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## A Message From Commissioner Williams:

Dear Friends and Teammates,

While 2020 has interrupted, disrupted, reorganized, and upended so much of daily life, there are some things that never change, and that includes the budgetary process for state government! The team has been hard at work collecting data, ideas, and information for our FY22 budget proposal to Governor Bill Lee, and we will present our plan to him on **Tuesday, November 10**. As in years past, the budget hearings for our department and the 22 other departments will be streamed live and will also be available on-demand on TN.gov. Please check the website closer to the date for the schedule and links to view the presentations.

Another thing that hasn't changed during the pandemic is the ability of Team TDMHSAS to bring in millions in federal grant funding. I am proud to say that since mid-March, **we have secured more than \$114 million in federal grant funding** to continue, supplement, and expand services for Tennesseans living with mental health and substance use challenges for years to come. That's a huge testament to the hard work of our team and an endorsement for the life-changing and life-saving services from our community mental health and substance abuse providers.

As always, we are grateful for your support and your partnership in the essential work we do for the people of Tennessee.

Blessings,

Marie

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## TDMHSAS secures more federal grants to support behavioral health needs

TDMHSAS has secured an additional \$7.2 million in federal grant funding to respond to mental health and addiction concerns caused by COVID-19 and recent natural disasters.

The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has awarded the department an additional \$3.5 million to continue to address mental health concerns caused by COVID-19. This funding supplements a previous grant of almost \$1 million. Crisis counseling services through this program are available in all 95 Tennessee counties.

These latest grant announcements come on top of a \$2 million grant from SAMHSA to respond to the behavioral health impacts of COVID-19 and a \$500,000 grant from FEMA to respond to the impacts of tornadoes in March.

“Whether it’s the ongoing effects of a natural disaster or the immediate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we know Tennesseans are hurting and need help. In our time of need, we are so grateful for the support of our partners in federal government and the leadership of Gov. Bill Lee and the Tennessee General Assembly,” said TDMHSAS Commissioner Marie Williams, LCSW. “Our amazing network of mental health and addiction treatment providers are

perfectly positioned to take this funding, meet the needs of their communities, and get people on the road to recovery.

[Read the press release in its entirety and find COVID-19 counseling services near you.](#)

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## Chief Executive Officers announced at two Regional Mental Health Institutes

Two of Tennessee's four Regional Mental Health Institutes (RMHIs) are getting new Chief Executive Officers. Josh Carter is the new CEO at Western Mental Health Institute in Bolivar, and Jeff Coons is the new CEO at Memphis Mental Health Institute.

Josh Carter has more than 18 years of service with the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. Carter spent more than 14 years of that time in various roles at Western Mental Health Institute (WMHI) before he was named CEO of Memphis Mental Health Institute (MMHI) in April 2017.

Jeff Coons has been with the department for 13 years, serving as an Assistant General Counsel for both WMHI and MMHI before being named Hospital Administrator at MMHI in September 2017.

Zach Edmiston is moving into the role of Hospital Administrator at MMHI. Edmiston served as Assistant Nurse Executive at MMHI for two and a half years leading the hospital's COVID-19 response and Electronic Clinical Record implementation.

[Read the press release in its entirety.](#)



Pictured left to right are: Zach Edmiston, MMHI Hospital Administrator; Jeff Coons, MMHI CEO; Commissioner Marie Williams; Josh Carter, WMHI CEO; and Ty Thornton, TDMHSAS Chief of Hospital Services.

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## New Director of Licensure named

### *Dan Giannotti returns to TDMHSAS for key role*

Please help us welcome Dan Giannotti as our new Director of Licensure. Dan is a familiar face at the department. In 2005-06, he worked as an attorney with TDMHSAS, primarily in licensure. Dan also served the State of Tennessee as a special hearing officer with DHS, and he worked as general counsel for the remainder corporation of Baptist Hospital in Nashville. He holds a bachelor's degree in finance from Middle Tennessee State University and a law degree from Roger Williams University and has been a licensed attorney in Tennessee since 2005.


Prior to re-joining TDMHSAS at the beginning of October, Dan was in private practice as counsel for individuals and small businesses, primarily dealing in business contracts, negotiations, start-ups ventures and business legal management. In his new role, he will be responsible for overseeing and managing the department's licensure division.

We look forward to Dan being a part of the team and leading a grant that merges physical and behavioral healthcare for the most vulnerable Tennesseans. Welcome back, Dan!

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## State employees are 'simply the best'

*State Employee Recognition Day 2020*



**TN** STATE EMPLOYEES ARE...  
**SIMPLY THE BEST!**

"While it has been a difficult year, this team continues to tackle every challenge in order to make a difference for our great state," said Gov. Bill Lee in an email message to employees on State Employee Recognition Day Sept. 30. "You have adapted to new work environments, assumed new responsibilities, and overcome unprecedented obstacles. I could not thank you enough for your selflessness and perseverance. Tennessee has the most committed, hard-working group of state employees in the country, and I am proud to serve alongside of you."

Click the video above to hear team TDMHSAS answer the question "State Employees Are \_\_\_\_\_", and don't miss Commissioner Williams' musical, heartfelt message to TDMHSAS staff.

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Creating Homes Initiative featured in  
National Housing Conference webinar

Join these health experts for  
NHC's Health and Housing  
Webinar on Sept. 30 at 1 p.m.  
ET



**Dr. Regina M. Benjamin** serves as Zillow's Health & Safety Advisor. Previously, she served as the 18th Surgeon General of the U.S.



**Neru Gobin** serves as director for the Office of Housing and Homeless Services at the TN Department of Mental and Substance Abuse Services



**Rachel Solotaroff** serves as president and CEO at Central City Concern in Oregon



**David Fukuzawa** serves as senior advisor to the president at The Kresge Foundation

Like all of our Directors, Neru Gobin, TDMHSAS Director of Housing & Homeless Services, has been even busier than usual, wearing a lot of new hats in the era of COVID-19. Recently, he was asked to join a panel of national experts to discuss "Creating Positive Outcomes During COVID-19." Alongside experts such as former Surgeon General of the U.S. Dr. Regina Benjamin, Neru spoke mainly about TN's Creating Homes Initiative (CHI). After two decades, CHI continues to offer solutions, housing, and innovative ideas for the future of housing and homeless services.

Watch the entire webinar at [this link](#) or catch Neru's presentation starting around 1:27:00.

A screenshot of a presentation slide. At the top left is a circular logo with a building icon. The title "Serving the Whole Person: Health & Housing" is in a dark blue banner. Below the title is the subtitle "Resilience, Recovery & Independence". A small video inset in the top right shows a man speaking. The main content is a list of bullet points:

- Access to Mental Health Care
- Access to Primary Care
- Integrated Care
- Affordability
- Transportation
- Identifying supplemental resources
- Peer Recovery Support
- Supported Employment (IPS)
- SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR)
- Individualized plans
- Social skills

# Work continues: De-criminalizing mental illness, substance use disorder

*Sevier County is the 8th TN county to lay out community goals in a Sequential Intercept Mapping workshop*



(Above) What brings Judges Jeff Rader and Duane Slone and Dr. Schuyler Geller together for this photo? The Sevier County Sequential Intercept Mapping (SIM) Workshop coordinated by Sevier County CARES!

If you're not familiar with these workshops, they are an important planning component for a \$6.5 million/36-month TDMHSAS grant being used to support county level responses to drug related overdoses, specifically as they relate to individuals who are coming into contact with the criminal justice system. The SIM workshops support cross-disciplinary engagement by community stakeholders from the following groups: criminal justice system professionals, mental health professionals, substance use professionals, housing and community support service providers, first responders/crisis services, peers and family members, religious and culture organizations, and elected officials.

Each stakeholder group develops a local systems map, sets priorities for

change, and on the second day of the workshop, develop action plans related to their top priorities as a community. Some of the priorities are then funded through the federal grant award for a 36-month period. Many of the priorities continue to be addressed through local collaboration post-workshop. This process allows the department to support local strategic planning in its response to challenges related to the interaction between individuals with behavioral health disorders and the criminal justice system.

The Sevier County workshop is the eighth workshop that has been completed. The other counties include: Sumner, Putnam, Wilson, Sullivan, Hamilton, Jefferson and Washington. Over the next 36 months, another \$6 million grant will support workshops in the following counties: Blount, Tipton, Dickson, Cheatham, Anderson, Roane, Bradley, Grundy, and Cocke.

The facilitator team for this Sevier County Workshop (pictured below) was: Ellen L. Abbott and Tom Pitt, TDMHSAS; Shara Biggs, Mental Health Cooperative Inc.; and Jan Cagle, Ridgeview Behavioral Health Services.

*Photos via [Sevier County CARES](#).*



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# National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

*TN's prevention coalitions lead the way*





(Above and below left) Clay County Anti-Drug Coalition got started early, hosting a drive-thru take-back event and even offered Narcan training. (Below right) Obion County Prevention Coalition reports that they collected 40 lbs. of unused or expired medication on National Prescription Drug Take Back Day.





(Left) Lawrence County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition  
(Right) Maury County Prevention Coalition



(Left) Prevention Coalition for Success (Rutherford Co.)  
(Right) Unicoi County



(Left) Sevier County CARES (Right) Weakley County Prevention Coalition

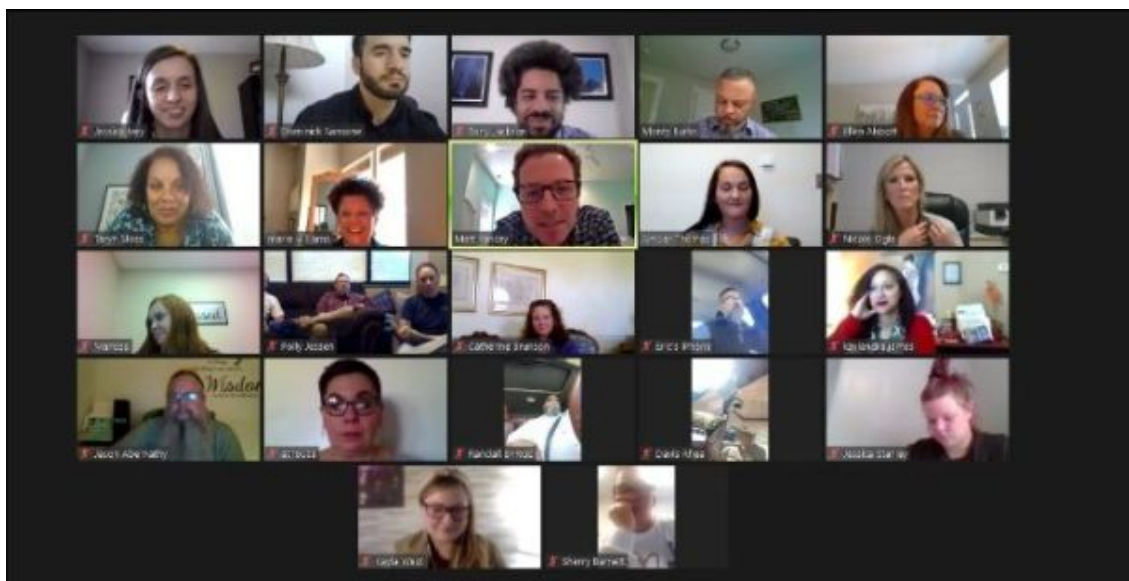


Thanks Officer Rob (Williamson County Anti-Drug Coalition) and all coalitions, community partners, law enforcement, and citizens who participated and assisted in take back day events. The simple act of cleaning out medicine cabinets, checking your home thoroughly for expired and unused medications, and disposing of them properly saves lives and helps keep our waterways clean and safe!

Read the TDMHSAS press release: [Prescription Drug Take Back Day Gains New Importance During Pandemic](#). Find a [permanent take-back box near you](#).

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## One Team | One Vision 2020



Following last year's very successful and exciting launch of [One Team | One Vision](#), Tennessee's team of "community-based change agents" have been collaborating more than ever before, working in new and innovative ways to respond to the changing needs of those struggling with substance use and co-occurring disorders. It's very clear that a worldwide pandemic will not slow this group (and their mission) down. Made up of TDMHSAS staff, TN's prevention coalitions, treatment providers, and those working diligently in several programs statewide, the team met virtually this year via four regional meetings.

"The biggest takeaway from [One Team | One Vision] is that we are seeing the value in collaborating and coordinating," said Anthony Jackson, TDMHSAS Director of Prevention & Early Intervention Services. "These programs have been able to build off of each other and have gained success from this collaboration."

Kayla West, our new Recovery Navigator Nurse Practitioner, agrees. She described the meetings and the work of the team as "forging creative collaboration during unprecedented times." Kayla shares how she witnessed this kind of collaboration on a personal level after participating in one of the meetings.

"I heard Dr. Burks discuss the Certified Recovery Congregations," she said. "I reached out to the pastor of my home congregation in East TN, and Dr. Burks connected him to Eric, the local Faith-Based Coordinator. Less than two weeks later, Eric came to speak at an association gathering of pastors throughout the Hamblen County and Nolichucky Region. Additionally, Pastor David expressed interest in meeting a ROPS coordinator to learn about having Naloxone at the church facilities."

This is how it's done. Thanks, Kayla, and everyone associated with One Team | One Vision. For another success story, don't miss this memorable one below.

## ROPS: A Success Story

*This is one of the moving recovery stories made possible through the One Team | One Vision team*

Since October 2017, Melesa Lassiter, Region 6 Regional Overdose Prevention Specialist, has worked with an individual struggling with substance use disorder for many, many years who comes from a family history of substance abuse and

mental illness. For years, his substance of choice has been what he could get his hands on, and he has been polypharmacy while using Suboxone, heroin, and fentanyl.

This individual met Melesa after a naloxone training event flyer made it into his hands, and they've spoken or texted at least once every two weeks since. He would say, "I was always able to reason myself to stay in my addiction." Melesa has provided him naloxone even when he wasn't ready for recovery. He has used the naloxone on those around him, and he has had it used on himself multiple times to save his own life. He recently hit "rock bottom" per his definition.

Together, the TN Lifeline Coordinator for Region 6 and Melesa were able to continue attempts at assessment and readiness for recovery. And guess what? He was finally ready to pursue recovery! The Lifeliner found a grant-funded detoxification bed, and as of the writing of this story, he was a week into his new definition of recovery. This individual has been able to make a few calls while in treatment, and Melesa was the one he called! He is forever grateful for the grant funds that have helped him on this journey.

This story is just one of the many successes we have had while doing the work of ROPS in partnership with the Lifeliners while also leveraging TDMHSAS-funded treatment services. For Melesa, this story stands out because of the many, many many late night texts, calls, emails and so much more that has been poured into that moment and his readiness for recovery decision. Melesa wants to thank everyone "for the continued opportunity for me and others to help others."

Keep up the GREAT work ... One Team | One Vision!

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## Early Psychosis Conference 2020

*Submitted by Jules Wilson, TDMHSAS*

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse services (TDMHSAS), in partnership with the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations (TAMHO), hosted TN's third Early Psychosis Conference last month. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference was a virtual

experience. We were able to go even bigger and bolder with multiple attendees calling it “the best virtual conference I have attended.” We had 362 conference registrants from many states including Tennessee, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Virginia, California, Utah, and Texas.

The theme was “Fueling the Flame of Recovery” which planning committee member Kaelin Large expounded on: “Just like fire, recovery can be painful; it hurts and is uncomfortable at times. But the story doesn’t stop at that pain, that temporary discomfort eventually moves into renewal and regrowth. Just as a forest bounces back teeming with new life, recovery often provides new skills, relationships, and a new outlook on life. Recovery, just like fire, is collective and inclusive; while every spark and twig is important, they cannot become a blaze on their own. In the same way, it takes a community with all types of roles and supports to help fuel the flame of recovery.”

We kept this beautiful image of recovery in mind with each step of planning. People with lived experience served on the planning committee, were invited to speak, and provided entertainment. I personally got to work with some incredible young adult activists and advocates from across the country for a panel session we called “Igniting the Fire Within.” The conference included a similar panel with family members of those who had experienced psychosis. We also had a bonus “Recovery Kickback” session where young adults who had or were currently receiving services shared videos of their rapping, art, music, spoken word, and more. And Michelle Hammer, Nev Jones, and Brittany Quagan were all keynote speakers with lived experience.

One of the greatest perks of being virtual was that it allowed us to invite speakers from far and wide, as well as offer dynamic entertainment options during every break, including a cooking demo during lunch, stand-up comedians, Latin dance instructors with the Global Education Center, trauma-informed yoga instruction, art therapy, and spoken word poets from Southern Word.

It was also important to us to highlight the depth and scope of experiences that people can have with psychosis and receiving services — it truly looks different for each person — while also modeling the success we have had in Tennessee with a Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC) model in our OnTrackTN program. “Behind the Scenes with Early Psychosis Programming in Tennessee” was a chance to put a spotlight on our incredible providers and included perspectives from staff at our five OnTrackTN sites (four urban and one rural) and our

Clinical High Risk for Psychosis (CHR-P) site in Shelby County.

Thanks to our planning committee who helped us create an original vision for this unprecedented event. This committee included: Jessica Mullins, Jules Wilson, Benita Hayes (TDMHSAS), Krystal Fortney (Vanderbilt University Center of Excellence), Olivia Heath (CMI Healthcare Services) Kaelin Large (Alliance Healthcare Services), Hailey Pruett (Carey Counseling Center), Alexandra Russell, Lindsay Stone, Sharletta Wentworth (Helen Ross McNabb), and Kaylee Wilson (Mental Health Cooperative).

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### *In Remembrance: Honoring Andrea Chase*

This year's Early Psychosis conference was dedicated to the memory of Andrea Chase (August 7, 1967 - August 10, 2020). Andrea provided incredible leadership to the OnTrackTN program at Carey Counseling Center. She spent more than 20 years working in the mental health field. As noted in the conference program, "she is treasured and respected in communities across the state" and was noted as a mentor for many, as she always took the time to share expertise and advocate for others.

It was Andrea's leadership and tireless commitment at a local and state level that led to Tennessee's first episode psychosis programs. Andrea was very eager to advocate for the need for a first episode program in a rural community, resulting in the department's successful partnership with Carey Counseling for the implementation of an OnTrackTN team that would serve seven northwest TN counties and would become some of the nation's first rural First Episode Psychosis sites. In 2015, she received the TAMHO Volunteer Leadership Award and her program, OnTrackTN, received the TAMHO Program of Excellence Award.

Andrea is remembered for her vital role in multiple statewide programs, and her legacy within OnTrackTN will live on for years to come. In celebrating our program's success at this year's conference, we most certainly felt her impact. The planning committee and the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services would like to take this time to extend our gratitude and our heartfelt sympathies to her family and loved ones.



## **THE ANDREA CHASE MEMORIAL FUND**

A memorial fund has been created in memory of Andrea Chase. As an avid supporter of children, young adults, families and education, the use of funds may range from assisting with services to children and young adults to potentially providing scholarships for students seeking degrees in behavioral health. Tax-deductible donations can be sent to:

**CAREY Counseling Center**

**Attention: Richard French, Fiscal Director**

**Post Office Box 30 | Paris, Tennessee 38242**

**In the memo section, please write “Andrea Chase Memorial Fund”**

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## **On Track TN: A Success Story**

*The First Episode Psychosis Initiative is changing young Tennesseans' lives; here is one example*

*Submitted by Jules Wilson, TDMHSAS*

When \*Sophie first engaged with Carey Counseling Center, it was because she'd begun to hear voices. It was shortly after the death of her grandfather when she started hearing the muffled conversations, music, and voices telling



her to harm herself or overdose when no one else was around. She felt like everyone knew what she was thinking and that people wanted to hurt her without cause. At her intake appointment, she was referred to OnTrackTN, the program that provides early intervention services for youth and young adults, ages 15 to 30, who have experienced psychosis.

The team leader met with Sophie to see if she would be interested in their program. Sophie agreed to participate in services with the First Episode Psychosis team which included a therapist, medication prescriber, Certified Peer Recovery Specialist, and a Supported Employment and Education Specialist. During her time with OnTrackTN, Sophie had several ups and downs, including an in-patient hospitalization and suicide attempt. The team worked with her and her natural supports to stabilize her mood, decrease her psychosis, implement a safety plan, and create a wellness plan. They collaborated on improving her communication, and when triggering events came up, they would process through them. Her mood became more stable and she no longer self harmed.

Even through the challenges, with the help and encouragement of her team, Sophie experienced personal growth. The team identified and supported her education and employment goals. Sophie was successful in maintaining a part-time job while also completing college, which is not an easy feat, especially for a young adult balancing so much. But Sophie did it! She stayed enrolled in services until she moved out of state for graduate school and worked with the team to link up with mental health treatment close to her new apartment.

Sophie is committed to continued commitment to her recovery and wellness journey. Since her move, she reached back out to OnTrackTN to thank them for their support. "I just wanted to let you guys know the progress I've made and how a lot of this change and development wouldn't have been possible without your help, so thank you so much." Keep up the great work, Sophie. It wouldn't have been possible without you!

To learn more about the First Episode Psychosis Initiative, please contact Jessica Mullins at [Jessica.mullins@tn.gov](mailto:Jessica.mullins@tn.gov).

*\*Sophie's name has been changed to protect her identity.*

"Since I started grad school, it has been an interesting experience. It's been stressful, but I've come through pretty strong, and I have gotten my

spark back and my joy of learning back. I go to therapy. I have completely changed my diet, and I am exercising. I work 32 hours a week, and I love my job and my coworkers and have made some great friends and supporters. Even in school, I have made them [friends] a lot faster than in undergrad, which surprised me.

I have my rough days and my good days, but I look to the bright side a lot more than the bad side. I've also gone through some big change recently after reflecting on what I've learned and my new outlook on both myself and the world. I can't say I don't have the urges or the thoughts anymore to injure myself, but they are less frequent and I don't act on them anymore. I am open about my struggles and more vulnerable in relationships now, but I'm also very assertive and stand up for myself when I don't like the way I'm being treated." - Sophie

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## IPS Conference 2020

Everyone involved in this year's Statewide IPS Conference would like to thank the more than 240 people who attended! If you missed out, you still have time to absorb the knowledge and insight from the conference!

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS), in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (TDHS), and the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations (TAMHO) was proud to present the 2020 Statewide IPS Conference: Wellness Through Employment to a virtual audience in September. This year brought new and unexpected challenges, but the Tennessee IPS community continues to spread the philosophy of recovery and wellness through employment. Despite the hardships that have arisen, IPS programs are increasing in team size, service capacity, and employment rate.

Thanks for your support of IPS in Tennessee. Learn more at this link:

<https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/ips> and in the video below,



## THE IPS MODEL IS EVIDENCE-BASED

U.S. and International Randomized, Controlled Trials Show:



- **IPS works** better than standard employment supports.
- **IPS works** in urban and rural communities.
- **IPS works** for youth and young adults.
- **IPS works** for people from different racial, ethnic, and minority backgrounds.
- **IPS works** for people with education goals.



How does working benefit people living with serious mental illness? And how does Individual Placement and Support (IPS) help them reach their goals? This video answers those questions and more.

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## Certified Peer Recovery Specialists Conference 2020

The 10th annual Certified Peer Recovery Specialists conference is sure to be remembered for years to come. With a nod to the theme: Roaring into the Future with 20/20 Vision, the program's first virtual conference has been called a roaring success! The conference and CPRS Awards ceremony (held the night before) were organized and implemented by the CPRS conference planning committee, made up by members of the Consumer Advisory Board and a team of volunteers.

If you missed the conference, be sure to check out its [home on tn.gov](https://www.tn.gov). Explore the site by clicking the section headers at the top of the screen, just below the TDMHSAS logo.

We owe much gratitude to the planning committee, speakers, panelists, artists, volunteers, and sponsors who made this year's conference possible!

2020 Sponsors: Centerstone, Blue Care Tennessee, United Healthcare, Amerigroup, TAMHO, TAADAS, Cumberland Heights, Healing Hearts Foundation, Volunteer Behavioral Health, Spero Health, Mental Health America of the MidSouth, NAMI Davidson County, and My Health, My Choice, My Life

2020 Speakers/Session Leaders: Keynote [Brad Schmitt](#)

Stephanie Guthrie (Boundaries in Ethics and Building Better Resumes)

Ron Morton (Labeling and its Impact on Working with Peers and Hindsight in 20/20: The History of Tennessee's CPRS Program from the Peer Perspective)

Deven Johnson (A Spirituality Framework for Peers)

Lori Rash (Recognize False Comfort, Move for Health, and Change for Wellness)

Marta Hernandez-Fontenot (Modeling Optimism: The Cornerstone of Knowing How to Lead Your Team)

Crystal Hutchins, Rebekah Lewis, Jordan Scruggs, and Jules Wilson (What, Why and How We Build Young Adult Safe Spaces - A Panel Discussion)

2020 Artists/Entertainers: Thanks to Karen Renée Robb for providing a very special pre-conference workshop ideal for our conference theme. The session entitled: "Your Voice Is Vital! | Connect with the resonating power of your voice to change the way you feel" had us all ready to roar!

Thanks to Dave Wilson for hosting our Awards night entertainment and for sharing his music and story with us. Thanks also to artists Gareth Laffely, Jodi Doidge, Lezlie Knight, Caty Davis, and Lynece Benton-Stewart and Selina Arman Hyzer of the Healing Arts Project, Inc. for sharing their time and talents with us. Finally, thanks to Dr. Monty Burks and our TN Wellness Coaches for providing much needed and appreciated wellness breaks.

2020 Planning Committee and Volunteers: Jason Abernathy, Carol Ackley, Leanne Crawford, Molly Davis, Laura Durham, Jaime Harper, Leslie Judson, Lary Latzman, Ronald Morton, Barbara Ann Nelson, Robin Nobling, Ben Overby, Ashley Pace, Matthew Parriott, Gerald Pitts, Lisa Ragan, Connie Ramsey, Dina Savvenas, Dianne Sherrod, Will Taylor, Michelle Webster, Dave Wilson, and Chris Wyatt

While we loved having the opportunity to gather together virtually, we eagerly anticipate when we will see each other again in person! Work on the 2021 conference will soon begin!

To join this rock star team and help plan next year's conference, please email TDMHSAS Peer Recovery Coordinator Michelle.Webster@tn.gov.

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# Congratulations to the 2020 CPRS Award Winners

Tennessee Certified Peer Recovery Specialists are amazing! That's one reason we make a point to recognize their exceptional work, unparalleled passion, and dogged determination via the annual CPRS awards. Congratulations to all the winners and also to each and every nominee. Keep up the great work!

\*Visit the [Awards section](#) of the 2020 CPRS Conference website to learn more about each award and to see a list of former winners. And if you know a CPRS (or an organization who supports peer support) who should be nominated, be on the lookout for nomination information, coming next summer!



CPRS of the Year: Jason Abernathy



Patsy Cronk Mentor of the Year: Ron Morton  
Community Service Award: Becca Humphrey



Advocate of Peer Recovery Service: Marta Hernandez-Fontenot  
Advocate of Peer Recovery Service (Group): 180 Health Partners/Strongwell

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Young adults become vocal  
advocates for suicide prevention





Have you seen the PSA created by young adults in Tennessee to raise awareness about suicide and suicide prevention? Featured in the video are: Jules Wilson, TDMHSAS; Crystal Hutchins, TN Voices; East Tennessee State University student Abigail Sanders; and Jordan Scruggs and Rebekah Lewis, members of TN's Statewide Young Adult Leadership Council.

This video was inspired in part by Dare 2 Dream, an opportunity for youth and young adults, ages 13-25, to plan and produce activities that bring awareness to mental health in their communities. To participate and share why this is important to you, visit <https://bit.ly/3dnrfjd>

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## I.C. Hope: Lake County Schools are Erasing the Stigma



*Submitted by MHA of the MidSouth*

Mental Health America of the Midsouth COO Jackie Cavnar (left) and Jennifer Roberson, Lake County Schools Health Wellness Coordinator, unpack Erasing the Stigma Youth (ETSY) supplies. Cavnar recently delivered I.C. Hope materials for

Roberson to integrate into Lake County Schools health and wellness curricula,

which serves more than 800 students. Funding for the ETSY program is provided by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services. For more information about the ETSY program, please contact Desiree' Kelly, DrPH, at [dkelly@mhamidsouth.org](mailto:dkelly@mhamidsouth.org).

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## RMHI Spotlights



Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute has recently said goodbye to one physician and hello to another. (Left) Dr. John Lowe retired after 25 years of loyal service. "Everyone who met Dr. Lowe remembers his famous stories. He will be missed!" Thank you, Dr. Lowe!

Welcome psychiatrist Dr. Farhad Amani to Unit 2! Dr. Amani was born and raised in Atlanta and moved to Chattanooga from Jackson, Michigan. He studied at GA Tech and PCOM Georgia.





Delivering excellent food services is vital to our hospitals. Congratulations to Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute's Food Services department who aced a routine inspection in June. "They really came together as a team and focused on detail and met very high standards. As a result of their dedication and hard work, they received the best results in recent memory."

*MBMHI news courtesy of the "Around the Bend" quarterly newsletter*

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*MMHI's Golden Ryders shine in the 'Great Cycle Challenge'*



Memphis Mental Health Institute's Director of Adjunctive Therapy Bobby Golden and Administrative Assistant Robert Hullett participated in the "Great Cycle Challenge" last month raising money for the Children's Cancer Research Fund. Their team, the Golden Ryders, crushed its goal to ride 200 miles each and raise \$1,000 as a team.

"We rode a total of 445.5 miles in 38 rides with our longest ride being 32 miles. We had 73 sponsors raising \$3,487.94, ranking #193 nationally. We ranked #7 in the state of TN," Bobby said. "Tennessee did great in fund raising ranking #23 nationally totaling \$193,024. We plan on participating in this event annually as it is for a great cause." Bobby and Robert are also active members of the MMHI Wellness Council.

Congrats, Golden Ryders!!

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In loving memory of Henry  
Davis Heck, Jr.  
(May 5, 1957 - August 13,  
2020)



Henry worked as a registered nurse in the Chattanooga area for more than 20 years and at Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute from July 2012 until his retirement in April 2019.

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## *TDMHSAS Planning and Policy Council meetings*

Planning and Policy Council meetings have taken place via conference call due to COVID-19. To listen to recordings of past meetings, and to verify the schedule and plans for upcoming meetings, please visit the department website at these links:

[Statewide and Committee meeting schedule](#)

[Regional Committee meeting schedule](#)

Note: The November Regional Council meetings and the Statewide Planning and Policy Council meetings were rescheduled to October. Listed below is the updated schedule.

### **Statewide Adult Committee**

Wednesday, October 14

10 a.m. -11 a.m. CST

[Link to Meeting Recording](#)

### **Statewide Planning and Policy Council Meeting**

Date change: October 28

10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

WebEx Information/Meeting number: Toll-Free: 415-655-0003

Access code: 171 661 5994

\*This council will not meet Dec. 15 as originally planned.

### **Region I Planning and Policy Council**

Date Change: October 13

10 a.m. EST

[Link to Meeting Recording](#)

**Region II Planning and Policy Council**

Date Change: October 14

1 p.m. EST

[Link to Meeting Recording](#)

**Region III Planning and Policy Council**

October 15

10 a.m. EST

[Link to Meeting Recording](#)

**Region IV Planning and Policy Council**

Date Change: October 26

11:30 a.m. CST

WebEx Information/Meeting number: Toll-Free: 415-655-0003

Access code: 171 060 6291

**Region V Planning and Policy Council**

Date Change: October 22

9:30 a.m. CST

[Link to Meeting Recording Part 1 \(Audio\)](#)

[Part 2 \(Video\)](#)

[Part 3 \(Audio\)](#)

**Region VI Planning and Policy Council**

October 13

1:30 p.m. CST

[Link to Meeting Recording](#)

**Region VII Planning and Policy Council**

October 27

11:30 a.m. CST

WebEx Information/Meeting number: Toll-Free: 415-655-0003

Access code: 171 842 5920

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*TN launches new PSA campaign focused on "Choices"*

**The choice  
is *simple*.**

**Choose to *live*  
your life.**

***Choose* to live  
responsibly.**

**Face It.  
Masks *fight* COVID-19.**

COVID19.TN.gov | #FacelItTN

LEARN MORE  
ABOUT COVID-19  
SYMPTOMS  
Scan to use  
our digital  
screening tool.

GET A TEST  
Scan to find a  
COVID-19 testing  
center near you.

“The most effective way for us to combat this virus is through individual Tennesseans making responsible decisions for the safety of themselves, their loved ones, and their neighbors,” said Gov. Lee in a [press release](#). “Masks remain one the most effective, widely available tools as we await a safe, approved vaccine. We recognize that life looks different during a pandemic, and we’re encouraging Tennesseans that as they live their lives they make the responsible choice and choose to wear a mask.”

Also recently launched is a [new COVID-19 website](#) from the Tennessee Department of Health.

A tool kit is available to download and share campaign assets at <http://tn.gov/content/tn/governor/covid-19/psa-toolkit.html>

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*Henry County is serious about suicide prevention!*



Check out this Henry County Sheriff's Office new patrol car! It features the TN Statewide Crisis Phone line and the TSPN logo. Pictured are: Interim Sheriff Damon Lowe and Officer Jimmy Cole. Thanks for helping spread the word that suicide is preventable and that treatment, resources, and support are available for Tennesseans experiencing mental health emergencies!

Photo shared via the [Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network](#) facebook page. Follow them to learn how you can learn to "Bethe1" to help stop suicide in TN. And [visit our website](#) for information on obtaining free suicide prevention training through our "Be the One" program.

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*In the event of a mental health emergency ...*

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**STATEWIDE**

# **CRISIS LINE**

**HELP IN A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS**

**855-CRISIS-1** [TN.gov/CrisisLine](http://TN.gov/CrisisLine)

**855-274-7471**  Department of  
Mental Health &  
Substance Abuse Services

24/7 • 365 DAYS



MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS LINE **855-CRISIS-1**

*For questions about addiction treatment/referrals ...*

**TN**  
**REDLINE**  
**1.800.889.9789**  
**CALL OR TEXT**

**TN** Department of  
Mental Health &  
Substance Abuse Services

**TAADAS**  
Tennessee Association of Alcohol, Drug & Substance Abuse Services

**TN TOGETHER**  
ENDING THE OPIOID CRISIS

*We hope you've enjoyed this issue of the Update!  
If you have news to share (a story idea, accomplishment,  
provider news, etc.) or if you'd like to be added to the  
distribution list, please email: the Office of Communications at  
[OC.TDMHSAS@tn.gov](mailto:OC.TDMHSAS@tn.gov).*

*And please connect with us on social media!*

*Celebrating 10,000+ likes on facebook!*





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