

Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment May 19, 2021

Attendees:

Brian Gallagher, Deborah Koester, Amy Saunders, Heather McDaniel, Secretary Sandy, Steve Koehler, Matt Christiansen, Chad Napier, Justin Smith, Stephanie Thornton, Craig Boisvert, Betsy Jividen, Tom Plymale, Matt Boggs, James Berry, Rachel Thaxton, Nick Stuchell, Nathan Fiore, Dr. Kilkenny, General Crane, Dr. Petrany, Jessica Smith, Dr. Becker, Dr. Eggleston and Melanie Purkey

Opening:

The regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment was called to order at 3:02 p.m. on Wednesday, May 19, 2021 by Chairperson Gallagher. The meeting was conducted by Zoom conference.

Approval of Minutes

Councilmember Tieman moved, seconded by Councilmember Berry, to approve the Minutes of the March 17, 2021 meeting with the addition of "Quorum was established." The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Items

ODCP updates by Matt Christiansen, Director of the Office of Drug Control Policy

The Council heard a presentation from Office of Drug Control Policy on 2020 data along with current initiatives and anticipated next steps.

The Council discussed possible contributing factors to increased overdose deaths. Hopelessness was identified as a factor along with the increase of availability and potency of drugs. The Council also discussed the utility of fentanyl test strips along with indications for stronger Naloxone doses.

The Council discussed strategies to reduce vaccine hesitancy as a tool to re-integrate those with SUD back into the community.

Finally, the Council discussed the availability of more granular data on overdose deaths.

Agency SUD related updates

Nick Stuchell provided an update for Bureau for Behavioral Health. BBH had been working on preparing and submitting several applications for grant funding.

Dr. Becker updated the Council on a recent personnel change at Bureau for Medical Services along with a data collection project on effectiveness and provider distribution of certain medications. Dr. Becker also brought the issue of mail-order illicit drugs to the Council.

Commissioner Jividen discussed the impact of COVID-19 on programming for and treatment of SUD within corrections. Corrections had been evaluating viable alternatives for outside treatment programs. They were also working on accountability for outside providers and more utilization of Peer Support Specialists. They had also released their Medical Request for Proposal that included MAT services. They continued to work on Naloxone distribution and planned to offer training for visitors and incarcerated individuals. Diversion programs had re-started due to releasing COVID restrictions.

Secretary Sandy had requested data for the GOALS program and reported a 65% success rate. Secretary Sandy had reviewed the overdose death data and made recommendation of substances to focus on. He also shared the continued success of body scanners in correctional facilities.

Steven Petrany of Marshall University reported the graduation of its first addictions fellow.

Chairperson Gallagher reported Dr. Boisvert's retirement and thanked him for his service on the Council.

Governors County Pilot Project Updates

Berkeley/Jefferson Counties – Nathan Fiore of WVU

Nathan Fiore of WVU provided the Council with an update on the Berkeley/Jefferson County Governor's Pilot Project. Chairperson Gallagher discussed scaling the programs, creating a toolkit and compiling FAQs.

Wyoming County – Deborah Koester of Marshall University

Deborah Koester of Marshall University updated the Council on the progress of the Wyoming County Governor's Pilot Project.

Governor's Council Plan Year 2, Quarter 1 report

Deborah Koester of Marshall University gave an overview on the current status of the progress on the Strategic Plan. She then turned the floor over to the Subcommittee Chairs for updates on their individual Subcommittees.

Review of Draft Recovery Subcommittee Strategic Plan

Chairperson Gallagher reported that the Draft Strategic Plan of the Recovery Community Subcommittee would be distributed for Council review and released for public comment.

Councilmember Boggs gave an overview and brief summary of the plan.

Discussion on involuntary commitment for SUD

Chairperson Gallagher began a discussion on involuntary commitment for SUD. Nick Stuchell, General Counsel for BBH, summarized the West Virginia law on involuntary commitment. He

recommended that the Council review the law and make comments on the same. The Council also discussed the availability of evidence-based inpatient treatment to support this law.

Further the Council discussed providing recommendations to the legislature on effectiveness of involuntary treatment.

Other business

The Council discussed returning to in-person meetings and was agreeable to the same.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:59 p.m.