

# Meeting Minutes

Logan County Mental Health Advisory Council

Meeting Date: August 24, 2021 (4pm)

Meeting Location: Community Action Partnership of Central Illinois, 1800 5<sup>th</sup> St., Lincoln, IL

Present	Absent	Excused
Alison Rumler-Gomez	Sheriff "Designee" Rod Boyd	
Don Cavi	Olivia Messina	
Villy Cone	Jeanette Harris	
Dan Benedict		

The meeting was convened at 4:08pm. Roll call was taken by Chairman Rumler-Gomez. Four members were present. Three members were absent. Dr. David Hepler of the Logan County Board attended the meeting as a guest.

**Action Item #1:** Meeting Minutes from August 25, 2020, were shared and discussed. No changes to the meeting minutes were made, and the minutes were approved. The motion to approve was made by Dan Benedict and seconded by Villy Cone.

**Item #2:** Members gave their Subject Matter Expert (SME) reports. Reports are as follows:

**Don Cavi (Mental Health Promotion)** – The health department is revisiting the strategic plan as COVID related work remains high. Resources are tight but the strategic plan must move forward. The health department needed to move target dates back due to the pandemic. Upcoming projects include becoming a Trauma-Informed agency and subsequently taking this to the community/partners, a data sharing project with local partners, and mental health promotion/education support to the community

**Villy Cone (Mental Health Maintenance)** – Villy reported that there is a growing waiting list of people needing mental health services. They are getting more grant dollars to help provide more services; however, there is a shortage of counselors to provide the services. Due to the shortage, there has been a push for lower standards to become licensed clinical counselors which can threaten the quality of services. The shortage of counselors, particularly in rural areas, is a major concern as major metropolitan areas are recruiting heavily.

**Dan Benedict/Alison Rumler-Gomez (Mental Health Outreach)** –

Dan reported that COVID has had a major impact with the roughly 2,000 veterans in the county. Financial assistance by veterans is being utilized less by veterans in the county and it is uncertain if unemployment pay is the cause. Such financial assistance would cover cost of rent, food, utilities. The morale of the veterans has been quite low as current events in the world are not positive for the U.S. and our military. The Veteran's Administration overall has been doing more outreach these days.

Alison reported that her agency continues to use the "Grow Me" application for life schooling for their families and this has been very positive! They perform a comprehensive assessment with clients before and after they finish the program to see if a family, in each case, is stabilizing and the program is making a difference. This

helps assure CAPCIL is getting a return on their investment and the program is worthwhile. They are finding with some families that as their lives improve and they stabilize, they see less use of welfare benefits. They are also finding that the top 25% of families who are performing well are also their most active and engaged clientele. CAPCIL is also taking “Grow Me” to the Logan County jail detainees and are working with a caseload of 10 to help improve their lives through programs centering around such things as academic support, anger management, mental health assistance, etc. So far, they are seeing much success! Nearly half of the detainees, after release, are taking advantage of the local food pantry and various programs the community offers to transition into a better life. CAPCIL is working to get funded again in 2020 to continue with this program. Lastly, Alison looks forward to Jeanette Harris joining our Council as she will be a great connection to the Resource Oriented System of Care (ROSC) program.

**Action Item #3:** For discussion, the Council talked about a work statement for the Council and the potential need for a separate equity statement. Since the Council is dedicated to working for all people who are vulnerable, as of now, the equity statement will coincide with the mission statement rather than having a separate statement.

**Item #4:** Alison gave an overview of the CAPCIL Community Assessment and, after a six-month study was conducted by their SMEs, mental health was by far the top priority. CAPCIL will now plan to do more work with mental health to extend their reach beyond life coaching. Access to mental health care will now be a priority. CAPCIL, like most area agencies, is open to suggestions for best ways of approaching mental health. The group also discussed how the Council sees their role in relation to working with ROSC and the rest of the community. It was re-emphasized that the Council should play an advisory role and is not equipped with resources and time to directly operate programs at the ground level. The Council also sees itself as a key liaison creating a bridge between the County Board/Stakeholders and the community and its partners. The Council thought it would be advantageous to have a mental health champion on the County Board who will work with the Council to act as a go-between the Council and the County Board to relay identified concerns and ideas/options. The Council, in addition to advising, will help identify community needs to the County Board, will identify partners who can carry out initiatives that are recommended for action, and offer support to partners in their efforts to organize and conduct outreach.

**Item #5:** The group scheduled their next meeting for Tuesday, October 26, 2021, at 4pm at CAPCIL. At this meeting, a schedule will need to be discussed to determine dates for all quarterly meetings for 2022. Once the meeting schedule is determined, the health department will include the dates on their website.

**Item #6:** At 5:52pm, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Don Cavi made the motion which was seconded by Dan Benedict.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Don Cavi, Secretary