



The end of March marked the high point of a very busy few months for our programmatic experts in the divisions of Substance Abuse Services and Mental Health Services as they prepared for and participated in the department's first ever joint block grant site visit. The visit with federal officials from SAMHSA went very well. We recently had an exit conference call with them, and I don't think I can fully convey how well they spoke of the system, providers, and services in Tennessee. Here are a few highlight phrases I heard during the call:

- *"Super impressive"* talking about our data sources and how we use research to inform policy decisions.
- *"Something I haven't seen in any other state"* referring to our Behavioral Health Safety Net.
- *"I found this to be especially innovative"* regarding our initiative to certify peer specialists among inmate populations.
- *"Tennessee does a really good job of addressing and paying attention to rural communities."*

That's just a short sample of the comments we heard. The observations and reactions from our federal monitors are a reflection of all of the hard work being done to improve services for Tennesseans living with mental health and substance abuse issues. As always, I want to thank you for your efforts, commend you for a job well done, and encourage you going forward.

My best,

Marie

Join us in celebrating Mental Health Awareness Month *May 2018*



110th General Assembly Adjourns

Late last Wednesday night, the 110th General Assembly completed its work and officially adjourned. It was a busy spring for state lawmakers as they worked through the budgetary process and debated legislation. Here's a quick update on our final FY19 budget and the final version of Governor Haslam's Tennessee Together opioid crisis proposal.

In the FY19 budget, lawmakers included a total of \$23,525,000 in cost increases. Those include:

- \$9.25 million for substance abuse prevention and treatment
- \$6 million targeted provider rate increase
- \$1 million funding for private psychiatric hospitals in East Tennessee
- \$1 million Medication Assisted Treatment in Recovery Courts
- \$300,000 Medication Assisted Treatment County Jail Pilot Project
- \$750,000 Lifeline Peer Project expansion
- \$425,000 Peer Engagement Project
- \$300,000 Courage Beyond services for veterans

Our FY19 budget also includes \$4.5 million in recurring funding for the Juvenile Justice Reform Act. In this area, our department will work in coordination with juvenile court judges, the Department of Children's Services, and other stakeholders to develop increased pathways to community care. The goal is to identify areas of need in the state and expand options so that juvenile court judges have more alternatives that keep children and families together.

In all, our final FY19 budget is \$380,236,100 including \$260,002,600 in state appropriations. Our team is very pleased with the continued support of Gov. Haslam

and the General Assembly. The added funding in this budget will continue to help us close the gap to make sure that Tennesseans needing substance abuse or mental health treatment can connect with services regardless of their ability to pay. This budget also increases rates for the network of community providers who are our essential partners.

Governor Haslam's top priority for this legislative session was addressing the opioid crisis, and that is reflected in the \$9.25 million in additional funding for substance abuse prevention and treatment that the administration added to our FY19 budget. The extra funding was part of the governor's Tennessee Together plan to address the crisis through Prevention, Treatment, and Law Enforcement.

Both bills in the legislative part of the plan passed. The final version of the opioid prescription bill limits the duration and dosage of opioid prescriptions for new patients, with reasonable exceptions for major surgical procedures and exemptions that include cancer and hospice treatment, sickle cell disease as well as treatment in certain licensed facilities. With initial opioid prescriptions limited to a 3-day supply, Tennessee will have one of the most strict and aggressive opioid policies in the nation.

The second bill creates incentives for offenders to complete intensive substance use treatment programs while incarcerated and updates the schedule of controlled substances to better track, monitor and penalize the use and unlawful distribution of opioids. Notably, it adds synthetic versions of the drug fentanyl, linked to an alarming number of overdose deaths, to the controlled substance schedules.

As you'd expect, it was a very busy few months for a lot of members of our team. I want to thank them for their tireless efforts and their immense professionalism in representing our department on so many issues. I think this budget and the other outcomes from the legislative session set us up for continued success in the near future.

TDMHSAS Announces New Assistant Commissioner; Taryn Sloss Promoted



Taryn received her 15-year Service Award from the department in 2017.

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is very excited to announce that Taryn Sloss has been appointed the new Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Substance Abuse Services (DSAS).

Taryn has worked with the department since 2002, holding various leadership roles. Most recently, Taryn served as the Deputy Assistant Commissioner for DSAS. In this role, she assisted in providing overall leadership for the division, working closely with all DSAS program areas (i.e. criminal justice, prevention, treatment and recovery, and faith-based initiatives) and their respective directors and teams. In addition, Taryn has served as the Project Director for both the Tennessee Opioid State Targeted Response (STR) Grant and the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Since joining the Department, Taryn has provided exceptional leadership in developing, managing, and maximizing the DSAS budget and also has assisted in successfully securing numerous discretionary grants that support Tennesseans struggling with substance use issues. Taryn is a graduate of The University of Tennessee and LEAD Tennessee.

Please join me in congratulating Taryn on this new appointment. I am confident she

will provide superlative leadership, vision, and support for DSAS, our provider network, and for Tennesseans in need of prevention, treatment, and recovery support services.

Citizens, Coalitions Help Fight the Opioid Epidemic on National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day!

Saturday, April 28 was the latest edition of National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Many of our community anti-drug coalitions partnered with law enforcement and other local groups to help people safely and securely dispose of expired or unneeded medications. Here are some pictures from take back day.



Smith County Drug Prevention



Sullivan County Anti-Drug Coalition



Milan Prevention Coalition





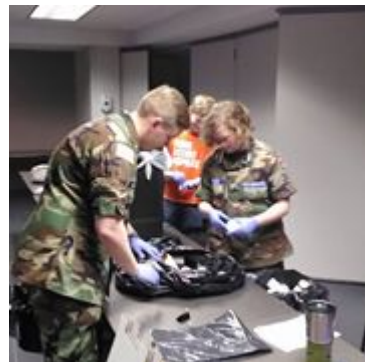
Prevention Alliance of Dyersburg and Dyer County (PADD)



Prevention Alliance of Lauderdale (PAL)



Weakley County Alliance for a Safe and Drug-Free Tennessee (Walgreens)



Obion County Anti-Drug Coalition



Overton County Anti-Drug Coalition (left) & Lawrence County Anti-Drug Coalition with members of the Health Dept.



Sullivan County Anti-Drug Coalition



Weakley County Alliance for a Safe and Drug-Free Tennessee



Police officer Chris Fair and Rev. Debra Shultz, Executive Director of Rescue 180 Coalition (Jefferson Co.)

Tennesseans can drop off expired and unused medications year round!

To find a permanent drop box near you, visit tn.gov/behavioral-health/substance-abuse-services/prevention/prevention/find-a-prescription-drug-take-back-box.html

To connect with an anti-drug coalition in your area: tn.gov/behavioral-health/substance-abuse-services/prevention/prevention/join-an-anti-drug-coalition0.html.

Tennessee Selected for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Training



NASHVILLE—Tennessee is one of 19 states selected for a new training and support program to improve the social, emotional, and mental health of babies, toddlers, and young children.

A group of leaders from several state agencies and other stakeholders led by the Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHiTN) will participate in a year-long series of sessions with [ZERO TO THREE](#). Goals include identifying strategies to increase education, funding, and access to assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of infants and young children in Tennessee.

“When we talk about infant and early childhood mental health, we’re looking at the social and emotional well-being of children from birth to age five,” said TDMHSAS Commissioner Marie Williams. “At this crucial stage of life, when a child’s brain is developing so quickly, we have an amazing opportunity to have a lifelong impact.”

[Read the press release](#)

On May 19, children, youth, and families will gather in Nashville to celebrate Children's Mental Health Awareness Month while learning, making friends, and having fun!



- FIND MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES!
- GAMES!
- PHOTO BOOTH!
- DOOR PRIZES!
- FOOD!
- GIVEAWAYS!
- BE A PART OF THE "HUMANS IN REAL LIFE" CAMPAIGN!

2ND ANNUAL CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

2018 MAY 19

Resource Carnival

#MUSICCITYMENTALHEALTH

TN Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services

TENNESSEE VOICES FOR CHILDREN



MAY 19
9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

HADLEY PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

1037 28th Ave N, Nashville, TN 37208

FOR MORE INFORMATION, LIKE @HEALTHYTRANSITIONSTN ON FACEBOOK OR CONTACT WILL AT 615-269-7751 OR WVOSS@TNVOICES.ORG



[Get more details and RSVP to the event here.](#)

TN Statewide Crisis Intervention Task Force Begins Work; Meetings Occur Monthly



Submitted by Jake Coffey, NAMI Director of Advocacy and Planning

The statewide CIT in Tennessee Task Force convened its first meeting Monday, April 2 to begin a planning process that will survey practices in Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training and program implementation across the state. Major Sam Cochran, **pictured above** addressing the group, led a dynamic presentation. He is known nationally for his work in the field of crisis intervention and is one of the founders of the "Memphis Model."

The task force will collect information about CIT best practices and practice gaps, in order to create a statewide plan to expand and sustain the program model in alignment with existing pre-arrest diversion programs and behavioral health reform efforts. The membership of the task force reflects a broad base of expertise and interests, including representatives from state and county government, law enforcement personnel, behavioral health providers, individuals with lived experience, and other community stakeholders from across the state. The diverse representation and perspectives underscore the planning initiative's commitment to community stakeholder collaboration and oversight that's at the core of CIT.

The CIT in Tennessee initiative is co-led by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services and Tennessee Department of Corrections in partnership with the National Alliance on Mental Illness Tennessee. Their focus will

be on: developing consensus on the core elements of an effective CIT program; establishing system-wide definitions, processes, and protocols; advising in the development of a CIT inventory tool; and evaluating findings and generating recommendations for expanding and sustaining behavioral health crisis intervention training for Tennessee.

The task force will convene monthly and is organized into four work groups: 1) mental health/ criminal justice system coordination; 2) data and assessment; 3) training; and 4) community engagement. For more information about CIT and the planning initiative, contact planning coordinator Jake Coffey jcoffey@namitn.org

Youth across the state participate in the TN Together video PSA contest



Vote for your favorite PSA on the [NewsChannel 5 website](#) through May 4 and stay tuned to the [TN Together facebook page](#) for results!

MTMHI Recognized as Patriotic Employer;

Human Resources Staff Receives Honors



Congratulations to Christy White and the Office of Human Resources at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute for receiving the Patriotic Employer Award. The award was presented on behalf of SPC Garfield Oakley of the 1138th FMSD, Tennessee Air National Guard. SPC Oakley is a human resources staff member who is on military leave. His colleagues have supported him in his absence, wish him Godspeed, and will welcome him back when his mobilization is completed.

"We value the skills and positive attitude Garfield contributes to our office on a daily basis," said Human Resources Director Melissa Peters. "We value his dedication, sacrifice, and hard work which he offers to our country as he serves in his role with the Army National Guard."

MTMHI Human Resources staff (pictured below) are: Chris Pollard, Vera Graham, Katy Eskander, Melissa Peters, Christy White, Don Chambliss, Lori Bell, Eric Leavell, and Rashaad Stewart. Presenting the award (front row, far right) was Joe Thomas, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, Department of Defense.



NAMI Davidson County Community Walk



April 21 brought sunny skies and plenty of smiles at NAMI Davidson's 6th annual Community Walk, 5K, and Village. About 600 people gathered in Shelby Park in support of the Davidson County chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. **(Above)** Members of Team Recovery included (front row, left to right): Sheila Plowman, Sean Ragan-Plowman, Trenton Ragan-Plowman, Lisa Ragan, Chas Nichols and son Logan, Team Captain Michelle Webster, and Howard Cofer. Back row, left to right: Kevin Currie, Bob Currie, Carol Ackley, and Kyla Cofer Nichols. Standing: Gerald Pitts. Not pictured: Kendra Wagener, Shelia Mann, and Jim Layman. **(Below, left)** Sean Ragan-Plowman and Trenton Ragan-Plowman enjoyed the family-friendly event. **(Below, right)** Kendra Wagener brought her dog, Annie, who was one of 60 furry friends to participate this year.



Join TN's Faith-Based Recovery Movement!



To find a calendar of upcoming faith-based recovery events and meetings, visit [our website](#) and follow the TDMHSAS facebook page. If you'd like to add an event or meeting to the list, please send the details to OC.TDMHSAS@tn.gov.

For questions about substance abuse treatment,
Call the Tennessee REDLINE

800-889-9789



**In the event of a
MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCY:**

**Call 855-CRISIS-1
*855-274-7471**

For confidential help
from a caring crisis professional
in your area, available
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
This is a free call.

To learn more about Crisis Services in the
State of Tennessee, [visit our website.](#)

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