

BHAC Committee Meeting: **Children, Young Adults, and Families Committee**
May 6, 2024, Minutes

Present: Co-Chairs Christi Green and Kimberlee Watts; Abigail Baines, Ann Geddes, Ashley Tauler, Olivia Suite, Barbara Allen, Ellen Weber, Heather Dewey, Jerica Washington, Joana Joasil, Lee Ohnmacht, Laura Kimmel, Natalee Solomon, Renee Neely, Sarah Winter, Rebecca Raggio, D’Lisa Worthy, Laura Torres.

Meeting called to order at 3:00pm

- Welcome, Christi and Kimber
- Presentation on **2024 Insurance-Related Legislation Access to Behavioral Health Care for Children, Youth + Families** by Ellen Weber, Sr. Vice President for Health Initiatives at the Legal Action leads the Maryland Parity Coalition. For over thirty years, Ms. Weber has worked to expand access to health services for persons with substance use disorders and challenge discrimination in employment housing and insurance through litigation, and state and federal legislative and policy advocacy. Slide deck is available.
 - Overview of Legal Action Center and Maryland Parity Coalition
 - Description of **Parity Act – Equal Insurance Coverage** and how it is important to our work
 - Review of three bills:
 - Health Insurance - Utilization Review ([HB932/SB791](#)) – awaiting Governor’s Signature
 - Parity Act Compliance Reporting ([HB1074/SB684](#)) – signed by Governor
 - Behavioral Health Advisory Council and Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access ([SB212/HB1048](#)) – signed by Governor
 - Announcement of Ellen’s retirement
- Presentation on **Primary Behavioral Health/ Early Intervention, Behavioral Health Administration** by Laura Torres, LCSW-C, Director, came to BHA from the Maryland Insurance Administration as their Director of Behavioral Health & Advocacy, and brings 19 years of experience within the hospital setting with behavioral health. Slide deck is available.
 - Review/Update of department, department heads, and restructuring initiatives:
 - **PBH/EI Director: Laura Torres, LCSW-C**
laura.torres1@maryland.gov
 - **PBH/EI Deputy Director: Joana Joasil, LCPC**
joana.joasil1@maryland.gov
 - **Director Early Childhood Services: D’Lisa Worthy, M.Ed.**
dlisa.worthy1@maryland.gov

- **Director of School-Aged Programming: Caroline Jones**
cjones@maryland.gov
- **Director of Transition-Aged Youth & Young Adult Services: Natalee Solomon** natalee.solomon@maryland.gov
- **Director Early Intervention: Barry Page** bpage@maryland.gov
- Improvement and expansion initiatives, including 1915(i)
- Future Initiatives

Meeting adjourned at 3:58pm