

Behavioral Health Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date: April 24, 2026

Time: 1:30 PM

Location: Northland Pioneer College – Silver Creek Campus (Symposium Room 101)

Format: In-person and virtual

Attendees

Carlos Baki – NPC

Darwin West – Changepoint Integrated Health

Dawn Wilson-Golden – Navajo County Criminal Justice Coordinator

Jay Johnson – Rural Program Manager, Workforce Development

Kristin Burns – AZ Complete Health

Kristine Rumzis – Show Low Education

Mike Gaffney – AZ PBS

Molly Bradley-Ryk – Division of Developmental Disabilities

Shannon Williams – AZ Complete Health

Sharyl Beard – MIKID

Susy Salvo-Wendt – Summit Healthcare

Tamara Dayton – NAMI White Mountains

Becky Heward, RN MSN – Chief Quality Officer

Daniel Kuhse – White Mountain Coaching

Julie M. Cota, MA – NAMI White Mountains AZ, President

Delia Allen – Division of Developmental Disabilities, Supervisor

Kenia Guzman – The Arizona Peer and Family Career Academy

Brissa Rubio – The Arizona Peer and Family Career Academy

Julee Sherwood – Nexus / The Connection Coalition

Becky Montoya-Wright – Blue Ridge Unified School District

Jeremy Raisor – NPC

Rachel Channell – NPC

Agenda Items & Discussion Summary

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Meeting opened by Rachel Channell.
- Participants introduced themselves and shared organizational roles.
- Representation included behavioral health providers, healthcare systems, education, justice, and community-based services.

2. Program Updates and Outcomes

- Overview of NPC Behavioral Health programs and recent updates.
 - Continued emphasis on:
 - Skill-based instruction
 - Case documentation
 - Treatment planning
 - Efforts underway to reduce reliance on textbooks and increase applied learning experiences.
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3. Workforce Needs and Student Readiness

Discussion Highlights:

- Continued demand for entry-level behavioral health professionals across the region.
- Employers value:
 - Strong documentation and writing skills
 - Professional communication
 - Reliability and consistency
 - Ability to manage stress and respond appropriately in crisis situations

Identified Gaps:

- Limited real-world application experience
 - Need for stronger confidence in practical skills
 - Exposure to co-occurring disorders and complex cases
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4. Internship and Partnership Opportunities

- Strong support for expanding internship placements.
- Interest in:
 - Earlier exposure to field experience
 - More structured expectations for student interns

Potential Opportunities:

- Behavioral health clinics
 - Substance use treatment programs
 - Integrated care settings
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5. Curriculum and Skill Development Feedback

Recommendations from Advisory Board:

- Continue emphasis on:
 - Documentation accuracy and completeness
 - Treatment/service planning
 - Ethical decision-making
 - Suggested enhancements:
 - Scenario-based learning
 - Realistic case complexity
 - Exposure to workflow and caseload expectations
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6. Future Program Priorities

- Strengthen alignment between curriculum and workforce needs
 - Expand community partnerships
 - Increase applied learning opportunities
 - Maintain flexible course delivery formats
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Key Takeaways

- Regional behavioral health workforce needs remain high.
 - Strong support for NPC's applied, skills-based training approach.
 - Clear need for graduates who are workforce-ready with practical experience and professional skills.
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Action Items

NPC

- Continue refining curriculum to emphasize applied and scenario-based learning
- Expand internship partnerships and formalize expectations
- Integrate more real-world case applications across courses
- Strengthen preparation for entry-level job expectations

Advisory Board Members

- Share internship opportunities and placement availability

- Provide guest speaking, training, or case examples where possible
 - Continue offering feedback on workforce needs and skill gaps
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Next Steps

- Distribute meeting minutes and summary to participants
- Follow up with potential internship partners
- Incorporate advisory feedback into:
 - BHS 166 (Assessment & Planning)
 - BHS 170 (Case Management & Documentation)
 - BHS 180 (Advocacy)
- Plan for **Fall 2026 virtual advisory board meeting**