

**MINUTES OF THE**  
**SANTA FE COUNTY**  
**HEALTH POLICY & PLANNING COMMISSION**

**November 22, 2024**

**Santa Fe, New Mexico**

This regular meeting of the Santa Fe County Health Policy & Planning Commission (HPPC) was called to order by Chair Steven Berkshire at approximately 10:00 a.m. on the above-cited date at the Plaza Conference Room, 100 Catron Street, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The following members were present:

**Members Present:**

Steven Berkshire, Chair  
Jane Hajovsky [remotely]  
Craig Schermerhorn  
Arthur Culpepper [remotely]  
Maria Jose Rodriguez Cadiz [remotely]  
Ronald Aldrich  
Mark Hayden  
Deborah Weiss

**Member(s) Absent:**

None

**County Staff Present:**

Jennifer Romero, Deputy Community Services Director  
Anne Ryan, Community Services Director

**Others Present:**

Valeria Alarcon, New Mexico Alliance of Health Councils  
Heather Maxey, New Mexico Alliance of Health Councils  
Alicia Kormick, United Healthcare [remotely]  
Kathleen Tunney, CSV [remotely]  
Chris Novak, DOH  
Jeremy Espinoza, DOH Epidemiologist [remotely]  
Carmengloria Hulsey, UNM Cancer Center [remotely]  
Christa Hernandez, City of Santa Fe

**C. Introductions**

Those present and on line introduced themselves.

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**D. Approval of Agenda**

CSD Director Anne Ryan asked to give a department update before the principal presentation. Commissioner Aldrich moved approval. Commissioner Hayden seconded and the motion to approve the agenda passed by unanimous voice vote.

**UPDATE:** Ms. Ryan spoke about AOT, Assisted Outpatient Treatment, a tool that has been used effectively in some communities with adults with SMI – serious mental issues – in a chronic capacity. In July the Governor convened a meeting of the counties of the First Judicial District in order to promote AOT and \$3 million was appropriated to the Administrative Office of the Courts in a special legislative session to implement AOT as a pilot program. Program managers and contract attorneys have been onboarded. Senator Wirth believes the program would do well in Santa Fe. Thirty individuals have been identified as potential clients of the program.

Additionally, Ms. Ryan spoke of Sequential Intercept Mapping, which maps the gaps between behavioral health and overall health in the context of criminal justice. This is also targeted toward the high acuity population. An interactive meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2025 at Christ Church. Space is limited but HPPC should have representation there to assist in coordination and integration and to bring information back to this body. Commissioner Aldrich agreed there was a tremendous gap in behavioral health.

**E. Approval of Minutes**

**September 20, 2024:** Commissioner Hayden moved to approve and Commissioner Weiss seconded. The motion to approve the September minutes passed without opposition.

**PRESENTATIONS: NM Alliance of Health Councils**

Valeria Alarcon, Executive Director, introduced herself and Heather Maxey who lead the Alliance. Ms. Alarcon provided a power point presentation outlining the history and current state of affairs. She began with a land acknowledgement. The organization sprang from the Maternal and Child Health Act in the 1990s. She pointed out that statistics indicate New Mexico is the worst state in which to be a child. The councils are critical in addressing the numerous needs. The strategy involves many public and private partnerships, and is a local link with four regions in the state's centralized health system. There are ten tribal councils throughout the state.

There is a goal to make New Mexico the healthiest state in the nation in by 2040. Sixty percent of the state is rural, complicating access to healthcare, and this is a problem being dealt with by the councils. During COVID the CDC provided \$50,000. Ms. Alarcon showed a chart demonstrating the interrelationships with agencies and partners to drive community solutions for systemic change.

Commissioner Schermerhorn asked if all pueblos have health clinics. Ms. Alarcon said not all do but the councils work to carpool or van people to clinics or provide mobile services.

Commissioner Aldrich noted Blue Cross/Blue Shield New Mexico just donated \$500,000 to help recruit new providers.

Ms. Alarcon noted liability is also an issue, but there are many dedicated people in the state. She gave an example of the work of the Alliance as Guadalupe County creating a new EMS license. A graph was provided showing the funding trajectory. In 2024 the legislature allocated \$3.64 million, around \$80,000 for each health council. They will be advocating for more in the future. She emphasized this is replacement funding.

The councils use varying governance structures – county-based, 501 (C)(3)s, fiscal agents or tribal agencies. They were able to secure 109 council coordinator positions statewide. She spoke about the leadership roles of the health council coordinators and personnel. In response to a question from Commissioner Aldrich, Ms. Alarcon said the councils are by nature representative of the diversity in their area. She reviewed the eight stated functions of the councils, noting there are actually more.

The assessment process is critical to the implementation phase. DOH included two specific deliverables: access to primary care and behavioral health.

Commissioner Hayden asked if telemedicine and mobile clinics are being used, and if vaccines are available. Ms. Alarcon said there are some mobile units. COVID vaccine continues to a priority as there is shortage of vaccines. Dr. Novak said there used to be large allocations but the situation has been privatized. The priority is people without insurance and children. Mobile units go out to the tribes and rural areas. Flu vaccine is more readily available and more requested due to some residual skepticism.

Commissioner Culpepper asked if there was a coordinated effort to redistribute vaccines to needed areas. Mr. Novak said DOH does that and retail pharmacies work to avoid waste. More could be done in the way of collaboration.

Ms. Alarcon highlighted the CHIP priorities identified by various councils, with behavioral health figuring prominently. Impact reports are currently being submitted to DOH which will provide more data. They will be requesting \$43 million from the upcoming legislative session. This will provide more “boots on the ground” and allow for the bandwidth to bring on more tribal participation.

Commissioner Aldrich announced that Anchorum Health Foundation will be doing a presentation on housing in northern New Mexico on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Housing is a prime social determinant of health.

Ms. Alarcon indicated the LFC will be meeting the week of December 9<sup>th</sup> and she requested that everyone do what they can to help the advocacy efforts through letters of support and emails to representatives.



### **Annual Work Plan**

Chair Berkshire requested that subcommittees be formed to work on the various aspects. Ms. Romero distributed a template of the DOH invoice, listing the requirements for each deliverable. [Exhibit 1] Three have been completed and the major ones would benefit from a subcommittee. *A Health Action Plan*, which covers the next five years, covers this territory but needs to be transferred to the format of the DOH template. The deliverables need to be completed this year with quarterly reports. She reviewed the priorities of the Health Action Plan, noting measures staff has taken in each area.

Ms. Romero said HPPC has formulated action plans for a number of years but only recently has the County applied for health council funding. The CONNECT network receives much of the funding. Commissioner Hajovsky asked if the action plan drives CSD and Ms. Romero said it does, and she gives regular updates on progress.

For the subcommittees: #4A will be worked on by Commissioners Hayden, Berkshire and Weiss. #1A will be worked on by Commissioners Berkshire, Rodriguez Cadiz and Hajovsky. They will be meeting December 16<sup>th</sup>. # 2 will be worked on by Commissioners Weiss, Berkshire and Schermerhorn, the time to be determined

### **Matters from the Commission**

Ms. Romero said she would forward copies of the DOH template to those on line.

Chair Berkshire said he would cover the January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting on Sequential Intercept Mapping mentioned by Ms. Ryan.

### **Matters from Staff**

Ms. Romero asked for a Commission member willing to serve as the liaison with the Behavioral Health Leadership Council. It would be a non-voting position and the meetings take place Thursday at 10:00. Commissioner Hayden volunteered to serve in that capacity.

There was a discussion on orientation for new members and it was noted a packet has been assembled by Commissioners Hajovsky, Schermerhorn and Berkshire. Ms. Romero said there could be a visit to La Sala, the crisis triage center.

Ms. Romero mentioned the following:

- CSD is working with the Community Development Department on providing services to low income housing projects going in on the south side
- There is a vacancy for a Commission member from District 3
- Commission members were asked to review the HPPC website and provide feedback
- Future meeting dates for 2025 are February 7, May 2, August 1, and November 7

**Public Comment**

In response to a question by Commissioner Rodriguez Cadiz, Chair Berkshire noted that members of the community with an interest in public health can attend HPPC meetings. Ms. Romero said participation used to be more robust prior to the pandemic.

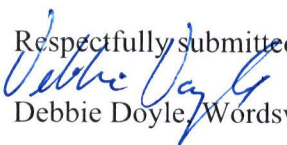
Dr. Novak, speaking about activities in the Department of Health, said they continue with efforts disseminating information about medically appropriate treatment with Suboxone. A pilot program will be conducted in Santa Fe and Española to increase access. He clarified that the mobile units that go to rural areas are not primary care clinics but do provide vaccines and reproductive healthcare. They are contemplating doing an open house at the DOH facility on Letrado, January 6<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 to 6:00. Details are still in the works.

**Adjournment**

This meeting was declared adjourned at approximately 11:50 a.m.

Approved by:

  
Steve Berkshire, Chair  
Health Policy & Planning Commission

Respectfully submitted by:  
  
Debbie Doyle, Wordswork



COUNTY OF SANTA FE ) HEALTH POLICY & PLAN M  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO ) ss PAGES: 5  
I, Katharine E. Clark, County Clerk, do hereby certify that this instrument was filed for record on the 7th day of February, 2025 at 12:19:46 PM and was duly recorded as instrument # 2052298 of the records of Santa Fe County.

deputy  Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office  
Katharine E. Clark  
County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

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