

Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Prevention Subcommittee September, 21 2023, Approved

Attendees:

Michelle Bowles, Christina Chill, Tammy Collins, Lori Garrett-Bumba, Stephanie Hayes, Nancy Hoffman, Jostin Holmes, Jenny Lancaster, Greg Puckett, Melanie Purkey (co-chair), Gig Robinson, Amy Saunders (co-chair), Nikki Tennis

Opening:

Amy Saunders (co-chair) provided welcome and opening remarks of this meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, Prevention Subcommittee. The meeting was called to order on Wednesday, September 21, 2023 and was conducted by Zoom conference. A quorum was present to approve August meeting minutes. Greg made the motion to accept the minutes and Lori seconded this motion. The meeting's objective was to review the Town Hall Meeting Report to develop 2024 priorities for the State Plan.

Agenda Items:

2023 Quarter 3 Report

Amy stated that she plans to distribute the Q3 progress report to subcommittee members, requesting them to indicate their respective progress percentages.

Review of Town Hall Meeting Summary – Developing 2024 Priorities

- Jenny pointed out that attendees appreciated the more open meeting format, enabling a broader discussion of ongoing developments rather than solely adhering to the plan.
- Tammy observed that many participants were present to learn about prevention rather than contributing their own input. Jenny recalled the value of holding quarterly meetings a few years ago, with the final meeting dedicated to plan feedback, providing participants with an opportunity to first gather information and then contribute during the last meeting.
- Amy acknowledged the need for substantial efforts to promote prevention in rural areas and among disconnected communities.

- Jenny highlighted feedback from public education professionals, expressing their desire for closer collaboration between education and prevention efforts.
- The group emphasized the importance of unobstructed data collection and educating individuals on accessing locally relevant data. Greg suggested the possibility of conducting a comprehensive data evaluation next year, exploring whether PLOs could take on such a project.
- They discussed the significance of understanding the perception of risk in schools and enhancing messaging and marketing campaigns to convey the message effectively.
- Examining data related to gender differences was also discussed, with a higher overdose rate in men above 18 and women below 18. They emphasized the need to delve deeper into the reasons behind this discrepancy, including its connection to suicide.
- Targeting vulnerable groups, such as rural communities, BIPOC populations, and LGBTQ+ individuals, remained a priority.
- Amy mentioned her efforts to engage with coalitions subject to local ordinances governing vape shops, including considerations like density and proximity to schools. Christina noted that Christina Mickey, who works in this area, could be invited to the next subcommittee call. Patty Hughes might also have access to relevant data. Greg mentioned that an attorney informed him about a county zoning policy preventing restrictions on vape shops and similar businesses, leaving them with no legal recourse.
- Tammy addressed feedback about the plan lacking specificity and proposed adding specific action items under broader categories, particularly those that could be worked on collaboratively across agencies. The aim was to help stakeholders better comprehend this section of the plan, understand their accomplishments, and establish metrics for success, such as training on prevention "dos" and "don'ts."
- Greg recommended developing a top 3 policy plan to guide their efforts and distinguishing between prevention and overdose prevention more effectively. He also mentioned a comprehensive meeting with the West Virginia First Foundation to share data and discuss adapting destigmatizing language.
- Tammy and a graduate student collaborated on creating a two-pager titled "Supporting Prevention Policies and Practices that Work," aimed at helping coalitions understand their funding needs, particularly for youth empowerment initiatives. Tammy outlined three funding requests: community coalition coordinators, school-based prevention (both totaling 2.7 million), and youth-led prevention (1.8 million). These funds could support communities interested in these activities based on the prevention survey. Amy suggested holding events to share data with PLOs and inviting legislators and the WV First Foundation.
- Greg mentioned that the Hope & Action Alliance draft proposed a task force for each county to guide data-related decisions, relieving the pressure of making individual decisions.
- They discussed funding sources, including block grants from BBH and SAMSHA, which often support coalitions. The WV First Foundation controlled opioid settlement funds, with a dedicated person for each region. A certain percentage (approximately 23%) of funding came directly from municipalities, but there was no specific line item in the state budget for prevention funding.

Additional Discussion

- Christina Chill mentioned that her team has scheduled two upcoming training sessions for Handle with Care, in addition to the SHAPE conference. They have partnered with the Department of Education for these events. Registration is still available, and they have received participation from 22 counties so far. Their focus is on increasing sign-ups and ensuring full attendance at the training sessions. Christina is also working on scheduling evaluation meetings before commencing the project. Over the next month, they will reassess their participant list and address any issues related to counties gaining access to schools. There was also discussion about the possibility of offering training sessions during the week of Thanksgiving, considering their length, which is approximately 7 hours each.
- Gig presented a document containing a joint press release shared on August 21st by DHHR and WVABCA, promoting back-to-school resources aimed at preventing underage drinking and substance use. He also shared information about the upcoming WV Alcohol Conference scheduled for October 11 and 12. Gig noted that registration for the conference is nearly full and may need to be closed soon. The conference includes a unique session focused on media messaging.

Adjournment:

Amy closed the meeting by thanking all subcommittee members for their attendance and participation. The subcommittee will meet again in October.