

# Meeting Minutes -



**Arkansas**  
Behavioral Health  
Integration Network

**Location:** Zoom

**Date:** January 10, 2025

**Meeting:** AR CoCM Community Stakeholders Meeting

**Time:** 12:00-1:00

## **Attendees:**

- |                 |                    |                 |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Kim Shuler   | 5. MD Kellum       | 9. Brea Strong  |
| 2. Patty Gibson | 6. Anna Strong     | 10. Mark Jansen |
| 3. Michael Keck | 7. Sarah Matsumoto |                 |
| 4. Miste Trent  | 8. Tina Zimmerman  |                 |

## **Agenda:**

1. Welcome/Updates/Announcements
2. IBHA Executive Committee Meeting Update
3. CoCM Update from DHS
4. UAMS Update
5. CoCM Events and Resources

## **Meeting Notes:**

### **Next Steps:**

- Kim to provide an update next month on the Executive Council meeting scheduled for Monday.
- Patty to get and share handout information about the REACH Institute training scheduled for May 2-4.
- Kim and team to continue efforts to get Medicaid codes turned on and ensure appropriate reimbursement rates for COCM.
- Team to keep COCM at the forefront of discussions addressing access issues in mental health care.
- Michael to provide details and registration information for the Arkansas Suicide Prevention Conference on April 10th.

### **Summary:**

David Jones & Tisha Dean were both unable to come to today's meeting. We will receive their updates during February's scheduled meeting. The team discussed the challenges faced by clinics due to insufficient reimbursement rates and the need for an expedited promulgation process, as well as the potential of using data from the UAMS system to support their financial argument. They also addressed the need for creative solutions to address access issues and reimbursement challenges.

### **Project Updates:**

ABHIN provided updates on the CoCM grant project, which is in its 2<sup>nd</sup> year, including the successful 2-day training with Eastern Arkansas in West Memphis during December. The psychiatrist consultants who will be working with them are scheduled to start on January 13<sup>th</sup>. They also mentioned participation from two additional clinics for the grant. One is McGhee, who will be joining later in the year. The 2<sup>nd</sup> will be River Valley Wellness.

### **AR BCBS Training Opportunity:**

REACH has received funding from the Blue & You Foundation to do an adult behavioral health training program for Arkansas adult health care providers, presumably family physicians, but also internists and others, including nurse practitioners and PAs. This program will be held May 2-4 (by Zoom), so we can reach PCPs easily across the state. The program includes follow-up small group video conference support every 2 weeks

for 4-6 months thereafter. Given its intensity, this program usually costs about \$1900, but Blue & You is covering all the costs. After this training, the providers usually feel more comfortable screening and assessing and are better equipped to work in integrated care. Dr. Gibson will be providing a flyer for the training soon.

### **Medicaid Payment and Grant Project Challenges:**

The committee discussed the need for Medicaid to start paying for the codes related to the implementation of the Grant project and the many challenges the clinics face due to insufficient reimbursement rates, which could lead to discontinuation of the program. Many at Medicaid think the grant is paying for services, but it is only paying for the clinics to implement CoCM. They highlighted the challenges faced by clinics if all their payers don't pay for these codes, as it hinders the implementation of the project. Healthy Steps mentioned having the opposite problem with Medicaid paying for services but not private payors. The committee also discussed the need for an expedited promulgation process to avoid limited uptake. The committee agreed on the importance of return on investment studies to demonstrate the effectiveness of the program. They also discussed the potential of using data from the UAMS system to support their financial argument.

### **Mental Health Access and Prescribing Concerns**

The team expressed concerns about patients' access to appropriate mental health care, particularly in relation to a proposed bill on psychologists prescribing medication. Patty shared her knowledge of the bill, stating that it was an interim study proposal and that the American Psychiatric Society was opposed to any level of prescribing by psychologists. She also expressed concern about remote vendors hiring psychologists from other states to provide psychiatric medication via telehealth. Kim highlighted the potential of the Collaborative Care Model (COCM) to extend reach and provide access to a larger population of patients. Michael emphasized the need for guidance in improving access to care. Anna mentioned a meeting with Representative Vaught about a continuum of integrated behavioral health that included prevention.

### **Important Date(s):**

- ▶ **Tuesday, Jan 21<sup>st</sup>, Noon**, [AIMS Center Webinar – Relapse Prevention Planning in Collaborative Care](#)
- ▶ **Wednesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 10:00 – 2:00**, Eureka Springs, AR – ABHIN Reentry Fair
- ▶ **Thursday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 8:00-2:00**, Fayetteville, AR – Fayetteville Town Center  
[Northwest Arkansas Schizophrenia Conference](#)
- ▶ **February 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>**, Fayetteville, AR – University of Arkansas, 2-Day PCBH Conference, [Serving Diverse Populations with Primary Care Behavioral Health: Considerations from the Front Line](#)
- ▶ **Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 – 4:30**, Little Rock, AR – 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual BHI Conference
- ▶ **Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup>** – Little Rock, AR – UAMS will be sponsoring a Suicide Prevention Conference with Dr. Christine Moutier. (more information coming soon!)
- ▶ **May 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>**, Virtual Training – Reach Adult Behavioral Health Training (more info coming soon!)

### **CoCM Resources:**

- ▶ [ABHIN CoCM Training & Resource webpage](#)
- ▶ [AIMS Center: Collaborative Care Monthly Finance Office Hours](#)
- ▶ [AIMS Center: Collaborative Care Monthly Implementation Office Hours](#)
- ▶ ABHIN *While You Wait* Podcast now streaming:

- [Amazon](#)
- [Spotify](#)
- [YouTube](#)

