



## Minutes of the Meeting

**Date: March 26, 2024 Time: 11am CST Location: Zoom**

### **Meeting Agenda: PRAYER,**

#### **1. PRAYER, Introductions & Updates: Neesha Stringfellow**

- **Network with Council Meeting Attendees**
  - Dr. Kathleen Burke - Angela McClellan - New RCO in Joliet
  - Connie Dewall- Will County Substance Use Initiative
  - Michael Wood -Banyan Treatment Center
- **Event Updates: Jada Anthony**  
What's New from our Council Members and Partners?

### **Opening Prayer:**

Neesha Stringfellow initiated the meeting with a prayer, expressing gratitude for the opportunity to contribute to providing help, hope, and healing in various areas of recovery. The prayer included blessings for all individuals and organizations present.

### **Introduction:**

Neesha Stringfellow welcomed everyone to the meeting, acknowledging the diverse backgrounds and commitments of the attendees. She highlighted the purpose of the organization, Heart Life Ministries (HLM), in providing support and resources for recovery in substance use, mental health, unemployment, and homelessness, particularly in Will and Grundy Counties.

**Kathleen Burke/Scott Sylvester RCO in Joliet-**Dr. Kathleen Burke provided updates on the Recovery Community Organization (RCO) launched by the Will County Department of Health. She explained that the RCO plays a crucial role in offering support for people in recovery, providing them with access to resources, meetings, and opportunities to engage with the community. Scott emphasized the significance of the RCO's mission and mentioned an event that was recently held, which had an excellent turnout of over 50 people in support of the RCO.

**Connie Dewall- Will County Health Department -**Our second speaker was Connie Dewall, and her story was truly inspiring. She shared her personal journey of struggling with alcohol addiction, and how her ongoing recovery has been a challenging but rewarding experience. Connie also spoke about her role as an employee at the Will County Health Department, where she uses her own story to encourage others to seek help and continue on their own journeys of healing.

**Michael Wood- Banyan Treatment Centers-** Our last speaker was Michael Wood, who spoke about the incredible work being done by Banyan Treatment Centers. Banyan is at the forefront of substance use disorder treatment, providing evidence-based treatments and showing immeasurable compassion to those in their care. I have had a great experience sharing my story and educating younger generations about the impact of drug and alcohol abuse. Being a part of someone's journey towards recovery brings me great joy and fulfillment. At Banyan, we embrace a holistic clinical approach to treating substance use disorders, meticulously addressing any co-occurring mental health challenges and life issues with an integrative, multi-disciplinary methodology. Delivered collaboratively by our expert team, our therapeutic strategies encompass various approaches, each chosen for its proven effectiveness and adaptability to individual circumstances.

**Networking and Collaboration:** She emphasized the importance of collaboration and resource-sharing among attendees to support the recovery community effectively.

### **Event Updates:**

Attendees were encouraged to share upcoming events, workshops, or programs relevant to the recovery community. Neesha highlighted the significance of staying informed and connected to maximize support efforts.

### **Announcements:**

- Loving Grief Care, grief counseling program every third Tuesday of the month from 7 to 8 pm.
- a crisis response training and a youth mental health first aid training.
  - Jada Anthony announces a Rally for Recovery in Chicago on September 21, 2024,.
  - Neesha Stringfellow encourages attendees to share upcoming events on HLM recovery's social media platforms, tagging the account for visibility.

### **Closing Remarks:**

- Neesha thanked attendees for their participation and encouraged continued collaboration.
- Emphasized the importance of sharing events and resources for mutual support.
- Expressed gratitude for everyone's dedication to improving community health and well-being.

### **Action Items:**

- Attendees share upcoming events via email for dissemination.
- Collaboration on smoking and vaping prevention workshop
- Continued recruitment of guests for future meetings.
- Collaboration on addressing gaps in service delivery for Medicaid beneficiaries

### **Conclusion:**

The meeting concluded with Jada providing updates on upcoming events and inviting attendees to share any additional information or announcements. Neesha reiterated the importance of communication and collaboration within the recovery community and expressed appreciation for everyone's participation.

Next Meeting Date: **Tuesday April 23, 2024 at 11am CST**

*Meeting Adjourned.*

## **Individual Introductions:**

### **Attendees introduced themselves, their roles, and organizations:**

- Alison Thomas - Rosecrans Behavioral Health, announced new office openings.
- Dr. Crystal Lewis - Virtual life coach and therapist, developed a restorative justice program.
- Danny Sourbis - Serenity House and DuPage ROSC.
- Caitlin Daly - Will County MAPP Collaborative, focusing on community health improvement.
- Christina Ramirez - Existential Counselor Society, residential treatment facility for addiction recovery.
- Angela Baumesiter- WCSJ/Breaking Away
- Tim Brown - Gateway, providing outpatient services.
- Ben Rudolph- Region 2 Technical Assistant
- Kathleen Patristic - Valley View School District, connecting schools with mental health and social services.
- Tarcia Leak - Operational Manager, HLM Recovery, discussed partnerships with correctional facilities and faith-based organizations.
- Patty Johnstone- Trinity Services Living Room
- Dr Mary Roberson- NIRCO
- Jenny Guiney- Angel Community Services, Groundwork ( Domestic Violence Program)
- Kathy Bastistich- Valley View School District
- Troy Green- Gateway Foundation
- Connie Dewall- Program Manager Will County Substance Use Initiatives WCHD
- Kathleen Burke- Will County Health Department Coordinator Substance Use Treatment and Recovery Services
- Jada Anthony- HLM Recovery 180 R.O.S.C Administrative Assistant
- Brent Newman
- Vawnsheika Brown- ROSC
- Avery Leak- HLM Council Member
- Paul Hempel
- Scott Sylvester- New Invitee
- Alicia Rodriguez- New Invitee
- Felicia Miceli- New Invitee
- James O' Connor- Second Story Foundation Crete
- Ginni Demko- Behavioural Health Alliance of Grundy
- Cristina Banda- Illinois Family Resource Center
- Angela Mcellan- RCO development Will County