

Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment February 3, 2021

Attendees:

Deb Koester, Matt Christiansen, Dora Radford, Christina Mullins, Brian Gallagher, Dr. Amjad, Dr. Boisvert, Secretary Sandy, KC Bohrer, Am Saunders, Dr. Berry, Dr. Becker, Dr. Moran, Melanie Purkey, Stephanie Thornton, Attorney General Morrisey, Amanda Morgan

Opening:

The regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment was called to order at 3:01 p.m. on Wednesday, February 3, 2021 by Chairperson Gallagher. The meeting was conducted by Zoom conference.

Announcements

The Chair began the meeting by announcing the Governor's appointment of Stephanie Thornton and Chad Napier to the Council. The Chair welcomed the new members to the Council and opened the floor to the them for remarks.

Approval of Minutes

Councilmember Tieman moved, seconded by Councilmember Boisvert, to approve the Minutes of the December 16, 2020 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Items

Presentation by Attorney General Morrisey

Attorney General Morrisey began his presentation to the Council by giving an overview of pending litigation and potential settlements for various opioid lawsuits. He went on to discuss the way in which he has proposed settlement funds be structured. It was his hope that settlement funds be used to fund the initiatives outlined in the Council's Strategic Plan.

The floor was then opened to questions and discussion ensued about the specifics of the settlement funds and how those would be administered. Discussion was further had surrounding concerns of settlement funds being used to fund other projects such as an income tax reduction.

ODCP 2020 Updates

Dr. Christiansen of the West Virginia Office of Drug Control Policy gave a presentation on the projects and initiatives by ODCP. Preliminary data for January 2021 was not yet available. Any overlap between EMS and ER data was very low.

Presentation of Year 1 action plan annual report

Deborah Koester of Marshall University gave an overview of the Year One Action Plan Annual Report. The Chair gave a brief clarification on the color-coding system used to measure progress in this report.

Councilmember Becker began a discussion on providing SUD treatment on demand and how to achieve that goal. The Chair discussed removing the X Waiver requirement to allow collaboration between providers to extend MAT induction. Any initiatives needed to be patient-led. Dr. Christiansen of ODCP discussed Telehealth and extended treatment hours to bridge gaps. The Chair further mentioned the HALO initiatives.

Quarterly Reports will continue under the same process in 2021.

Presentation of Year 2 action plan

Deborah Koester of Marshall University next gave an overview of the Year Two Action Plan. Chairs of the respective Subcommittees also gave details on their sections of the Action Plan.

Councilmember Bohrer discussed the loss of their training director due to COVID and the process going forward as they try to attract new candidates. He further discussed lack of manpower in implementation of the Law Enforcement section of the plan.

Councilmember Boggs discussed the progress that the Recovery Subcommittee is making on strategic planning.

Items for Legislative Agenda

The Chair gave the council an overview on expectations for this legislative session. Secretary Sandy was to provide the Chair with information on building access during session.

The Chair brought the issue of Medicaid recipients losing insurance coverage when they return to work and its effect on those with SUD in losing access to treatment(s) such as MAT to the attention of the Council as potential legislation.

Councilmember Mullins reported that SOR dollars could be used to bridge the gap between employment and losing Medicaid for those with OUD and StimUD. Comprehensive Behavioral Health Centers knew about this money and DHHR's Communication could be enlisted to promote that information. In addition, Councilmember Tieman could assist individuals to address this issue. Under current COVID State of Emergency, individuals should not lose their Medicaid benefits.

Adjournment

Councilmember Tieman moved, seconded by Councilmember Bohrer, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:14 p.m.