

Community Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention Commission

Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2025

3:00 - 4:30 pm

Date of meeting: Thursday, April 17, 2025

Start time: 3:00 pm

End time: 4:30 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Commission Members		Present	Vote 1*	Vote 2
1	Kiame Mahaniah – Executive Office of Health and Human Services (<i>chair</i>)	X	X	X
2	Tobin Abraham – Office of Tram Nguyen (<i>designee of Rep. Nguyen</i>)	X	X	X
3	Nancy Allen Scannell – Mass. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children	-	-	-
4	Lena Asmar – New England Center and Home for Veterans	-	-	-
5	Ruth Blodgett – Department of Public Health (<i>designee of Commissioner Goldstein</i>)	X	X	X
6	Jessica Bresler – Office of Mindy Domb (<i>designee of Chair Domb</i>)	X	A	-
7	Diana Cabrera – Office of Senator Pavel Payano (<i>designee of Sen. Payano</i>)	X	X	X
8	Jessica Collins – Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts	X	X	X
9	Georgia Critsley – Trial Court (<i>designee of Chief Justice Brieger</i>)	X	X	-
10	Yaminette Diaz-Linhart – National Association of Social Workers – Mass.	-	-	-
11	Brooke Doyle – Department of Mental Health	X	X	X
12	Lynette Gabrila – Executive Office of Veterans Services	X	X	X
13	Elizabeth Ganz – Association for Behavioral Healthcare	-	-	-
14	Margaret Hannah – Freedman Center at William James College	X	X	X
15	Jacqueline Hubbard – National Alliance on Mental Illness - Mass.	-	-	-
16	Sophie Jean-Felix – Mass. Association of Community Health Workers	-	-	-
17	Jessica Larochelle – Mass. Association for Mental Health	X	X	X
18	Danna Mauch – Mass. Association for Mental Health	-	-	-
19	Jocelyn Schafer – Office of Senator Velis (<i>designee of Senator Velis</i>)	X	X	X
20	Emma Schlitzer – CHIA (<i>designee of Executive Director Peters</i>)	X	X	X
21	Noel Sierra – Mass. Organization for Addiction Recovery	-	-	-
22	Stephanie Sladen – Justice Resource Institute (JRI)	-	-	-
23	James Vetter – Social Emotional Learning Alliance for Mass.	X	X	X

* (X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

Proceedings

Undersecretary Mahaniah called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm. He welcomed members and reminded participants that the Commission is subject to the Open Meeting Law, noting that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call.

Vote 1 to approve the 2/6/2025 minutes: Undersecretary Mahaniah called for a vote to approve the minutes from the Commission's previous meeting on 2/6/2025. Professor Hannah introduced the motion, which was seconded by Ms. Gabriela and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Undersecretary Mahaniah explained that the Commission's annual report was submitted to the Legislature in early March. He noted that members' feedback shared on the draft report had been incorporated into the final version submitted to the Legislature. He noted that a copy of the annual report was posted to the Commission's Mass.gov webpage.

Funmi Aguocha, Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention (OBHPP), shared updates on the ongoing efforts to establish her office, including the hiring of two new staff members, a project manager and program director, both of whom would be starting in the summer. She explained that she has moved forward with engaging a consultant, DMA Health Strategies, to undertake a comprehensive landscape analysis and review of the RFI submissions, with the goal of posting an official RFP later in June. She explained that she has also begun engaging a public relations firm to assist with health campaigns funded by the behavioral health wellness and workforce development funding streams. Assistant Commissioner Aguocha noted that a strategic plan and roadmap has been developed based on the OBHPP's mission, built off six core pillars:

1. Coordinate and Collaborate with State Agencies on BH and Wellness Promotion
2. Disseminate Evidence-Based & Data-Driven Practices
3. Support the Implementation of Evidence-Based Prevention and Promotion Programs, Campaigns, and Initiatives
4. Strengthen & Coordinate Activities to Advance BH Equity
5. Conduct Reporting & Evaluation
6. Consult Commission of Community Behavioral Health

For additional details, refer to the OBHPP presentation available on the Commission's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

Commissioner Doyle emphasized the enormous amount of work that Assistant Commissioner Aguocha has undertaken in her first year, in collaboration with the Commission's members.

In response to members' questions, Undersecretary Mahaniah clarified that the grant funds are not tied to a particular fiscal calendar. He emphasized that the funds are dedicated towards behavioral health promotion and prevention work and that steps are being taken to safeguard the funds in coordination with DMH.

At 3:45 pm, Georgia Critsley left the meeting.

Assistant Commissioner Aguocha summarized her initiative to form two workgroups to provide interested members with opportunities to meet informally in between the broader, bi-monthly Commission meetings. She explained that the topics would include early interventions related to mental health wellness, substance use prevention, suicide prevention, and violence prevention; and school-based programming related to promotion and prevention.

In summarizing next steps, Undersecretary Mahaniah noted that Commission's next meeting is scheduled for June 12, with this year's remaining meetings scheduled for the following dates:

- June 12, 2025
- August 7, 2025
- October 9, 2025
- December 11, 2025
- February 5, 2026

Professor Hannah offered to organize a presentation for the 6/12 meeting with other longstanding Commission members to provide the broader group with the history of the CBHPP Commission and the work of the Promote Prevent Commission, which was a predecessor of the CBHPP Commission. It was agreed that Commission staff would follow up with the Commission's members separately to solicit their feedback on their preferences for the 6/12 presentation's content.

Vote 2 to adjourn: Undersecretary Mahaniah requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Vetter introduced the motion, which was seconded by Director Blodgett and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 pm.

Meeting Materials

1. Draft 2/6/2025 meeting minutes
2. OBHPP presentation