose of the email was to get approval to send the survey out and to remind everyone at the hospital to complete the survey.
<b>Seminole</b>	<b>Virginia Herring.</b> Ms. Herring still has a lot of surveys out. Based on the today's "Completed Questionnaires" report some of the surveys have been turned in. Ms. Herring has encouraged her contacts to work close with the school system. Ms. Herring is encouraging her contacts to have people complete the survey online. She will follow up with her contacts.



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<p><b>Discussion: Suggestions for retrieving paper copies of surveys</b></p>	<p><b>Retrieval of Paper Copies of Survey Suggestions</b> (Mr. Zorn, Ms. Herring, Ms. Cosby &amp; Ms. Davenport):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Designate an individual at site for people to return the surveys to.</i></li> <li>• <i>Designate a location where you would like to have the surveys turned in to.</i></li> <li>• <i>Address stamped envelopes with the address on it to where to send surveys to. If it's not enough, they can add another stamp.</i></li> <li>• <i>Other regions have sent paper surveys out with envelopes addressed without the stamp. If people wanted to do a paper survey they could and just put a stamp on it and mail it in.</i></li> <li>• <i>Type something up, designate someone at site and ask them to call you to come back and pick surveys up.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Dougherty I</b></p>	<p><b>Gail Davenport.</b> Lee County Police Department went over and above and made copies of the survey. Staff at Probate Court gives everybody that walks in a palm card. Has shared the survey with the Sheriff's Office, Family Connections and EMS. A recent Lee County newspaper article listed all of the calls made to EMS. The list included how many calls were for psychiatric patients. They have five or six psychiatric patients every week. Ms. Davenport met with the Hispanic community at a church on Sunday, March 10. She handed out surveys and did receive feedback. Ms. Davenport also went by the Change Center (Aspire BH &amp; DD) in Albany and gave them information. The staff member she spoke to said that he would send it out again. Ms. Dunn commented that Kathryn Newcomb, supervisor of Aspire's Change Center got the survey.</p> <p><b>Question</b> (Gail Davenport): During last year's priorities process, <i>Early Intervention</i> was one of the statewide priorities. Is it true that some of the \$8.4 million dollars that Governor Kemp has allotted for Apex is mainly due to RAC efforts last year? Ms. Dunn responded that she knows that some of the money was already earmarked for that purpose. She does not think it hurts that you threw it in there. Ms. Dunn distributed a one page handout to attendees regarding Apex.</p> <p>Ms. Davenport has distributed the survey in Lee County a couple of times via Primary Health Care. Recently the representative at Primary Health Care shared that said they don't know where to tell people to go. There is a new building that has Aspire's name out in front of it, but they are not sure who to send there (adults, kids, etc.). Primary Health Care shared the same thoughts. Primary Health Care has their own mental health staff, but there are circumstances where they might need to use community service.</p>
<p><b>Dougherty II</b></p>	<p><b>Debra Richardson.</b> Left surveys at the library. Attended the DBHDD R4 Albany Area Community Collaborative Meeting on February 27 where she made an announcement about the survey. Several people picked up paper copies and cards. Ms. Richardson attended the BHS (Legacy BH&amp;DD) CSB Board meeting in Adel on February 26. People (contacts, family &amp; friends) who Ms. Richardson asked to complete the survey online often email her back with comments and feedback. The main feedback has been that many people did not know what the programs were. These are educated people; some of whom have previously worked in mental health. The need for education and publicity is great. Ms. Richardson assured her friends and family that after this is all over she would send follow up information to them about it. It leads to think that there needs to be a lot more communication about services and in a lot of different venues. Ms. Dunn commented that Georgia has a lot going on, but does not do a good job of promoting, advertising and sharing it. When Ms. Dunn attends the national meetings with other states; Georgia is way ahead in terms of what it is doing. Some of it is because Georgia has money from the Settlement Agreement; which is really where it started.</p> <p><b>Question</b> (Bryan Arwood): Is there a possibility of DBHDD getting with WALB or WCTV to have a press conference? WALB did a 30 minute session (The Carla Health Show) with Ms. Dunn and local provider's right before the holidays last year. Per DBHDD policy, employees cannot contact the media outlets, but if the media contacts DBHDD, there are certain people at DBHDD who can</p>



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	communicate back. Ms. Dunn and Mr. Hester are two of those people who can do that for this area. Staff must go through the DBHDD Public Affairs office. Anytime the media contacts DBHDD, the department is happy to accommodate.
<b>Promotional Tools for Survey</b>	(Ms. Cosby). There are promotional tools for the survey which includes a press release. The newspaper in Worth County has been contacted twice, however nothing has been printed to date. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution printed an article about the survey on February 13. Ms. Cosby can email the survey promotional tools to anyone who needs them.
<b>Thomas</b>	<b>James Parrott.</b> Mr. Parrott attended the Family Connections meeting and had a good verbal response from attendees. Several people completed the survey during the meeting. When he ran out of palm cards at the meeting, attendees took pictures of it and everybody put it on their phones. Approximately 70 – 75 people attended the meeting and they plan to pass it on to others. The hospital was enthusiastic. They plan to make everybody fill it out. Ms. Dunn added that because of the new mental health commission that the Governor's Office has appointed; Family Connections at a state level wants to make mental health a priority for the agency. Mr. Parrott is on the agenda for the upcoming County Commission meeting. He plans to follow up on surveys that he has distributed. Mr. Parrott also has one more Family Connections meeting that he will be able to attend prior to the survey deadline.
<b>Survey Deadline</b>	<b>Ms. Cosby.</b> The deadline for this year's Priorities Process is <b>April 15, 2019</b> . Ms. Cosby is not certain at the moment, but this deadline may be extended. RACs have a total of 5000 surveys that have been completed.
<b>Baker</b>	<b>Carla Heard.</b> Ms. Heard has not been to the Health Department and believes this would be the place to go to in Baker County. Per Ms. Dunn, Baker is the smallest county in Region 4. There are approximately 3000 people in Baker. There are many people who are in need of services. Many people who live in Baker, go to Dougherty for services. Suggestions for getting the survey out in Baker County include contacting Primary Health Care. They have an online newsletter. Another suggestion is to distribute the survey link via Facebook. Ms. Dunn shared that the Southwest Georgia AHEC ( <a href="http://sowega-ahec.org">sowega-ahec.org</a> ) circulates an electronic newsletter which is distributed by Laura Calhoun from Albany. The newsletter goes to a lot of nursing students and people in the medical field. Ms. Dunn suggests emailing the survey to Ms. Calhoun for publication in the newsletter.
<b>Calhoun</b>	<b>Landra Lane.</b> Ms. Lane shared the survey on Facebook. Attended a Family Connections meeting two months ago. The Director was very receptive over the phone and sent the link to different people. Previously visited the superintendent of schools office and she planned to get it to all employees (faculty, teachers, everyone employed). Ms. Lane followed up with her this morning and believes that they will come through with getting the surveys completed. The number for Calhoun has increased since last month.
<b>Terrell</b>	<b>Robin Schofill.</b> Ms. Schofill got permission to send the survey out to all staff of the school system. She also shared it with a Parent Mentor and with their WIAO (Work Enforcement) Program. The WIAO program works with kids who have dropped out of school who are trying to get their GED and also serves people who are out of school, but need help getting jobs. It has been a very productive program. The instructor there made all of the people enrolled in the program come in and complete a survey.
<b>Discussion: GCAL Cards</b>	<b>Jennifer Dunn.</b> If you need GCAL cards, please send Ms. Dunn an email ( <a href="mailto:Jennifer.Dunn@dbhdd.ga.gov">Jennifer.Dunn@dbhdd.ga.gov</a> ) as soon as possible before your event or meeting as bulk supplies of the cards must be ordered in advance. The turnaround time is usually one to two weeks. Requests for GCAL cards from providers comes through the Region 4 Field Office.
<b>Discussion: Georgia Social Workers Conference</b>	Ms. Dunn shared that the School Social Workers of Georgia's Annual Conference will be held at Callaway Gardens on March 20 & 21. Because the conference is at Callaway, Region 6 staff will attend to represent DBHDD. Please let Ms. Dunn know if you would like to receive the announcement again.



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### R4 Parent Mentors

Ms. Cosby shared that Parent Mentors in Region 4 are, Decatur County (Kit Griffin), Dougherty (Kristy Hodge), Mitchell (Shirley Daniels), Seminole (Tiffany Ross), Terrell (LoTonia Mansfield). Ms. Cosby has names, phone numbers and emails if anyone would like them.

**Review & Discussion of R4 counties with low count and/or no surveys completed** (Ms. Cosby): Specific discussion regarding what RAC members can do to help these counties get their numbers up.

- **Baker.** Ms. Davenport suggested utilizing the Primary Health Care contacts. They have a newsletter. Ms. Heard is going to send another email with the survey link asking the County Clerks to forward it. She will also send out an extra challenge to the Council and ask that each of them can get five surveys filled out. Ms. Heard will send the survey to friends and people that she knows in the county. Ms. Heard plans to attend a board meeting tomorrow. It was also suggested that she talk to the Apex representative in the school.
- **Ben Hill.** Ms. Cosby will call to see if Rhonda (who used to work in Valdosta) can help. Ms. Herring's stepson is a surgeon in Ben Hill. She will contact him for assistance with distributing the survey.
- **Berrien.** Currently no RAC representative for Berrien County.
- **Brooks.** Heather White turned in two paper surveys for Brooks County today. Ms. Herring has several contacts (Rose Hall, a cousin & Maryanne Johnson, a friend) in Brooks County. She will make contact with them. Ms. Cosby suggests that they then contact new RAC member Reg McCutchen.
- **Early.** Ms. Dunn suggests getting in touch with Touchstone in Arlington (Aspire program). She will send the link to her dad who was a former County Commissioner in Early County.
- **Cook.** Commissioner Robinson is the RAC representative for Cook. Commissioner Robinson has been busy caring for her mom who has been ill. Ms. Cosby has not had a recent response from her. If anyone knows anyone in Cook or has any suggestions, please let Ms. Cosby know. Ms. Lane knows Laura Hill who is in the school system. She will contact her. Ms. Cosby will follow up with Commissioner Robinson.
- **Decatur.** Ms. Herring shared the survey at the Decatur County Hospital. She will follow up with Georgia Jones who works in Medical Records. Ms. Herring has been encouraging people to go online to complete the survey.
- **Dougherty.** Ms. Richardson will contact Dental offices in Dougherty. She will focus on her own personal physicians.
  - **Priority Selection** (Ms. Cosby). Ms. Cosby commented that when the surveys are completed, each RAC will chose three priorities and will have three strategies for each priority. The three priorities and corresponding strategy will go to Statewide Leadership Council where the priorities from all six regions will be pooled for review. Statewide Leadership Council will decide which three priorities and strategies will be selected for presentation to DBHDD from all six Regions. Ms. Dunn commented that RACs should keep in mind when selecting the priorities not select things/goals that DBHDD can never meet or address.
  - **Survey Distribution | Additional Locations** (Jamie Parrott). Mr. Parrott commented that Emergency Rooms are a good place to distribute the surveys. Ms. Dunn shared that RACs should keep in mind that most of the people who go to the emergency rooms have insurance. DBHDD





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funds those who are uninsured. Ms. Davenport noted that if RACs follow the same process as last year, those things get bumped out and narrowed to things that are really needed. Ms. Dunn noted that there was one priority selected last year that fell out of DBHDDs scope.

- **Early.** Ms. Cosby has not been able to reach Early county RAC representative, Angie McVey. Ms. Dunn's step sister works at Touchstone. Ms. Dunn can promote the survey in Early County. Ms. Dunn will send the link out to the Early Board of County Commissioners.
- **Echols.** Bobby Walker is the new R4 RAC representative for Echols County. Last month was his first meeting. Mr. Walker is an Echols County Commissioner. He identified a problem with the survey, the details to follow in summary of discussion.
- **Grady.** Ms. Heather White knows someone in the school system in Grady County. Ms. White's husband is a member of the City Council for Grady. Ms. White will help with promoting the survey in Grady County.
- **Irwin.** Ms. Cosby will call Rhonda Snipes and ask for assistance with promoting the survey in Irwin. Mr. Zorn noted that both Irwin and Ben Hill County have Chambers of Commerce where the survey can be sent.
- **Ben Hill.** Ben Hill County does not currently have a RAC representative. Ms. Herring knows someone in Ben Hill who might assist with promoting the survey.
- **Lanier.** Amy Griffin is the R4 RAC representative for Lanier County. Ms. Cosby will follow up with Ms. Griffin to see how she is coming along with the surveys.
- **Turner.** Ms. Cosby has a contact in Turner County. Please let Ms. Cosby know if you have any suggestions or any contacts in Turner County.
- **Lee.** Ms. Davenport has Lee County covered. She will contact everyone previously asked to complete the survey again.
- **Miller.** Ms. Dunn can help with Miller County.
- **Mitchell.** Deanie Campbell will do some follow up with some people in the school system. Ms. Campbell will follow up with Gina Waters at Mitchell Baker Service Center. Ms. Dunn is facilitating a Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) class for officers in Mitchell County during the week of March 25. Currently 19 officers are signed up to attend. Ms. Dunn will give the officers survey palm cards on Monday morning March 25. She will ask officers to complete the survey and return it before they walk out of the door.
- **Seminole.** Ms. Herring will check back with the Sheriff's Department and the county commissioners. Ms. Herring was asked to be a Bailiff, so she will take the survey with her when she returns.
  - **Distribution / Circulation Suggestions:** Chambers of Commerce likely have a list of churches they can share. Use the listing to communicate with pastors and see if they will share with their congregants. Libraries are also a good place for distribution.
- **Thomas.** Tim Hester has shared the survey locally at two churches and the McIntosh Clinic. His hoping that they will go online to complete the survey.



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- **Tift.** Ms. Cosby met an Associate Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Tifton yesterday who can share the survey in Tift. Ms. Dunn commented that there is a new substance abuse center in Tifton called “The OASIS Recovery Community Organization” (Judge Herbert Benson). Ms. Dunn can share the address and contact information, or she can take cards to them. Judge Benson is a magistrate judge who has a strong passion for substance abuse treatment. Both Ms. Dunn and Mr. Hester participate in Region K and Region L Emergency Preparedness Coalitions. Typically, approximately 200 people attend the Region K meeting (attendees are from Thomasville to Columbus). The next meeting is scheduled for the end of April for Region K. This date falls after the survey deadline. Approximately 100 people usually attend the Region L meeting in Tifton. Ms. Dunn can send the survey to the two people who man the Coalition list serve. Ms. Cosby will send the promotional tools to Ms. Dunn for use in emailing the survey to the Coalition contacts. Tift no longer has a representative on the RAC because Valeria Creel’s term expired and she does not wish to be reappointed.
- **Turner.** Mr. Arwood sent the survey link to a friend of his who is a Social Worker (Counselor) at a school via Facebook for distribution in Turner County. Ms. Dunn talks to the Turner county sheriff about once a week. He is on Facebook everyday and he will definitely put it out.

**Summary (Ms. Cosby).** It is nice to see the numbers of completed surveys rise collectively regardless of the county statewide. Ms. Cosby appreciates the feedback provided by everyone. Please don’t forget the Thrift Stores, Albany Rescue Mission, Food Bank, Civic Organizations, Women’s Clubs, Kiwanis, etc. RAC member Bobby Walker identified a technical issue with the survey. More than one person cannot do the survey on the same computer. Please *clear the browser history* to allow more than one person to complete the survey on a single computer. If you need assistance, please contact Ms. Cosby or the Statewide Community Relations Intern, Zenawit Nerae. Zenawit’s email address is [gadbhddinternzn@gmail.com](mailto:gadbhddinternzn@gmail.com). Please contact Ms. Cosby or Jackie Davis for paper copies of the survey or for palm cards.

### Announcements:

- **Bi-Annual Co-Located Regional Advisory Council Learning Event** (Ms. Cosby). The first of two RAC trainings will be held in Augusta May 1-3, 2019. Registration will be forwarded to members as soon as it opens. RAC member travel, meals and hotel accommodations are covered by DBHDD. Please make plans to attend the training.
- **Partnering for a Healthy Community Forum** (Ms. Cosby). This forum is scheduled for Thursday, May 21 from 8:00 am – 2:00 pm at SRTC conference center in Moultrie. Panelists of representatives from local agencies will share information with attendees about the services they provide. The RAC survey will be distributed at the forum. Please register and attend if you are available.

**Next Meeting.** April 9, 2019. The location of the next meeting is to be determined. Suggested locations include Echols Board of County Commission (Bobby Walker, RAC member), Regional Coalition in Camilla (Executive Director of the SW Georgia Regional Commission) and Albany at Aspire’s Change Center (Debra Richardson, RAC member). RAC members will be notified when a location has been identified.

**Adjournment.** Mr. Zorn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Gail Davenport seconded the motion. The motion passed.