

Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Transportation and Employment Workgroup May 16, 2023, Approved

Attendees:

Deb Harris, Matt Johnson, Ashley Shaw, Rachel Thaxton, Jonathan Young, Brittany, Josh

Opening:

Deb Harris provided welcome and opening remarks of this meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, Community Engagement Subcommittee – Transportation and Employment Workgroup. The meeting was called to order on Tuesday, May 16, 2023 and was conducted by Zoom conference. The purpose of this meeting was to give work group related updates and review goals related to the Community Engagement section of the 2023 State Plan.

Agenda Items:

Transportation and Employment Updates:

Transportation

- Josh stated he has been working with Recovery Point to run a pilot program with the CPCs to handle a majority of the volume in Huntington, as well as expand to other CPCs across the state.
- Deb noted that a new program is rolling out in collaboration with Jobs & Hope, Modiv Care, First Choice Services, and WV ODCP called "Getting Paid to Pay it Forward" that encourages individuals in recovery to sign up to be an independent driver for Modiv Care to take individuals to and from treatment. 40 participants have already signed up for this position, and Josh noted 70 additional applicants. Rachel reported that they are also trying to identify barriers for individuals who are not successful in signing up for this position.
- Deb reported that Good News Mountaineer Garage has been provided with funding to have vehicles in Morgantown and Charleston to provide participants rides to the DMV to get their driver's license. 17 individuals have been helped so far.

- Deb noted there is an event scheduled for tomorrow at the Capitol to celebrate the successes of Jobs & Hope.

Employment

- Ashley stated that they are currently looking into hiring an employment specialist to serve the new expanded region, as well as an additional employment specialist for the Hub 1 region in Putnam County. Interviews for that position will be held next week.
- Deb noted that there is a Re-entry and Recovery Works Conference Job Fair in Bridgeport in July. It will discuss incentives available for employers statewide for hiring second chance re-entry and recovery individuals, as well as a speed hiring event. She will share the registration link with the group.

2023 Q2 Progress:

Goal 3

- Strategy 3, KPI 1: Ashley notes CORE has been facilitating the trainings and in their first cohort had 21 employers participate. They are on track to surpass the KPI.
- Strategy 3, KPI 2: Beverly and Ashley have met to discuss the Kentucky and Ohio work place models, and have already documented New Hampshire. This information will be compiled for the group.
- Strategy 3, KPI 3: A group has been established, but has not met recently. Deb, Ashley, and Rachel will coordinate to schedule a meeting for June.
- Strategy 3, KPI 4: Deb noted that the Strategic Relations employee is in place and will be getting a summer intern who will be responsible for duplicating the documents that are already available from New Hampshire and conforming it to West Virginia.
- Strategy 9, KPI 1: Deb, Ashley, and Bev met to accomplish this goal and create the plan. The document will be provided as a part of the minutes for work group members to view.
- Strategy 9, KPI 2: The plan created in KPI 1 will be used to move this KPI forward.

Goal 2

- Strategy 1, KPI 1: Deb reported this KPI is in progress.
- Strategy 1, KPI 2: Routes to Recovery may be counted as a duplication.
- Strategy 1, KPI 3: Rachel noted that no updates have been shared with her.

Guest Speakers:

Kristin Tiedeman, Fletcher Group

- The Fletcher Group is a non-profit that aims to provide technical assistance to expand recovery housing and services needed to aid in the recovery of individuals with SUD.
- Kristin noted that their pilot project currently consists of 7 recovery houses nationwide with one in West Virginia and employment of a part-time employment coach to work at the house to remove barriers to employment, make connections to employment resources, and connect with employers in the area who are recovery friendly. The main goal is to make individuals living in recovery houses aware of these resources.

- The development of an employment toolkit will be replicated for use across all Fletcher group recovery houses.

Christena Ross and Shawna White, WVU Health Affairs Institute

- Christina introduced the new program, Substance Use Disorder Legal Assistance Program, which is funded by SOR. The purpose of this program is to provide direct legal assistance to clients with substance use disorder, opioid use disorder, or stimulant use disorder who are facing legal problems.
- They currently have many partners, including the CHES Connections App. This allows them to host virtual support groups, and in the future, they are looking to offer virtual legal workshops to their clients.
- The program started last summer and piloted in Clarksburg Mission in Harrison County and just now expanding into the next grant year.
- Shawna is the program attorney and leads 3rd year law students at WVU to represent clients in real cases under a licensed attorney. Students are given 30-minute slots to provide these clients with information and referral, legal advice, and direct representation regarding re-entry into the community from criminal justice or any legal issues they've faced due to their SUD.
- Shawna noted that the brief advice events have been the most useful to the clients and should be expanded beyond Clarksburg, potentially into Parkersburg and the southern panhandle as the program grows.

Adjournment:

Deb closed the meeting by thanking all subcommittee members for their attendance and participation. The workgroup will meet again in July.