

# Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Public Education Subcommittee August 21, 2024, Approved

## Attendees:

Subcommittee Members: Keigan Aabel-Brown, Tahnee Bryant, Anne Martin, Dr. Lyn O'Connell (chair), Tina Ramirez, Amy Saunders, Crystal Welch  
Staff: Bradley McCoy

## Opening:

Dr. O'Connell (chair) provided welcome and opening remarks of this meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, Public Education Subcommittee. The meeting was called to order on Wednesday, August 21, 2024, and was conducted by Zoom conference. There were six subcommittee members present in addition to the Chair and staff. Keigan Aabel-Brown made a motion to approve the minutes with the edit to include the State Communication Department's approval of the stigma training which was seconded by Amy Saunders. There was no further discussion, and the minutes were approved with all in favor, and none opposed. The objective of this meeting was to share Subcommittee updates.

## Agenda Items:

### 2024 KPI Progress:

- Keigan Aabel-Brown was able to provide updates on the stigma training. The group is awaiting final updates from initial feedback before they train Prevention Lead Organizations. Since the slides have already been approved by Communications, they will likely update the talking points associated with the training but leave the slides unchanged. People will be able to request training through the StigmaFreeWV website. Jenny Lancaster is providing the feedback on the training, but Tammy Collins is evaluating the results of training. There have been requests for stigma training for student leaders of various organizations and in the future, they can just be directed to the StigmaFreeWV website. The official name of the training is "Challenging Stigma: Supporting Individuals Through Education and Empathy" so there is less confusion around the purpose of just "stigma training." The group discussed how to handle a situation in which an organization says that they already do/have their own stigma training. It was suggested to offer this as a State-approved training course and one can think of it as an updated and expanded version of Dr. O'Connell's previous stigma training on Blackboard. The group discussed how they could get involved with criminal justice and healthcare students to receive stigma training.

Professors would likely enjoy it as a hands-off homework exercise or makeup activity. The group could partner with Collegiate Recovery for this.

**Town Hall Meetings:**

- Information dissemination is difficult in West Virginia, and this has been attendees' biggest concern. They want the future State Plan to directly address people at the community level, particularly for those without technology access.
- Pregnant and Parenting Women have been identified as a target population for stigma reduction among all groups. An example brought up was women with medical marijuana cards who become pregnant. The State still needs to work toward addressing unique problems such as these.

**Fall Planning:**

- The agenda item of 'Fall Planning' for the final plan that is due on November 15, 2024 was not discussed.

**Other Business:**

- Tina Ramirez has made a calendar of events occurring in September 2024 for Recovery Month and Dr. O'Connell shared this with the group.
- On August 26<sup>th</sup>, Eleanor is having a meeting about their recovery/stigma reduction mural.

**Adjournment:**

Dr. O'Connell thanked the Subcommittee members for their attendance and involvement. The Subcommittee is scheduled to meet again on Wednesday September 18, 2024.