

Community Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention (CBHPP) Commission

Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2025
3:00 - 4:30 pm

Date of meeting: Thursday, December 11, 2025

Start time: 3:00 pm

End time: 4:30 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

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

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

APPROVED

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Proceedings

Amy Rosenthal, Undersecretary of Health at the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS), called the meeting to order at 3:09 pm. She welcomed members, introduced herself and explained that Secretary Mahanah had designated her as Chair of the Commission. She reminded members 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 10/9/2025 minutes: After a round of introductions, Undersecretary Rosenthal called for a vote to approve the minutes from the Commission's previous meeting on 10/9/2025. Margaret Hannah introduced the motion, which was seconded by Noel Sierra and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Funmi Aguocha, Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention (OBHPP) and Sarah Mughal Program Director for OBHPP, shared updates from the OBHPP's ongoing initiatives. She highlighted the recent launch event for the Office and its "What's On Your Mind?" Noting that members of the legislature, DMH staff, EOHHS staff, Commission members, and community partners were all in attendance.

OBHPP Program Director Sarah Mughal provided an update on the statewide "What's On Your Mind" behavioral health awareness campaign that launched in October and is running through January. She noted that it is aimed at promoting the importance of behavioral and mental health wellness; reducing the stigma surrounding mental health; and increasing health equity by focusing campaigns within prioritized communities as identified by the Advancing Health Equity in Massachusetts (AHEM) Initiative. Sarah shared examples of visuals and images from the campaign and where they might be found (social media, transit, billboards, community events, etc.) and highlighted the diversity across language, age, race, and gender as well as the geographic representation across the state. Sarah invited Commission members to [visit the OBHPP website](#) to access shareable Campaign materials.

Assistant Commissioner Aguocha provided an update on the OBHPP Community Behavioral Health Grant RFA. The RFA was posted on October 3rd, with a bidders conference held on October 17th. Dr. Aguocha remarked on the overwhelming conference turnout with nearly 300 attendees and over 190 questions. Due to the massive response, OBHPP extended the RFA deadline to November 21st. The Office is currently in the midst of the review process. Dr. Aguocha highlighted that the Office received 246 applications – far exceeding the 70 or so she expected. Due to the enthusiastic response OBHPP had to develop an extensive review process including 36 members on review panels from various roles across the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. OBHPP hopes to enter into contract negotiations in early 2026.

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

Dr. Vincent Paquin, MD, MSc, FRCPC, a visiting researcher at Maastricht University in the Netherlands presented an overview of artificial intelligence (AI) companions and mental health. In his presentation, Dr. Paquin touched on real world examples of youth and young adults using common AI tools such as ChatGPT and various AI chatbots and their impacts on mental health. He highlighted the high volume of young people turning to AI chatbots to discuss subjects like depression and suicide ideation in addition to using these tools as a form of social interaction. Dr. Paquin shared data on the risks, accuracy, and bias of AI Chatbot responses and the unrealistic expectations that those responses may set. He also discussed how AI

companies are adapting and changing, how to raise awareness of these risks, and how to promote safe use of these tools.

Members shared feedback and asked questions about the presentation and Dr. Paquin made himself available via email if anyone had any questions after the meeting.

For additional details, refer to the AI Companions and Mental Health presentation available on the Commission's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

Undersecretary Rosenthal indicated that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 5th and that the meeting would include an update on the grant awardees and an update on the Commission's annual report and to reach out to Sarah Mughal directly with any questions.

Vote 2 to adjourn: Undersecretary Rosenthal requested a motion to adjourn. Tobin Abraham introduced the motion, which was seconded by Yaminette Diaz-Linhart and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 4:29 pm.

Links shared in the Chat during the discussions:

- <https://www.mass.gov/whats-on-your-mind>
- <https://mass.gov/obhpp>

Meeting materials:

1. Draft 10/9/2025 meeting minutes
2. OBHPP presentation
3. AI Companions and Mental Health presentation