

## **Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Courts and Justice-Involved Populations Subcommittee July 11, 2023, Approved**

### **Attendees:**

Tom Aland, Amber Blankenship, Stephanie Bond, Deb Koester, Tom Plymale, James Rowe, Stephanie Thornton (co-chair)

### **Opening:**

Stephanne Thornton (co-chair) provided welcome and opening remarks of this meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, Courts and Justice-Involved Populations Subcommittee. The meeting was called to order at on Tuesday, June 11, 2023 and was conducted by Zoom conference. A quorum was present to approve April meeting minutes. Judge Rowe made the motion to approve the minutes and Amber seconded the motion. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce Tom Aland from Indivior to discuss the scope of Sublocade in West Virginia and continue 2023 implementation planning and review of KPI progress for Quarter 2 for the Courts and Justice Involved Populations section of the State Plan.

### **Agenda Items:**

#### **Tom Aland (Indivior)**

- The West Virginia Department of Corrections is implementing the use of Sublocade in jails, prisons, and federal correctional facilities.
- The method of administration (oral vs. injectable) varies based on the duration of treatment. Initially, Sublocade is prescribed at a dose of 300 mg for the first two months, followed by a reduction to 100 mg or continuation of 300 mg. In jail settings, a higher dosage is typically maintained for 4-5 months after release to ensure continuity of care and prevent overdose. Transition of care resources and personnel are available to assist with re-entry and connect individuals with community providers. Additionally, a program is in place for individuals who receive one dose in a professional setting but are not covered by Medicaid for subsequent doses, whereby they automatically receive two more injections. When it comes to communication during the discharge process, the jail coordinates with probation and parole, and efforts are made to reach out to individuals with cell phones.

- Each county has personnel, including clinical specialists and sales representatives, who can provide Sublocade and be contacted by community providers.
- By delivering Sublocade as a monthly injectable, the burden of transporting and treating buprenorphine overdose cases, which requires a significant amount of time, is reduced. This results in only 12 visits per year for each inmate, leading to substantial cost and time savings for correctional facilities.
- The therapy and counseling component of Medication-Assisted Treatment is determined by the prison, probation, and parole authorities. Injections are administered to anyone with an Opioid Use Disorder, regardless of their offense or conviction.
- Data on reduced rates of diversion and in-jail overdoses in West Virginia is currently being collected and has not yet been reported. However, according to Tom, locations in the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections that use Sublocade have experienced a 90% reduction in overdose deaths in jails.
- Overall, minimal adverse reactions have been reported regarding the use of Sublocade injections.
- Efforts are being made to collaborate with advocacy groups and lobbyists at the State Capitol to expand the availability of Sublocade in specific institutions and secure funding.
- The subcommittee discussed the importance of establishing community support systems to prevent relapse after individuals' complete treatment programs and family treatment courts. Building trust with individuals released from jails and day report centers to ensure they receive appropriate care was also mentioned. Opportunities to provide peer-based community options, Recovery Community Organizations, and day report services for re-entry were emphasized to ensure individuals are connected to the most suitable continuity of care services that meet their needs.
- Stephanie requested a list of Sublocade providers throughout the state, and Judge Rowe discussed the coverage rate for the population being served and the screening process. Stephanie will summarize these follow-up questions and forward them to Tim, along with a request for the transition of care team to present at a future meeting.

## **2023 Q2 KPI Progress**

### **Goal 1**

- Strategy 1: Stephanie has contacted Medina Prue to gather KPI percentage figures, which will provide insights into the capacity of the system. Additionally, she has scheduled a call with Dr. Amjad to discuss strategies for securing funding and addressing staffing needs to support MAT and MOUD in jail settings. The next step involves compiling a white paper that includes data, recommendations, and opportunities for implementing treatment in jails and prisons, thereby avoiding the need for increased staffing for more time-consuming treatments. Stephanie will also follow up on data regarding the number of individuals referred to treatment versus those who actually engage in treatment.
- Strategy 2: Stephanie highlights the Prosecutor Initiated Diversion Program and the Yellow Line Program as means to establish connections for individuals. These programs have already been

piloted in West Virginia. To further explore these initiatives, Stephanie plans to invite a representative from the Yellow Line Project to present their three pathways to the subcommittee. Additionally, time will be allocated to discuss the Southern Highlands Lead COSSAP Grant Project once data becomes available in late July or August.

#### Goal 2

- Strategy 1: The code section pertaining to the expungement of child abuse and neglect findings was sent out for review. However, it was observed that these findings do not align with the existing expungement code, as both code sections specifically refer to convictions. The question arises whether there is a procedure to expunge adjudication. Stephanie notes that while such procedures are in place in other states, they are not currently implemented in West Virginia.
- Strategy 1: Code 49 4 601 B stipulates that unsubstantiated allegations without any new allegations within a year are automatically sealed if the court does not adjudicate the case. If this process is followed as outlined, it would address the issue. However, Stephanie wants to verify that these allegations are indeed being automatically sealed, rather than requiring a petition to trigger the possibility of expungement.
- Strategy 2: Amber will provide the numbers from the first speed hiring event, and plans are underway for a second event in Bridgeport. It is requested that Deb Harris from Jobs & Hope present these updates to the subcommittee.

#### Additional Business

- Stephanie mentioned her attendance at the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, where she showcased a film called "The Fifty." The film depicted a program implemented in California, where 50 inmates from various parts of the facility were trained to become substance abuse counselors for other inmates. The program exhibited a high success rate in terms of counseling licensure.
- Amber informed the group that REACH is currently in the process of launching the First Step Act as a regional initiative.
- Stephanie provided an update on the Town Hall Meetings scheduled for August, which will take place from 10 am to 12 pm. She also mentioned that Dr. Koester might reach out to committee members to seek additional support as breakout leaders.

#### Adjournment:

Stephanie closed the meeting by thanking all subcommittee members for their attendance and participation. The subcommittee will meet again on August 8<sup>th</sup> at 10 am.