

**Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on
Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment
Community Engagement and Supports Subcommittee
Transportation and Employment Workgroup
July 16, 2024, Approved**

Attendees:

Alyce Almond, Salwa Amin, Jonathon Compton, Leah Cook, Danial Gum, Bob Hansen, Deb Harris (co-chair), Tamara Lee, Tennysa Mace, Gwyn McGee, Joshua McGill, Ashley Shaw (co-chair), Lorrie Smith, Rachel Thaxton, Stephanie Thornton

Staff: Bradley McCoy

Opening:

Deb Harris and Ashley Shaw (co-chairs) provided welcome and opening remarks of this meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, Community Engagement and Supports Subcommittee Transportation and Employment Workgroup. The meeting was called to order on Tuesday, July 16, 2024 and was conducted in person at the Mountain State Educational Services Cooperative in Dunbar, West Virginia. This meeting was held to revitalize the group and attract new subcommittee members. The January and May meeting minutes were tabled for approval at the next bimonthly meeting in September.

Agenda Items:

Welcome and Background:

- Bob Hansen provided some historical background for the forming of the workgroup as the Chair of the larger Community Engagement Subcommittee. Out of necessity, legislation required the forming of the Governor's Council and the yearly Substance Use Response Plan. There were in-person listening sessions pre-covid and now meetings are primarily virtual. KPIs are developed to act as a living document that can also measure change of progress (or lack thereof) in the plan.

Transportation Progress Update and Identifying Needs and Gaps:

- Deb Harris provided background on Transportation successes. Rurality and car ownership is a huge transportation issue for all West Virginians, and especially those with SUD. Successes include Jobs and Hope partnerships with Motivcare and First Choice Services, utilization of public transit, DMV licensing reinstatement for many individuals, referrals to Goodwill's Will to Work program, and a partnership with Good News Mountaineer Garage who funds 75 vehicles a year to employed participants and helps with DMV practice and licensing.

- Josh McGill with Motivcare emphasized the need to understand gaps and resource volume to find the things that work and expand them.
- Deb Harris suggested the hiring of (person) or creation of (tool) a mobility manager that can create an exhaustive list of resources and services. After identifying the entities dabbling in helping with transportation, expansion opportunities can be identified.
- Danial Gum highlighted how the Wheels to Work program through Goodwill provides a \$500 deposit toward a car.
- Recovery Point currently serves Huntington and Charleston but is expanding to Wood County soon. Although based out of those areas, they provide statewide transportation. They remain fully booked so it is difficult to even market the service. They know the need is there but just need more funding for more employees and vehicles.
- SOR has a transportation grant to serve those with opioid use disorder. Their representatives at the meeting provided a flyer of their 17 partners of the WV Transit Authority. They also can pay for bus tickets with their grant funding.
- Rachel Thaxton further explained how difficult it can be to communicate all these transportation pathways to the public.

Employment Progress Update and Identifying Needs and Gaps:

- Ashley Shaw provided background on employment successes. West Virginia is a leading state in recovery employment. Jobs and Hope, REACH, and CORE have worked together to make this happen despite this being a novel form of infrastructure for the country. In 6 years, CORE has employed 700+ people. There have been jobs fairs hosted across the state by various partners that have been very effective. There have been webinar trainings for employers to teach them recovery support strategies that included insight from national HR workers. The WV Chamber of Commerce has an Employer Toolkit for those employees with SUD. The West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine has suggested an employer certificate to recognize recovery supportive workplaces. There just needs to be more funding to provide employer incentives and employee support.
- Jonathon Compton with Workforce WV is working to submit grants to support opioid affected individuals. These dislocated worker grants exist to help with things such as natural disasters and the opioid epidemic qualifies for such funding as well. The grant would fund the creation and filling of jobs. They already have grants that fund social worker re-entry operations in Clarksburg and St. Albans from federal facilities.
- Goodwill has a mobile unit that is used to get people educated and facilitate the job application process.
- Alice Almond with the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services serves those with disabilities. BBH has asked that they do on-job training with employers.
- Jobs and Hope has employed 1,416 people that have also successfully gotten off state-funded benefits. The average salary of participants is \$33,000. They provide employer reimbursement for training as well. They have a new partnership with Lowe's' Bright and Blue Futures second chance hire program that allows participants to explain and own up to their background checks

without local HR knowing their history. There is also a multistate ARC work grant for recovery-ready workplaces.

Discussion of Goals and Strategies:

- Deb Harris and Ashley Shaw provided a quick overview of the goals and strategies. They emphasized that some of the missing work may already be happening and could be documented as more complete with the contribution of more partners.
- Goal 2
 - Strategy 1
 - KPI 1: marked at 50% and asking for a one-pager from those present about services offered so they can give it to ODCP for dissemination
 - KPI2: marked at 50% while asking for documentation to get a written plan together at ODCP to seek more funding.
- Goal 3
 - Strategy 1
 - KPI1: marked at 50% because training is happening, but they would also like Workforce WV to send their training information and progress in as well.
 - KPI2: marked at 50% they are at a halt with the multistate grant. They would like to widen the scope of this KPI, but there are some employers already working with Deb and Ashley.
 - KPI3: marked at 10% because they need to do a second chance job fair.
 - Strategy 2
 - KPI1: marked at 25% because small business focus has come and gone out of the plan with the scope of work. Alice Almond and Jennifer Rohrig could help represent this on the subcommittee.
 - KPI2: marked at 50% because CORE has done some small business creation workshops
 - Strategy 3
 - KPI1: marked at 50% for Q2 but now could be marked at 100% likely for Q3 because the plan has been revised.
 - KPI2: marked at 15% as they seek more funding.

Networking and Open Discussion Lunch:

- Attendees broke out for lunch to network and discuss participation availability and next steps.
- No Wrong Door WV was advertised as a resource repository. Outreach sessions need to occur to let people know to submit their resources to be included in the repository.
- There was discussion of next year adding combined goals to the larger, broader Community Engagement Subcommittee.
- The concept of a mobility manager was brought up again to identify transportation deserts, but to do that, one must first identify all existing transportation resources.

Meeting Schedule:

- The group agreed to continue to meet virtually bimonthly because that time schedule works best for assigning tasks and reconvening. Everyone was amicable to the idea of meeting once a year in person as well.

Town Hall Meeting Reminders:

- Rachel Thaxton and Bradley McCoy provided a reminder of the Town Hall Meetings occurring every Wednesday morning in August and asked for volunteers for facilitators as well.

Next Steps:

1. Workforce WV will send information about their job fair attendance and success.
2. BBH, WVRDS, and Workforce WV will send information regarding small business job fairs and training.
3. Workforce WV will add a question about recovery openness to their virtual job fair questionnaire and share the results.
4. Lorrie Smith is adding everyone to the group to the funding opportunities listserv.
5. The group will meet and discuss planning another second chance job fair (potentially at the September meeting or maybe an internal group could meet before).
6. Everyone present is sending a one-pager about their organization services to the co-chairs to then give to ODCP for dissemination.
7. Potentially, the group could create a shared document (Google Doc) for shared tasks.
8. Deb Harris will disseminate information about the Lowe's Bright and Blue Futures program.

Adjournment:

Deb and Ashley expressed their gratitude to all the workgroup members for their participation. The work group is scheduled to meet again on September 17th.