

National Association for Behavioral Healthcare

Access. Care. Recovery.



Executive Committee Call May 11, 2020 Minutes

Roll Call

Present: Members: Pat Hammer, Board Chair; Mark Covall, Michele Gougeon, John Hollinsworth, Eric Kim, Jameson Norton, Matt Peterson, Chris Roussos

Staff: Shawn Coughlin, Kirsten Beronio, Maria Merlie, Julia Richardson, Sarah Wattenberg, Emily Wilkins, Jessica Zigmond

Absent: Jameson Norton

I. Minutes Approval

Shawn began the call at 3 p.m. Pat Hammer asked for a motion to approve the Executive Committee (EC) minutes from April 13. The motion was seconded and EC members passed the motion unanimously.

II. Financial Impact of 2020 NABH Annual Meeting Cancellation

Shawn said he and NABH Treasurer Michele Gougeon spoke with NABH's financial advisor. The association is in good shape and dues are coming in. Also, NABH's investments are diversified as we continue to see swings in the market.

We have seen the financial impact from cancelling the meeting is about \$27,000 to date for expenditures we had budgeted and paid for the Annual Meeting.

Michele Gougeon commended Shawn and the NABH team for an excellent job and taking the losses that were necessary due to the Annual Meeting's cancellation. Michele said she was impressed and reassured during the discussion with NABH's financial advisor and added she is pleased with the conservative approach the association is taking on the path forward.

III. Behavioral Healthcare Guidance and Regulatory Update

Telehealth

Kirsten Beronio said CMS has issued two waves of regulatory flexibility, first in late March and next in late April. Here are the highlights: Telehealth was a focus both times; there were flexibilities around federal rules that had required providers to be licensed in the state to which they provide services; there were also flexibilities around telephone-only services and patients accessing services via their home, and not specific facilities; the list of services by phone has been expanded as well as the type of caregiver who can provide this service; there is more flexibility around substance use treatment services, allowing for counseling from OTPS to be via telephone calls and also supervision by non-physician clinicians. Most recently, OTPs have been allowed to provide assessments via telehealth, allowing providers to work at the top of their license. This is all in Medicare.

In Medicaid, most states have taken action to expand coverage via telehealth. There have also been changes allowing for EMTALA requirements and many conditions of participation (CoP).

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Sarah Wattenberg reported that telehealth has been a big issue. NABH started working with ONDCP in March and identified a few dozen issues to address, and telehealth was a very big part of that. In a few weeks, we saw a lot of activity in the government for this.

OTPs have an interaction with the DEA, which was helpful in increasing the level of methadone permitted. CMS continues to help our OTPs get enrolled in the part B benefit. SAMHSA helped identified addiction services as providers that need PPE.

Work still needs to be done, such as methadone induction in telehealth. Sarah has been talking with Hill representatives.

Youth Services

NABH has convened a Youth Services-Covid workgroup during the pandemic. The association outlined key priorities for youth services in its letter to Vice President Pence and Hill leaders.

IV. NABH Covid-19 Task Force

NABH's Covid-19 task force, led by Acadia's Anne Kelly and NABH staff liaison Kirsten Beronio, continues to meet each week by phone and video. The task force sent a letter of behavioral healthcare priorities to Vice President Pence and Hill leaders that is available on the association's website.

V. Legislative Update

Shawn gave an updated on NABH's advocacy and coalition activities. He said the Covid-4 legislative package: this is changing daily. The House has taken a very broad approach and we expect this package to be about \$2 trillion with resources for state and local governments, paid time off, and a host of additional issues for members.

The Senate is taking a slower position. The Senate wants to make sure that the money is reaching its intended recipients and has started hosting virtual hearings on this issue.

VI. Communications Update

Jessica Zigmund reported on two items since the EC's mid-April call:

- Shawn and former U.S. Rep. Patrick Kennedy co-authored an op-ed on mental health and addiction treatment that *The Morning Consult* published on April 20.
- NABH launched an interactive comments feature for NABH members on the association's Covid-19 resources page. Jessica asked EC members to please use the feature and also to follow NABH on Twitter and LinkedIn, especially during Mental Health Month in May, to see what fellow NABH members are doing.

VII. NABH Champions PAC 2020 Fundraising Update

Shawn said there has not been fundraising events during the pandemic. Only now are we starting to see some virtual fundraising events during this election year. Shawn suggested to the EC that NABH not push PAC contributions until at least mid-June.

Mark Covall said he thinks it is a good idea to wait because, he said, there is a lot of economic pressure on people right now. Mark added that the pandemic continues to be the top priority for the association.

Chris Roussos said he agrees; Matt Peterson said the EC should re-evaluate at the end of June.

VIII. **Adjournment**

EC members did not raise additional issues, and the call was adjourned at 3:30 p.m. ET.