

SCC Community Services Coordinating Body Meeting

July 16, 2025

SCCCMH 1st Floor Auditorium

Present:

<u>Chair</u>	Deborah Johnson	St. Clair County Community Mental Health
<u>Vice Chair</u>	Scott Crawford	The Council on Aging
	William Holmes	McLaren Port Huron
	Dr. Daniel Goyes	McLaren Port Huron
	Juanita Gittings	Citizen
	Renee Pettinger	Blue Water Area Recue Mission
	Nicol Bickel	Blue Water Recovery Community
	Lisa Stoneberg	Professional Counseling Center
	Whitney Ostrom	Professional Counseling Center
	Lisa Beedon	Blue Water Developmental Housing
	Andrea Bubel	Blue Water Developmental Housing
	Kevin Watkins	Port Huron NAACP
	Brian Kerrigan	Port Huron Police Department
	Bernie Newby	Blue Water Community Action
	Mike Baranowstu	Community First Heart Center
	Karen Palka	A Beautiful Me
	Robert Furtado	Citizen
	Eric Norax	Catholic Charities Southeast Michigan
	Kathy Baker	Blue Water Developmental Housing Sanborn
	Suzanne Powers	Legal Services of Eastern Michigan
	Kathleen Swantek	Citizen
	Jennifer MacDonald	Spero Pregnancy Center
	Leann Clink	Spero Pregnancy Center
	Vicki Blackburn	Citizen
	Brenda Tenniswood	St. Clair County RESA
	Laura Lee	St. Clair County RESA
	Trish Gentile	St. Clair County DHHS
	Rita Carlson	St. Clair County DHHS
	Chiara Cameron-Wood	211 Northeast Michigan
	Nicole Bickel	Blue Water Recovery and Outreach Center
	Katie Scharf MSW	AgeWays
	Courtney Eveningred	NorServ Group Ltd.
	Major Jenny Ortman	The Salvation Army
	Brent Gillette	United Way of St. Clair County
	Jerry Bockhausen	Michigan State Police
	Dave McElroy	Blue Water Transit
	Telly Delor	St. Clair County Community Mental Health
	Tracy Willard	Hunter Hospitality House
	Alyse Nicols	St. Clair County Health Department
	Tod Logan	Camp Gracie Bentley
	Lauran Barker	Blue Water Safe Horizons
	Toni Thomas	The Harbor & Wings of the Harbor
	Rebecca Kettlewell	Wings of the Harbor
	Allison Arnold	St. Clair County Library System
<u>Staff</u>	Amy Smith	Community Services Coordinating Body
	Gloria Valentin	St. Clair County Community Mental Health

I. **Welcome, Introductions**

Mr. Scott Crawford called the meeting to order at 2:03PM. Mr. Crawford opened today's CSCB Full Body meeting by inviting everyone to introduce themselves and share their organization.

II. **Agenda Changes**

Mr. Scott Crawford confirmed that there were no changes to the agenda.

III. **Acceptance of March 2025 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Scott Crawford inquired about any corrections or additions to the March 2025 CSCB Full Body meeting minutes. Mr. Robert Furtado made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, which was seconded by Ms. Juanita Gittings. The motion carried.

IV. **Organizational Presentations**

A. **MDHHS Foster Care Program**

Ms. Rita Carlson delivered a compelling presentation on the critical shortage of foster care families in our region, particularly in St. Clair and Sanilac counties. She emphasized the vital role foster families play in providing safe, supportive, and loving homes for children while they await reunification with their biological families. A stable foster home not only offers safety but also helps children cope with trauma, maintain their childhood experiences, and feel a sense of normalcy during a difficult time.

Ms. Carlson shared eye-opening statistics about the foster care system: at any given time, approximately 10,000 children are in foster care across Michigan, with around 200 waiting for adoption. In St. Clair and Sanilac counties alone, an average of 226 children are in foster care each month—many with special needs. Alarmingly, there are only 84 licensed foster homes available between both counties.

Due to the shortage of local foster homes, many children are placed outside of their communities, leading to significant disruptions in their lives. Ms. Carlson highlighted the profound losses these children face; not only are they separated from their parents or guardians, but they often lose contact with siblings, extended family, friends, schools, and familiar routines. These multiple layers of loss deepen the trauma and make the need for local, nurturing foster families even more urgent.

For those unable to become foster parents, Ms. Carlson shared several meaningful ways to support the foster care system. You can become a licensed respite care provider, donate activity gift cards to help foster families create positive experiences with the children in their care, invite MDHHS to speak at your workplace or community group, or host an information table at a local event.

Finally, Ms. Carlson encouraged anyone with a heart for children to consider fostering. If you're interested in learning more about becoming a foster parent, a Foster Care Navigator can help guide you through the process. To speak with one, call 1-855-MICKIDS or visit www.michigan.gov/hopeforahome.com .

B. **Spero Pregnancy Center**

Ms. Leann Clink delivered an informative presentation on the mission and services of Spero Pregnancy Center. She shared that Spero provides free, practical support to women facing unplanned pregnancies, navigating sexual decisions, or experiencing post-abortion trauma; all services offered regardless of race, religion, socioeconomic background, or marital status.

Ms. Clink outlined the comprehensive services offered by Spero, which include:

- Pregnancy tests
- Confirmation ultrasounds
- Prenatal and parenting education
- Baby supplies
- Adoption resources
- Relationship education
- Individual mentoring for both male and female clients
- Referrals to community resources
- Post-abortion counseling

Ms. Clink also highlighted Spero's medical services. The center has a board-certified Medical Director who is actively involved in the local community. Pregnancy tests administered are laboratory-grade, and all nurses at Spero are Registered Nurses (RNs). Their prenatal and parenting education classes are led by RNs as well. Additionally, one of their volunteer nurses is an International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant, and another RN holds a Sexual Risk Avoidance Specialist Certification. Ms. Clink provided further details on their ultrasound services, explaining that they offer limited obstetrical (OB) diagnostic scans, which are reviewed by a board-certified radiologist. Two RNs are specially trained in conducting limited OB ultrasounds.

Ms. Clink concluded her presentation by sharing Spero's impact statistics and previewing upcoming events for 2025. According to Ms. Clink, in the past year, Spero has:

- Served 769 clients
- Conducted 516 pregnancy tests
- Performed 392 ultrasounds
- Reached 71 cities
- Positively impacted 512 babies
- Recorded 5,937 total center visits
- Delivered 4,954 educational classes
- Distributed 52,176 diapers

Upcoming Spero 2025 Events include:

- Baby Bottle Bounce Back – held on Mother's Day and Father's Day
- Walk for Life – scheduled for the second Saturday in September
- Volunteer Training Thursdays – taking place in October (RSVP required)
- Open House – Giving Tuesdays – 1st Tuesday in December

V. **Emerging Issues**

A. **Resource Navigation Ad-hoc Committee & 211**

Ms. Amy Smith provided an update on the Resource Navigation Ad-hoc Committee and its collaboration with 211. She shared that the Resource Navigation Network Sub-Committee has been meeting regularly over the past several months to evaluate the accuracy, relevance, and usability of available resources. Their goal is to ensure line staff can offer warm hand-offs to users, rather than relying on outdated resource lists. Since April, the group has focused on verifying and updating information. One of the key partners in this effort is 211, which has been working closely with the sub-committee to review and refine their data. Ms. Smith introduced Ms. Chiara Cameron-Wood, Executive Director of the 211 Midland Northeast office, who attended the meeting to provide further insights into 211's role and services.

Ms. Chiara Cameron-Wood delivered an informative overview of the 211 helpline, highlighting its critical role as a free and confidential service that connects Michigan residents with local health and human services. She explained that 211 serves as a centralized access point, providing referrals to

essential resources such as housing, food, healthcare, mental health services, substance use treatment, and crisis support. Available 24/7, the helpline ensures immediate assistance at any time, with all interactions kept strictly confidential to protect the privacy of those seeking help.

By collaborating with an extensive network of community organizations, 211 offers personalized, community-based assistance that addresses a wide range of individual needs. Ms. Cameron-Wood emphasized the importance of 211 in our region, describing it as a vital resource that enhances community well-being by connecting individuals and families to the support systems that promote stability and resilience. She also stressed the critical importance of keeping all 211-directory information accurate and up to date. Since 211 can only share the information provided to them, collaboration among community partners is essential to ensure the accuracy and usefulness of referrals. Accurate information enables 211 Northeast Michigan to empower individuals to navigate challenges effectively, reinforcing support systems across the region.

Additionally, Ms. Cameron-Wood noted that 211 is directly linked with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) through the MyBridges platform, ensuring greater integration of services and support. She reminded attendees that 211 is a simple, easy-to-remember number that connects people in need with those who can help.

Organizations interested in promoting 211 services are encouraged by Ms. Cameron-Wood to explore the available promotional materials at; www.211nemichigan.org/providers/promotional-materials.html . These resources are designed to help raise awareness and strengthen community engagement. Ms. Cameron-Wood also highlighted the importance of accessing 211's annual reports, data, and statistics, available at: www.211nemichigan.org/about/annual-reports.html . These reports provide insight into the positive impact 211 has across communities offering detailed information by county and date, including the most accessed resources, call and connection volumes over specific timeframes, and even the most frequently contacted areas or ZIP codes. Such data is invaluable when applying for grants, sponsorships, or donations, as it helps identify regions facing hardship or areas in need of additional support.

Ms. Cameron-Wood emphasized that through these services, 211 Northeast Michigan remains dedicated to improving the well-being of residents across its service area, building a stronger, more resilient community.

B. National & State Proposed Changes and Local Impact

Ms. Deb Johnson delivered a powerful presentation titled “Understanding the Threats to Public Behavioral Health in Michigan.” She outlined the serious challenges facing Michigan’s Community Mental Health (CMH) system, challenges that could significantly affect both those we serve and the future of our public mental health system.

One major concern she highlighted is the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services’ plan to issue a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) in Summer 2025 to determine who will manage behavioral health services beginning in October 2026. This proposal would exclude current publicly governed Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHPs) regional entities formed by local CMH’s from participating in the bid process. The likely result: private health insurers could take over, leading to reduced local oversight, diverted funding, and no meaningful solutions to the issues we face. The proposed model fails to address the core challenges in our system: workforce shortages, underfunding, administrative burden, and limited access to care.

Ms. Johnson also shed light on potential federal changes. Congressional proposals could drastically cut Medicaid funding, shifting costs to states, reducing eligibility, and limiting coverage. This would be a devastating blow to the 2.6 million Michiganders who rely on Medicaid especially

since 93% of SCCCMH's funding comes from Medicaid dollars. These funds directly support services for mental health, substance use disorders, and intellectual/developmental disabilities. Any reduction in funding would fundamentally disrupt care, confuse consumers, and weaken the very foundation of our public mental health system. Medicaid isn't just insurance it is the backbone of everything we do.

Further, Ms. Johnson emphasized that these changes could also threaten the strong community partnerships we've built. In FY2024, CMH's in our region served over 30,000 individuals, many of whom rely on integrated efforts between CMH's and schools, law enforcement, hospitals, housing providers, and others. Removing local control puts these relationships, and the broader social safety net, at serious risk.

Ms. Johnson encouraged both organizations and individuals to act now by raising awareness and advocating for change. Here are some ways you can help:

- Create advocacy videos or participate in letter-writing campaigns with those we serve.
- Share this information with coworkers, community members, individuals served, board members, and partner agencies.
- Talk with family, friends, neighbors, and community leaders about what's at stake.
- Support and empower individuals we serve to engage in advocacy if they are willing.
- Share your personal story about how public behavioral health services have impacted your life.
- Contact your legislators. <https://cmham.org/advocacy/take-action-now/>
- Find contact information for local legislators at SCCCMH's advocacy page: <https://scccmh.org/education-outreach/advocacy>

Now is the time to speak up. The future of public behavioral health in Michigan and the wellbeing of the people we serve depends on it.

VI. **CSCB Updates**

A. **Steering Committee**

a. **2026 Dues Increase**

Ms. Amy Smith spoke to attendees about the proposed increase in CSCB membership dues. In your meeting packet, you'll find a document titled "Proposed CSCB 2026 Dues" that outlines the suggested changes. The CSCB Steering Committee formed a small work group to review the current dues structure and recommend a fair approach to updating it, recognizing the diverse budgets of member organizations. As Ms. Smith noted, dues have remained unchanged since they were first implemented 12 years ago.

To create a more equitable system, the workgroup is recommending expanding the number of dues tiers from 4 to 7. This change is intended to better reflect the varying sizes and resources of member organizations, and to minimize the financial burden on any single agency. Ms. Smith also emphasized the value CSCB brings to the community and the benefits of being part of such a collaborative, impactful organization. However, she acknowledged the financial realities facing the coalition. CSCB ended the FY2024 year with a deficit of over \$30,000, a shortfall that was covered by CMH. While CMH has supported CSCB in the past, it can no longer continue to do so at the same level.

The Steering Committee reviewed and endorsed the proposed tiered dues structure at its last meeting. Today, it is being shared with the broader membership for review and input.

Ms. Kathy Swantek presented the proposed CSCB 2026 membership dues tier structure for a vote. The motion was seconded by Ms. Karen Palka and unanimously approved.

In the coming days, Ms. Amy Smith will be sending out a survey to gather feedback from members. The survey will ask where your organization would fall within the new tier structure, whether you would be willing to pay that amount, and invite any additional comments or suggestions. All input will be shared and discussed at the August Steering Committee meeting. If you have questions or would like to provide feedback directly, please contact Ms. Amy Smith at asmith@scccmh.org.

B. Workgroup Updates

a. Adolescent Services

Ms. Karen Palka reported that the July Adolescent Services meeting was canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 6th at 3:00 p.m. at CMH.

Ms. Palka also shared information about the Adolescent Help Cards that were distributed during Family Night, emphasizing their importance and the positive impact they have on the community. These cards serve as a vital resource for youth and families, offering quick access to essential support services. Ms. Palka encouraged attendees to take copies of the cards, which are available on the table at the back of the room. The next Adolescent Services meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 6th at 3:00 PM at CMH.

b. Early Childhood

Ms. Laura Lee shared that The Great Start Collaborative is currently in the process of developing a new Strategic Plan and is seeking input from a diverse group of individuals whose perspectives reflect the real needs of children (birth to age 8) and their families in the community. Those interested in participating or contributing to the planning process are encouraged to contact Jen Gunderson via email at gunderson.jennifer@sccresa.org.

Ms. Lee shared several program updates:

- The 35th Annual Community Baby Shower will take place on Tuesday, October 14th, from 5:00–7:00 PM at Hillside Wesleyan Church in Clyde. The event is free and open to all expectant mothers and fathers in St. Clair County, as well as new mothers with children under the age of three. The evening will include educational resources, vendors, guest speakers, and door prizes. Anyone interested in participating as a vendor is encouraged to contact Kassandre Alexander at the Health Department kalexander@stclaircounty.org.
- Help Me Grow, a program that connects St. Clair County families with children from birth to age five to local resources, developmental support, and early learning opportunities, will transition to a new HUB platform. Starting in January 2026, all referrals will be managed through the updated system at www.MIEarlyChildhood.org.
- A new Talking is Teaching reading space has been established at the Hunter Hospitality Family House. Families staying at the home can access this space, which includes take-home books and activity bags designed to support early literacy for young children.
- Ms. Lee reminded attendees about Pre-K for All. Applications for the 2024–25 school year are now available at www.sccresa.org. There are no income

restrictions, but spots are filling quickly. Attendees are encouraged to help spread the word.

- CDI (Head Start) is currently enrolling for Head Start and Early Head Start programs for the fall. For registration information, please contact Julie Pemberton at julie.pemberton@scmihs.org.

The next GSC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 28th, from 1:00–3:00 PM at RESA East.

c. Housing & Support Services

Ms. Kathy Swantek provided an update on the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) allocation recommendations. The Rating Committee will be submitting its funding recommendations for the 2025–2026 ESG cycle to MSHDA. At this time, MSHDA has not released the official allocation amount but has indicated it will be shared by the end of July. Due to the pending budget figures, recommendations have been made based on percentage allocations, which will be applied once the final funding amount is confirmed. Three organizations have submitted applications for ESG funding: BWCA/HARA, Detroit Rescue Mission/Pathway Shelter, and Youth Services/The Harbor. Please refer to the 2025–2026 ESG Allocation Recommendations document in your packet for additional details. Ms. Swantek noted that a vote was required to approve the ESG allocation recommendations. Mr. Brent Gillette made a motion to approve the recommendations, which was supported by Ms. Juanita Gittings. The motion carried.

Ms. Swantek introduced Ms. Bernie Newby, who provided an update on the upcoming July 2025 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count. The count will take place on Wednesday, July 30th, from 12:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. This marks the third consecutive year the PIT count will be held in July, a timeframe chosen to more accurately reflect the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in St. Clair County. Ms. Newby emphasized the importance of the data collected, as it plays a critical role in supporting grant applications and informing local planning efforts. She issued a call for community-wide participation, with a goal of conducting surveys throughout the county at shelters, senior centers, food pantries, walk-in clinics, soup kitchens, counseling centers, hospitals, and other human service agencies that engage with individuals facing homelessness. Volunteers are still needed, those interested in helping can sign up via the BWCA website at www.bwcaa.com or by emailing hara@bwcaa.org. Please refer to the Point-in-Time Count documents included in your packet for additional information.

The next Housing and Support Services meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 10th at 1:30 PM at CMH.

d. Substance Use Prevention Treatment & Recovery

Ms. Amy Smith introduced Ms. Nicole Bichel from BWROC. Ms. Bichel and Mr. Michael Thomas from Impact are the new co-chairs of the Substance Use Prevention Treatment and Recovery committee. Ms. Bichel reminded attendees that meeting times have changed for SUPTR. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, August 13th from 1:30pm to 3:00pm at CMH. Ms. Bichel told attendees that included in their packet there is also an updated SUPTR calendar with the new meeting dates and times. Ms. Bichel asked attendees if they or anyone they know is interested in joining the SUPTR committee to please reach out to her via email at nbickel@bwroc.org.

VII. **Additional Agenda Items**

A. **Enhancing Board Governance Training**

Ms. Deb Johnson shared insights from the “Enhancing Board Governance” training she recently attended. She described the session as highly engaging and informative. The training focused on strengthening board governance practices in Michigan through educational programs and resources aimed at improving leadership, effectiveness, and decision-making among board members across various organizations. Below are the key takeaways from the training:

- Understanding Roles and Responsibilities
- Effective Decision Making
- Best Practices Implementation
- Strengthening Board Dynamics
- Addressing Current Challenges
- Promoting Accountability and Transparency
- Succession Planning

Ms. Johnson noted that these were just a few of the key highlights from the training. She found the session highly valuable and was eager to share what she learned with others. Ms. Susan Radwan, the facilitator of the Enhancing Board Governance Training, will be conducting a free session at St. Clair County Community Mental Health on Thursday, July 31st, in the CMH Auditorium. Ms. Johnson encouraged those interested in board governance to attend and asked that attendees RSVP by July 28th. To RSVP, please contact Tracy Wells at twells@scccmh.org or call 810-966-3740.

VIII. **Announcements** (flyers provided)

- **St. Clair County Health Dept.** – has moved new address is 220 Fort Street, Port Huron (old MDHHS building).
- **Blue Water Safe Horizons** – Fundraising at Texas Roadhouse on Sunday, July 20th from 11:00AM-10:00PM. Texas Roadhouse will donate 10% of your total food purchase.
- **United Way** – You’ve Been Flocked from August 1st – August 31st. (all proceeds benefit BWSH)
- **McLaren Port Huron** – Grief Support for Parents on Friday, August 8th at McLaren Port Huron from 6:00PM – 7:30PM.
- **Blue Water Community Action** – Backpack Give Away on Wednesday, August 13th from 9:00AM – 12:00PM
- **Friends of St. Clair River** – Message in a Bottle on Thursday, August 21st starting at 9:00AM.
- **Blue Water Developmental Housing** – Cornhole tournament on Saturday, August 23rd from 12:00PM – 5:00PM
- **Blue Water Safe Horizons/Blue Water Allies** – Jeep Poker Run on Sunday, August 24th registration starts is from 3:00PM – 3:30PM.
- **Hunter Hospitality House** – Endowment Fund Awareness Raffle drawing will be on Thursday, August 28th at noon.
- **Sanborn Gratiot Memorial Home** – Cash Prize Raffle winner will be drawn on Thursday, August 28th at 6:00PM

- **Blue Water Safe Horizons** – trainings and educational opportunities for more information and to schedule trainings call 810-989-5246
- **Blue Water Safe Horizons** – Domestic Violence Support Group every Thursday from 12:00PM – 1:30PM. For more information and to register contact Brittany at 810-989-5246 ext. 303 or via email at blevins@bwsh.org .
- **Blue Water Safe Horizons** – Knowledge is Power on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 6:30PM – 7:30PM at BWROC.

IX. **Next Meeting: Wednesday September 17th from 2PM – 4PM at CMH Auditorium**

X. **Adjournment**

With no further business to address, Ms. Deb Johnson adjourned the meeting at 3:21PM

Respectfully Submitted by,

Reviewed and Approved by,

Gloria Valentin
Recording Secretary

Deb Johnson
CSCB Chair

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