

## Message from the Executive Director

### TAMHO 2018 Advocacy Day

Close to **50 TAMHO members** gathered at the newly renovated Cordell Hull on March 13, 2018 for its annual Advocacy Day to share their expertise with legislators who set healthcare policy that impacts individuals with mental illness and substance use disorder. **Almost 100 legislative visits** were made to discuss TAMHO's legislative priorities set earlier this year.

**Our key priority relates to the Episodes of Care payment reform initiative.**

### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EPISODES...



#### Episodes of Care Legislation

HB 1541 / SB 2364 excludes behavioral health from TennCare's Episodes of Care (EOC) initiative.

TAMHO has met extensively with TennCare to discuss concerns with the fundamental design and how behavioral health, as a chronic disease, does not neatly fit into an episode design. After implementation of 4 behavioral health episodes with many more planned for the future, our position continues to be that Tennessee Health Link is the more appropriate model to treat individuals with significant behavioral health needs and including behavioral health in the EOC payment reform initiative is fraught with challenges, will erode the public behavioral health system, and is like driving a square peg into a round hole. Behavioral health can be forced into the Episodes design, but we fear that there will ultimately serious consequences for those with mental health and substance abuse disorder as a result. Further, the savings that are being projected for behavioral health are questionable at best.

At publication time, a decision has not been made on this bill.

Other TAMHO legislative priorities include:

#### HB1795 / SB1718 Peer Review Protection for CMHCs

This bill adds CMHCs to the list of organizations given certain protections for quality improvement committees. This bill PASSED and will be sent to Governor Haslam for signature.

#### HB2026 / SB2040 Preserving treatment in CMHCs as amended

This amended bill maintains the way treatment has been provided in CMHCs and ensures that services are not disrupted. At publication time, this bill is still in Committee and a final vote has not been taken.

#### HB2510/ SB2095 Expands the type of medical practitioner who can prescribe buprenorphine under certain circumstances in order to provide services to more uninsured people in need of treatment

This bill was amended to require that a group be convened with wide representation to examine the potential impact of such legislation and report findings and recommendations by February 2019. At publication time, this bill is still in Committee and a final vote has not been taken.

— Elyn Wilbur, Executive Director, TAMHO



#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

TN TOGETHER PROGRAM	3
TAMHO 60TH ANNIVERSARY	4
TNCODC STRATEGIC INITIATIVE	5
PEER WELLNESS IN TENNESSEE	5
TAMHO MEMBER ORGANIZATION HAPPENINGS	6
STATEWIDE HAPPENINGS	8
NATIONAL HAPPENINGS	11



Jerry Vagnier



Teresa Fuqua, Houston Scmelcer



Robert Vaughn, Phyllis Persinger, Jimmie Jackson, Vicky Valentine-Phillips



Teresa Kidd, Kristy Hammonds



Greg Lewis, Danielle Smith



Jimmie Jackson

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- Director of Member Services | Teresa Fuqua
- Director of Administrative Services | Laura B. Jean
- Project Manager TNCODC | Patrick Slay
- Statewide Peer Wellness Coach | Ken Barton
- Meeting Planner Assistant | Carrie Ligon

## Governor Haslam Approves School Safety Working Group Recommendations

### *Puts Forth Plan to Significantly Increase Available Funding for School Safety and Implement a Statewide Technology Application for Anonymous Reporting of Threats and Suspicious Activity*

Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam today announced his approval of recommendations submitted by the school safety working group he appointed earlier this month to make immediate enhancements to school safety. The working group identified three immediate priorities:

1. A review and risk assessment of all school facilities to identify vulnerabilities;
2. An increase in available resources to help secure school resource officers (SROs); and
3. A statewide technology application for anonymous reporting of security threats.

Haslam has directed the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security (TN DOS), in conjunction with the Tennessee Department of Education (TN DOE) and local officials, to immediately begin development and implementation of a statewide assessment of every public elementary and secondary school in the state to identify areas of risk. While all school districts currently have safety plans, this will be the first time that the state has led a comprehensive effort to determine the security needs at each individual school. The risk assessment will be based on model security standards identified by TN DOS, with assessment training provided by state homeland security officials to local school district personnel and first responders. As this is the first priority identified by the working group, Haslam has asked the state agencies to ensure completion of the assessments before students return to school for the 2018-19 school year.

Following the school security assessments, and on an annual basis thereafter, each school's emergency operations plan (EOP) must ensure specific facility risks are identified and updated and that state school safety resources, including the additional \$30 million proposed in the governor's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget, are utilized to address the identified risks.

One such area of risk, and the second priority identified by the working group, is the availability of trained school safety personnel or SROs. For the schools in the state that do not have SROs on-site, lack of funding is often cited as a primary reason. The governor's proposed budget and school safety plan doubles the amount of recurring school safety grant funding for schools, which can be used toward SROs or other facility security measures. And, to address immediate needs while further state, local and federal conversations around school security and budgeting take place, total state school safety grant funding would increase by more than 500 percent for the upcoming fiscal year.

"All children in Tennessee deserve to learn in a safe and secure environment, and I appreciate the efficient and thorough work of the school safety working group," said Haslam. "The recommendations of the working group, coupled with increased investment, provide a path to making immediate, impactful and unprecedented security improvements in our schools and also lay the groundwork for longer term actions around training, drills and mental health support."

The third immediate priority of the working group, also adopted by Haslam, is for the state to provide a statewide technology application for the anonymous reporting of threats or suspicious activity by students, faculty, staff and others. The concept, which Haslam is also pushing for a 2018-19 school year implementation, would provide for direct communication among and between the individual reporting the threat or activity and the state, local law enforcement officials and local school districts.

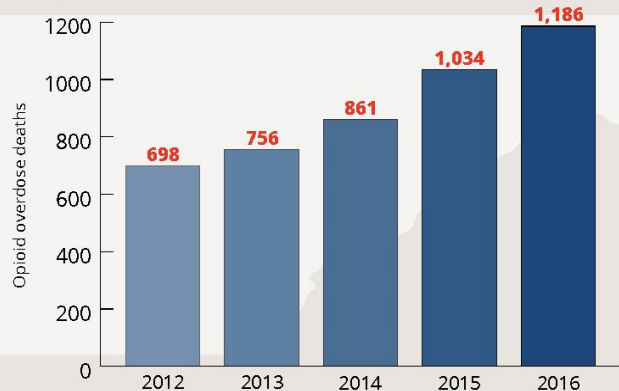
The working group also recommended the promotion of positive behavioral health for all students. Haslam has directed the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services to work in conjunction with the TN DOE to expand training areas, including training on strategies to increase awareness and responsiveness to signs and symptoms of student behavioral health and mental health needs.

The General Assembly will consider Haslam's school safety budget proposal over the next few weeks.

**At least 3 people die each day in Tennessee from an opioid-related drug overdose.**

Each year, more opioid prescriptions are written than there are people living in Tennessee, with more than 1 million prescriptions left over.

Opioid Overdose Deaths in Tennessee



Source: Tennessee Department of Health

TN Together is a multi-faceted plan, comprised of legislation, Governor Haslam’s proposed 2018-19 budget and other executive actions to attack the state’s opioid epidemic. TN Together will provide nearly \$30 million in state and federal funding to address opioid abuse. *(Proposed legislation in green.)*

### Prevention



- Place reasonable limits on supply and dosage of prescription opioids.
- Increase public awareness through outreach campaign and targeted education.
- Promote best practices in the medical community for pain management.

### Treatment



- Ensure that all Tennesseans who need treatment have better access to recovery services and resources.
- Effectively target areas for resources through data, improved access and sharing.
- Expand treatment options and recovery programs, including those within the criminal justice system.
- Create incentives for offenders to complete intensive substance use treatment programs while incarcerated.

### Law Enforcement



- Increase funding to address unlawful sale and trafficking of opioids.
- Provide every Tennessee state trooper with Narcan for emergency treatment of overdoses.
- Update the schedule of controlled substances to better track, monitor and penalize the use and unlawful distribution of opioids.



**tamho**

tennessee association of  
mental health organizations

The Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations (TAMHO) is a statewide trade association representing community mental health organizations and other non-profit corporations that provide and coordinate behavioral healthcare and primary health services. The TAMHO member organizations have been the virtual cornerstone of the Tennessee community-based behavioral health system since the 1950s and continue today as the primary provider network for community based care in Tennessee by serving 60,000 individuals per month.

The trusted voice for  
**Tennessee's behavioral  
health system for  
sixty years.**



**www.tamho.org**

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## TNCODC Update

### Regional COD Learning Community Meetings

The West TN COD Learning Community meeting was held on January 25. There were two main discussion topics. The first was learning from all agencies about their current status in improving COD services and their experiences with getting buy-in to make progress in agency change. The second was sharing about the availability and usage of best practice guidelines for COD. 16 agencies participated with a total of 34 attendees.

The Middle TN COD Learning Community meeting was held on March 21. The topic was "Building Staff's Confidence in COD Abilities". Dr. Ken Minkoff led a webinar on how to inspire co-occurring competency in front line staff. Attending agencies then reflected on Dr. Minkoff's presentation and shared on how they can help build their staff's confidence in their COD abilities. 9 agencies participated with a total of 26 attendees.

### Upcoming COD Learning Community Events

West-Memphis, April 19, Thursday, 9:30-12:00, topic: agency share on services and resources

East-Knoxville, May 1, Tuesday, 9:00-12:00, topic: MAT

Middle-Nashville, summer – to be announced

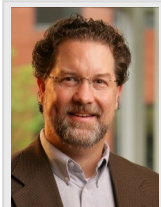
### Free Feedback and TA on the COMPASS-EZ

As part of the COD Learning Community offerings, we are planning face-to-face sessions with Dr. Ken Minkoff to provide feedback on the COMPASS-EZ. These are tentatively planned for May/June and more information will be forthcoming.

## "Together in Recovery": CPRS Conference 2017

Certified Peer Recovery Specialists (CPRS's) from across the state attended this year's "Together in Recovery" themed conference held October 8- 9 in Manchester. Statewide peer wellness coaches are also CPRS's, and we enjoy the privilege of being with our fellow peers every year at the conference, where we can learn and grow and celebrate our achievements together.

This year, former Tennessee Titans defensive end David Ball delivered the keynote address. The conference also included a variety of workshops, an awards luncheon, a recovery meeting, entertainment, door prizes, and fellowship. Those who arrived Sunday evening enjoyed dinner and live music provided by soulful singer/songwriter Chuck Glass, followed by a recovery support group meeting. On Monday



Patrick Slay  
Project Manager  
Tennessee Co-Occurring Disorders Collaborative (TNCODC)



morning, CPRS Conference Planning Committee Chair, Maita Hernandez; Michelle Webster, Peer Recovery Coordinator for the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) and Marie Williams, TDMHSAS Commissioner, welcomed everyone.



In his keynote address, titled "Unwinding the Tape", David Ball shared his lifelong issues and recovery from chronic anxiety that he kept hidden from coaches, teammates and friends. His story was especially powerful and courageous because he is a male, professional athlete who had to break the barriers of stereotypes that society has placed on men, especially men in sports.

Workshops offered this year included: Ethics: Role Modeling Recovery and Maintaining Boundaries; Partnering with the Faith Community; Recovery Courts and Certified Peers: A Perfect Partnership; The Dance of Recovery Brings People Together; Cultural Understanding of the LGBT Community; Mental Health and Substance Abuse Parity: Getting What is Rightfully Yours; Engaging Youth in Their Own Recovery, and Motivational Interviewing.

State peer wellness coaches on the My Health, My Choice, My Life team were especially excited this year to offer a Health and Wellness Fair during the conference. Approximately 60 fellow CPRSs visited the fair to learn information and receive assessments at different "stations", including:

Body mass index; Sleep; Tobacco cessation (that included carbon monoxide blood level monitoring); Healthy eating; Physical activity (that included a step test for endurance and a plank test for strength); Lifestyle risk (that included drug and alcohol assessments); Wellness coaching (that included action planning and discussing goals).

Coaches assisted participants with assessments and provided them with tips on how to talk to peers about wellness. They were also able to enter their name into a drawing for a door prize at the conclusion of the conference.

During Monday's luncheon, Jason Abernathy and Steve Shates, who serve the recovery community throughout the state as Lifeline Coordinators, provided musical entertainment that was inspiring.

Leaders in the peer community then held an awards ceremony. Those receiving awards were: Ken Barton, Patsy Cronk Mentor of the Year; Jessica Collins, Community Advocate of Peer Recovery Services; Len Pipkin, CPRS of the Year; Lori Rash, Community Service Award; Next Door, Advocate of Peer Recovery Services, Group Agency.

This is the fourth CPRS conference I've personally attended, and I've enjoyed so much the privilege of watching the conference evolve and grow. I love being with peers across the state in a specific location where we feel united in our belief that peer leadership is a key factor in recovery.—*By Leanne Crawford, Cherokee Health Systems | Originally printed in the My Health, My Choice, My Life Newsletter*



Ken Barton  
Statewide Peer Wellness Coach  
Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations (TAMHO)



# TAMHO MEMBER ORGANIZATION HAPPENINGS

## Lacy Monday Promoted to Director of Crisis Care Services for Centerstone

Becky Stoll, vice president of Crisis & Disaster Management at Centerstone, has announced the promotion of Lacy Monday to director of Crisis Care Services. Monday

first joined Centerstone in 2016 as program coordinator for two federal suicide prevention grants.

In her new role, Monday will maintain all Centerstone Crisis Care Services standards of clinical and operational excellence while leading the 24/7 Crisis Call Center. Her background also includes experience as a crisis triage counselor and mobile crisis clinician.

“Lacy has not only the clinical skills to guide our Crisis Call Center but also the leadership abilities that make her the ideal director for this very complex and high stress service,” said Stoll. “We handle thousands of crisis callers, often suicidal, every month and Lacy will be an asset to our leadership team.”

Monday holds a Master’s degree in social work from the University of Tennessee and is a licensed clinical social worker.



are proud to be a member of the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations. We look to the future knowing that partnerships with associations like TAMHO allow us to continue our mission of “improving the lives of the people we serve.”“

- **On participating in the Addressing Health Disparities Leadership Program at NatCon18.** This year’s cohort includes participants from 17 states and the District of Columbia. The cohort will be convening in person at NatCon18, and Lindsay Riggs will be representing Helen Ross McNabb.

## Frontier Health Receives 2 Awards from MHCA

Dr. Teresa Kidd accepted the award for Overall Best Practices in Drug & Alcohol Services for achieving the highest level of client satisfaction in the provision of drug and alcohol services. The second award was for Recognition of Best Practices in Drug & Alcohol Residential services, which focuses on client satisfaction in regards to Drug and Alcohol Residential Services. Congrats Frontier!

## Congrats Helen Ross McNabb...

- **On Receiving the 2018 Excellence in Addictions Treatment Award** at National Council’s Awards of Excellence celebration on April 24 in conjunction with NatCon18 annual conference and Hill Day. The award recognizes McNabb’s neonatal abstinence syndrome continuum of care, which is targeted at serving pregnant and postpartum women who have given birth to a child diagnosed with NAS or are at risk of giving birth to a child with NAS.
- **On celebrating 70 years of Improving Lives:** “Over the past seven decades, the Helen Ross McNabb Center has been a premier provider of behavioral health services in East Tennessee. Throughout the Center’s history, it has always found ways to serve those in the community with the most need and fewest resources. In its 70 year history, the Helen Ross McNabb Center has offered mental health, addiction treatment and social services to children, families and adults. The Center has kept a strong vision throughout its history, staying focused on clients first. With this focus in mind, the Center continues to deliver quality and compassionate care, demonstrate effectiveness, inspire its staff and build upon the spirit of its founder. As we celebrate 70 years of service, we

## Creating Affordable Housing Funding: PCS receives \$75,000 for Dyersburg Facility

The FY 2018 submitted proposal for Professional Care Services of West Tennessee, Inc., located at 1908 Davy Crockett Cove, Dyersburg, TN 38024, in the amount of \$75,000, was selected for Creating Affordable Housing funding. Congratulations to PCS as they continue on in their commitment to provide safe, quality, affordable, permanent housing to those experiencing mental illness or co-occurring disorders in the State of Tennessee.

## Samantha Hammonds Promoted to Clinical Director for PCS

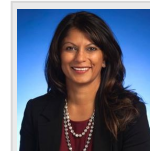
Samantha Hammonds, LCSW, has been promoted to Clinical Director at PCS. Samantha joined our PCS team in July 2013 as a clinical therapist. Samantha was promoted as the Children and Youth Director where she also served on the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations C&Y Committee. Samantha has supervised the System of Care Grant, Project BASIC grant program, and School Based Prevention grant programs.

Samantha served as the Somerville Site Director starting November 1, 2015 through December 1, 2017. Samantha also represents PCS at TAMHO board meetings. Samantha took the lead in implementing our Same Day Access program last year. She also took the lead in submitting a grant proposal that was recently

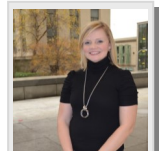
selected for Tipton County System of Care Across Tennessee. Moving forward she will be responsible for all clinical operations, ensuring medical necessity integrity, overseeing clinical supervision, and development of new programs and services for PCS.

## IPS Staff Changes

The Tennessee IPS Community is ushering in a new era. Katie Lee, Director of Wellness and Employment with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, has taken another position. The IPS Community is grateful for Katie's years of service and advocacy in spreading the IPS model across the state. Katie's energy and excitement will be missed, but we are super excited to welcome back our new Director of Wellness and Employment, Sejal West. Sej previously served as the Deputy Commissioner of TDMHSAS and she brings experience and knowledge of the IPS model. We know she will be a great champion for IPS in the state. We wish Katie good luck in her new role as we welcome Sej back to the family! We are really excited to see IPS continue to grow and serve the people of Tennessee!



*Sejal West,  
Director of  
Wellness and  
Employment,  
TDMHSAS*



*Katie Lee, Former  
Director of  
Wellness and  
Employment,  
TDMHSAS*

## 2018 Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Regional Summits

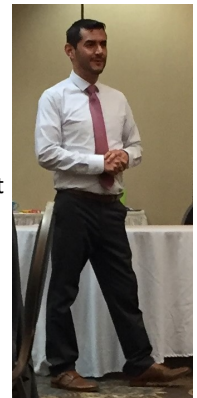


*Ruth Brock, Cassie Belter, Nichole Phillips, Katie Lee*

The Tennessee IPS Community hosted three regional summits, entitled "Achieving Great Heights through Employment," across the state in late March. IPS agency staff and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors enjoyed a day packed full of dynamic speakers, networking opportunities, and collaboration.

Attendees had the pleasure of listening to national economic empowerment expert Oscar Jimenez-Solomon, a Research Scientist at the New York State Psychiatric Institute and a Senior Research Staff Associate at the Columbia University Department of Psychiatry. Mr. Jimenez-Solomon spoke about breaking the cycle of poverty, dependency, disengagement, and disability

through supported employment programs. The summits also featured Kisha Ledlow, Project Director of Youth and Young Adult Initiatives for TDMHSAS; regional benefits counseling experts from the Benefits to Work program; and Statewide IPS Trainers Nichole Phillips and Cassie Belter. The summits highlighted the great work being done in supported employment programs and VR across the state and provided inspiration for practitioners to continue providing the best possible services and supports to mental health consumers seeking employment. The IPS Leadership Team would like to thank TAMHO staff, especially Teresa Fuqua and Carrie Ligon, for their help in planning and executing these events. Their dedication and expertise are unmatched and much appreciated!



*Oscar Jimenez-Solomon*

Tennessee's 2018 IPS Regional Summits were presented by the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations in conjunction with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and the Tennessee Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services/ Vocational Rehabilitation.





# STATEWIDE HAPPENINGS

## NTI Adoption Competency Mental Health Training



ARTICLE FROM: [adoptionssupport.org/adoption-competency-initiatives/national-training-initiative-nti/](https://adoptionssupport.org/adoption-competency-initiatives/national-training-initiative-nti/)

The National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative (NTI) is designed to enhance the capacity of child welfare professionals and mental health practitioners to better understand and address the mental health and developmental needs of children moving to or having achieved permanency through adoption or guardianship.

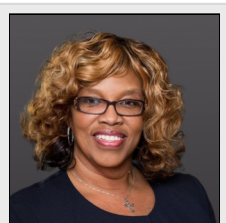
When can you begin training?

If you reside in one of our pilot sites (California, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Washington, and The Cherokee Nation), you can begin the training in March 2018. All other states will have access in 2019. Either way, click [here](#) to get connected to the NTI initiative.

Through this initiative, State, Tribe and Territory child welfare professionals and mental health practitioners will have access to two state of the art, evidence-informed, standardized web-based, trainings to provide the casework and clinical practices to promote child well-being and family stability.

NTI was established in October 2014 through a 5-year, \$9 million cooperative agreement with C.A.S.E. and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau..

## Amerigroup Gets New President



Edna Willingham  
President  
Amerigroup

ARTICLE FROM: <https://www.nashvillepost.com/business/health-care/insurance/article/20991295/amerigroup-gets-new-president>

The Anthem subsidiary that runs the state’s Medicaid health plan has a new president in Edna Willingham, its former COO.

Willingham, who has been with Amerigroup Tennessee and its predecessor since 1994, takes over at the TennCare

insurer from Al King, who — per his LinkedIn profile — has moved into a consulting role with Amerigroup. In her new role, she oversees Amerigroup’s Tennessee operations, which cover

400,000 people statewide.

“Edna is a trusted and highly respected senior leader who has extensive knowledge of Amerigroup’s business, the Tennessee market and our state customer,” said Brian Shipp, South Region Medicaid president for Amerigroup. “Our Amerigroup Tennessee team will continue to focus on providing the highest quality service and support to consumers and our state customer as we work to make healthcare accessible, affordable and simpler for all Tennesseans.”

Before joining Amerigroup, Willingham was a practicing nurse at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis and held various management roles at the Mid-South Foundation for Medical Care.

Taking Willingham’s spot as COO is Robert Garnett, who was previously director of operations since mid-2014.

## TDMHSAS Announces New Chief Medical Officer

*Longtime Department Psychiatrist Promoted to New Role*

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is pleased to announce the promotion of Dr. Terry Holmes to Chief Medical Officer.

Dr. Holmes has more than 20 years of psychiatric experience with TDMHSAS. He has worked the last 15 years as Clinical Director at Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute in Chattanooga.

“I couldn’t be more excited to be adding Dr. Holmes to our executive leadership team,” said TDMHSAS Commissioner Marie Williams. “Dr. Holmes has been a great asset through his service and leadership at Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute, and now the whole state will benefit from his expertise.”

Prior to joining the department, Dr. Holmes spent 23 years in the U.S. Air Force, retiring in 1994 with the rank of Colonel. In addition to his Medical Degree from Baylor University, Dr. Holmes holds a Master of Public Health and Tropical Medicine from Tulane University.

Following retirement from the Air Force, Dr. Holmes engaged in private practice and became involved in part-time forensic work, testifying as an expert witness in a number of high profile cases. His personal interests revolve around the interface between psychiatric disorders and substance use disorders.

Additionally, Dr. Holmes participated in a task force effort with TDMHSAS and the Tennessee Hospital Association to decrease Emergency Department boarding times for psychiatric patients. That initiative is now demonstrating that early administration of a standard protocol is safely and effectively treating patients in psychiatric crisis.

Dr. Holmes will replace Dr. Howard Burley who is moving on to new opportunities after 12 years of service to the state.



## Parity Bill Update

President George W. Bush signed the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act into law in 2008. This law does not require health insurers to cover mental health and addiction services, but if insurance carriers do offer this coverage, they must design their cost benefits comparably to how they cover other medical and surgical cost benefits. The Department of Commerce and Insurance is responsible for implementing this law for commercial insurance and the Bureau of TennCare is responsible for implementing the law for Medicaid.

Some of these more challenging concepts of implementing mental health parity relate to how insurers design and apply their medical management practices, particularly for the treatment of drug and alcohol addiction. Unfortunately, some people are denied or provided limited coverage for addiction treatment due to incomplete or inaccurate parity application. Too often the results are devastating.

This bill seeks to ensure behavioral and drug treatment benefits are being designed and applied fairly and that insurance carriers are accountable to consumers and small business owners. The purpose of this bill is to help ensure that consumers and employers get what they pay for when they purchase health insurance, and provides insurance carriers and the Tennessee Department of Commerce & Insurance with guidance as to how they can demonstrate compliance with mental health parity.

The opioid epidemic is the most dire public health crisis facing Tennessee at this time. This bill is one of the solutions needed to save lives and to help those facing addiction return to a normal functioning life. While it is important to focus energy on preventing addiction, it is just as important that those already affected by addiction get the medical treatment they need through available health insurance coverage.

### Objectives for SB2165/HB2355—Mental Health Parity Legislation

Section 1 establishes legislative intent on the importance of mental health parity in Tennessee and requires the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance to report to the Tennessee General Assembly the results of their market conduct examinations from the past year and its compliance with all state and federal of mental health parity laws.

Section 2 provides guidance to the Department of Commerce and Insurance to consider when evaluating mental health parity compliance during their regular market conduct surveys.

This bill was approved by the Senate Finance Ways & Means Committee and was sent to the Senate Calendar & Rules Committee to be scheduled for a Floor vote. In the House, the bill has been placed “Behind the Budget” at the next meeting.

## TCCY Children’s Advocacy Days

### Children’s Advocacy in Concert



TCCY Children’s Advocacy Days took place on March 13th and 14th, 2018 at War Memorial Auditorium. Speakers included Karl Dean, Krissy Haslam, Randy Boyd, Craig Fitzhugh, and more. Topics ranged from breaking the cycle of poverty through improving the educational system to include more choices for vocations, to the community school

model. During the event, Dr. Matt Timm received the prestigious Jim Pryor Child Advocacy Award. Timm was recognized for his esteemed career that spans over 40 years in which he worked in the field of civil rights, special education, early education, and child advocacy. He worked along with Dr. John Ora at Peabody College who developed Tennessee’s pioneering behavioral intervention program for young children, the Regional Intervention Program (RIP), that continues to operate in TN, and in other states across the nation.



Matthew Timm, Ph.D., President, Board of Directors, Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHITN)

## Tennessee accepted for a Zero to Three (ZTT) Infant Mental Health Technical Assistance and Training grant

The purpose of the grant is to receive assistance in planning for financing infant and early childhood services across the state. The specific goals are to:

Utilize current mechanisms in place to finance the increasing utilization of assessment, diagnoses and treatment of infants and young children in TN.

Identify core Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) services which are not currently reimbursable in TN and explore options to finance those services.

Expand messaging about IECMH to providers, policy makers and funders. Read entire article here: <https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/news/2018/4/10/tennessee-selected-for-infant-and-early-childhood-mental-health-training.html>

## Straight Talk: Behavioral Health Day on Capitol Hill

This year's Behavioral Health Day on Capitol Hill took place on March 7, 2018 at War Memorial Auditorium. The day was filled with inspiring speakers and many successful legislative visits.



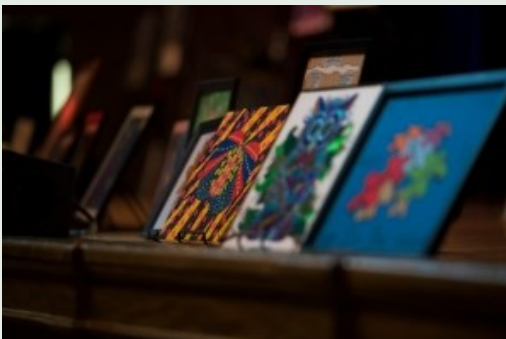
Senator Richard Briggs, MD; Emcee Amber McDonald; Ben Harrington, CEO of the MHA of East Tennessee and Chairman of the TCMHSAS

- More than 400 people participated representing stakeholders from the more than 30 Coalition member organizations.
- There were an estimated **900 office visits**
- Restored \$1m funding for hospitals in East TN
- Supported Budget improvements for TN Together, addiction & mental health contract improvements, additional addiction treatment funds
- Supported Parity Bill
- Supported restitution of Peer Engagement at RMHI funds to budget
- Reported status of Pre-Arrest Diversion project investments to legislators
- Opposed the Medicaid Work Bill as written due to lack of clarity on exemption groups & lack of supports
- Supported exclusion of Behavioral Health in Episode Design



Commissioner Marie Williams with Emcee Amber McDonald

## Art for Awareness: Celebrating Tennessee Artists in Recovery!



Thank you all artists, and art enthusiasts who attended the 13th annual Art for Awareness celebration! Artists across Tennessee shared their art and contributed to awareness of recovery and the healing it brings. The celebration included a discussion of what art means to different artists, free art supplies for registered artists, square dancing, bluegrass music, and an improv performance!  
See you next year!



# NATIONAL HAPPENINGS

## On Our Own, Transforming the Future Together

### Anthony Fox to Chair 2018 Alternatives Conference

ARTICLE FROM: <https://www.alternatives-conference.org/>

The National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery (NCMHR) is proud to host the 2018 Alternatives Conference which will be held in Washington, D.C. from July 29 through August 3, 2018. The site of the conference is the Catholic University of America which is strategically placed in the nation's capital, not far from Capitol Hill. A pre-conference Hill Day will offer a hands-on, grassroots opportunity for us to organize, raise our voices and be heard by our federal representatives.

The Alternatives conference is the oldest and largest conference of its kind, organized and hosted for more than 3 decades by peers for peers (people with lived experience of the behavioral health system, emotional distress/crisis, trauma, substance use, and/or addiction). Alternatives is renowned for offering the latest and best information in the peer recovery movement, and provides an invaluable opportunity for peers to network with and learn from one another. This will be a "people's Alternatives," funded entirely through registration fees and donations. We will be 'on our own' again, connecting to the roots of our movement.

For more information, please visit [alternatives-conference.org](http://alternatives-conference.org).

## HHS Secretary Appoints New Senior Advisor for Opioid Policy

ARTICLE FROM: The National Council | April 5, 2018 | Samantha Sears, Policy and Practice Intern

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex Azar announced the reassignment of Dr. Brett Giroir to serve as senior opioid advisor at HHS. Dr. Giroir, who previously served as HHS Assistant Secretary for Health, will now oversee the department's opioid-related policies. Giroir is a four-star admiral in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, which supports national improvement of behavioral health.

Dr. Giroir, in his role as senior advisor to Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services for Mental Health and Substance Use Dr. Elinore McCance-Katz, should bring a unique perspective to combatting the opioid epidemic as his ideas include using infectious disease practices to remedy opioid use. He has previously stated the opioid crisis is one of the most important public health issue in decades, and public health officials need to be proactive instead of reactive.

Giroir earned his medical doctorate at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and a bachelor's in biology from Harvard University. Dr. Giroir studied infectious diseases including acting as director of the Texas Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness Response during the global Ebola health emergency. Additionally, his infectious disease research has led him to create biomedical devices for which he holds multiple patents.

National Council for Behavioral Health

**NATCON18**

APRIL 23-25, 2018 | WASHINGTON, DC

APRIL 25 | HILL DAY VISITS

Be  
Heard.

## Get Ready to Advocate

On April 25th, join the largest behavioral health advocacy event of the year: National Council Hill Day 2018. Hear from seasoned policy experts, hone your advocacy skills, and make your voice heard in the national mental health and addiction policy conversation through workshops, presentations, and visits to your legislators on Capitol Hill. [Sign up today](#), or [update your NatCon18 registration](#) to attend!



# DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

## Basic Infection Control — Assessing and Planning

Rachel Franklin, MBA, HA, *Emergency Response Coordinator*  
Metro Nashville/Davidson County, Nashville, TN

April 17, 2018 | Doubletree Hotel  
by Hilton, Oak Ridge, TN

June 4, 2018 | Doubletree Hotel  
by Hilton, Jackson, TN

## Infectious Disease & Behavioral Health — Eliminating Fear and Anxiety

Elizabeth Hart, *Associate Director*

Office of Communications & Media Relations, Tennessee Department of Health, Nashville, TN

June 5, 2018 | Embassy Suites by  
Hilton, Nashville-South/Cool Springs,  
Franklin, TN

Event Registration and Details are Accessible at:

<http://www.tamho.org/disaster-preparedness-for-behavioral-health-professionals>

Register early to guarantee your seat  
as seating is limited to the first 70  
registrants for each date/site.

SPONSORED BY:



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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## TENNESSEE STATEWIDE CRISIS SERVICES CONFERENCE

June 27, 2018

Embassy Suites by Hilton, Nashville South/Cool Springs,  
Franklin, TN

More  
Information  
Coming Soon

## SYSTEM OF CARE ACROSS TENNESSEE (SOCAT) CONFERENCE

This conference is being designed to combine the traditional SOCAT, IMH, and FEPI conferences offering General Sessions, tracks, breakout sessions, and networking

More  
Information  
Coming Soon



TAMHO 2018 Annual Conference

December 11-12, 2018  
Marriott Cool Springs Hotel  
Franklin, Tennessee

More  
Information  
Coming Soon



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# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEWS & EVENTS



## TNCODC.COM



**Hope**  
As long as there is life, there is hope.

**ACCESS**  
Staying informed will be helpful  
when services are necessary.

**RECOVERY**  
is real!

- Keep up with current co-occurring disorder events/ trends
- Access the latest perspectives related to the impact of co-occurring disorders on: 1) families, 2) communities; 3) local and state level policy and legislative matters, 4) judicial and criminal justice systems; and, 5) business and workforce
- Order educational and awareness materials
- Sign up with TNCODC to stay current on co-occurring disorder updates
- Request educational presentations
- Download a TNCODC link banner to place on your agency or organization website and so much more!

The TNCODC is funded by a grant from the State of Tennessee, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS). No person in the United States shall on the basis of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal funding assistance. Civil Rights Act of 1964.



The Behavioral Health News & Events is a newsletter publication produced by the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations (TAMHO) that is edited and published quarterly by TAMHO. It is distributed electronically to behavioral health professionals, advocates, members of the Tennessee General Assembly and representatives of various State Departments of Government, as well as key stakeholders in the provision of behavioral health products and services procured by behavioral health agencies, and numerous individuals in local communities and throughout the state and nation who have an interest in the advancement of behavioral health in Tennessee.

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