

# **COLORADO SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREND AND RESPONSE TASK FORCE**

## **MINUTES**

**May 3, 2019**

**10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**Colorado Municipal League**

***1144 Sherman St., Denver***

### **Introductions**

Chair Weiser designated Matthew Baca, Director of the Office of Community Engagement in the Colorado Office of the Attorney general, to serve as chair of the meeting.

Members and guests were welcomed by Chair-Designate Baca, and this was followed by introductions of those in attendance.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the February 1<sup>st</sup> meeting were reviewed. Liz Hickman made the motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Wendy Buxton-Andrade gave the second to the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

### **Announcements from Task Force Members**

Lindsey Meyers mentioned that the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment submitted a grant application to the U.S. Center for Disease Control requesting \$4 million to enhance opioid-related data surveillance efforts, including a request for funds to implement real time overdose data gathering (mapping comparison with education, etc.), death data (all overdoses now), and birth certificate data that can be linked to the data of the Prescription Drug Monitoring System. One million dollars was requested for community prevention efforts, especially in supporting the efforts of Communities That Care coalitions.

Dr. Kathi Wells said that Judy's House has compelling data on children grieving opioid deaths.

Vice Chair Condojani discussed how the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) is managing the influx of federal funding. The State Targeted Response (STR) grant wrapped up on April 30th. As a result of the STR funds, OBH has exceeded goals on Narcan distribution and training of providers in Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT). The State Opioid Response (SOR) grant begins May 1<sup>st</sup> and funds from this grant are allowed for paying for opioid disorder treatment for incarcerated people. This includes \$2 million available for MAT in jails. OBH will be working with Sheriffs to make sure all counties who requested funding will get it.

Chief Rick Brandt mentioned that the replacement Narcan for law enforcement from the Office of Behavioral Health is very much appreciated. There are now 190 law enforcement agencies that have personnel that are trained in administration of Narcan and are equipped with it. He worked with the staff of the Colorado Peace Officers and Standards Training (POST) program in the Office of the Attorney General to create a Narcan training video is now on the POST website and available for law enforcement to receive credits towards their certification.

- Commissioner Buxton-Andrade asked, which law enforcement agencies carry Narcan and which one don't? Through Colorado Counties, Inc., she can help educate any County Commissioners where Narcan is not carried.

- Vice Chair Esquibel mentioned that this could be a follow-up item to draft a letter that could go out to County Commissioners through CCI.

Jade Woodard mentioned that the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing is preparing the grant application to the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services for implementing the Maternal Opioid Misuse Model in Colorado. This is a follow up item from the February meeting.

Matthew Baca said that Attorney General Weiser talks about addressing the opioid crisis almost daily. The Office of the Attorney General is working to hire an opioid strategy director. Also, the multi-district opioid litigation is ongoing, and there is the potential settlement.

### **Legislative Update**

Dr. Rob Valuck shared that the five bills of the Study Committee on Opioids and Other Substance Use Disorders were passed during the legislative session. In addition, Senate Bill 2019-001, regarding the expansion of MAT to several other counties, also passed. The bills are expected to be signed and will provide funding for a variety of services related to prevention, intervention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery.

Jade Woodard mentioned that one of the Study Committee bills, SB19-228, included pre-natal exposure data project regarding the exposure of babies to opioids. Another bill, HB19-1193, which is not from the Study Committee, includes expansion of eligibility for Medicaid substance use disorder treatment benefit to the first-year post-partum, instead of having to elect this benefit before leaving the hospital following the birth of a child.

Vice Chair Esquibel mentioned that HB19-1009, which came from the Study Committee, establishes an advisory group to counsel the Office of the Attorney General when settlement funds come to the state from anticipated settlement with opioid manufacturers and distributor.

Diane Carlson of Smart Colorado mentioned that the marijuana bills that were passed were expansive, including addressing issue of on-site use of marijuana with vendor training required, marijuana delivery, conducting a study of THC potency of marijuana products, and keeping the legal age of use of marijuana at age 21.

### **SBIRT Advisory Council as a Task Force Committee**

Vice Chair Esquibel mentioned that the federal State Innovation Model (SIM) Grant managed by the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing has been successful. One aspect of that grant has been the work on expanding training and implementation of Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT), an evidence-based practice for reducing the abuse of alcohol and also shows positive effect in reducing the abuse of other drugs.

The SIM grant is coming to a close by the end of September and the SBIRT partners that have met through SIM wish to continue their efforts. It was recommended at the February Task Force meeting that the SBIRT Advisory Council become a committee of the Task Force.

Bethany Pace-Danley of Peer Assistance Services, Inc., said the advisory council met to determine that SATF would be a great platform for connecting SBIRT to the broad network of the Task Force. The goal of the advisory council is to make SBIRT a standard of care in healthcare settings across the state, especially with regard to youth, as well as adults.

After some discussion about the practice of SBIRT, Vice Chair Esquibel made a formal recommendation for the SBIRT Advisory Council to be a Committee of the Task Force.

A motion was put forward and seconded with a unanimous vote of approval by Task Force members present.

### **New Substance Abuse Data Profiles**

Sharon Liu, Manager, Community Prevention Programs with the Office of Behavioral Health, Colorado Department of Human Services, provided a presentation on three drug data briefs prepared by the State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup, which serves as the Data Committee for the Task Force.

The three briefs focus on marijuana, alcohol and opioids and provide a template for summarizing and presenting data on other substance in the future. See the presentation PDF for details. The data profiles are available online at: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdhs-boards-committees-collaboration/colorado-state-epidemiological-outcomes-workgroup>

### **Substance Abuse Trends from Members**

Liz Hickman said that the abuse of methamphetamine is a concern. Centennial Mental Health has a medical team that is providing treatment for methamphetamine addiction. She mentioned that Wellbutrin has been useful in breaking the cycle of methamphetamine use. Regarding youth and marijuana, it's still a challenge to get realistic info on marijuana to young people. She stressed importance of the impact school-based prevention programming. In her area of Northeast Colorado, school districts are successfully and eagerly using evidence prevention programming, such as Sources of Strength.

Discussion: Data-driven/evidence-based education and work with legislation is needed. Wendy Buxton-Andrade mentioned the potential of getting the Board of Education involved, but it is complicated. This is also related to addressing issues regarding vaping and tobacco use among youth.

Liz Hickman also indicated that there is a workforce challenge to get people who are trained in substance addiction assistance, mental health, and general substance abuse. Workforce increase efforts have been slow.

Jade Woodard mentioned it is difficult to tell if families involved in child welfare are involved due to substance abuse. Testimony provided during the legislative session indicated that in a period of nine days in April, eight children were removed from homes due to parental methamphetamine use.

Liz Hickman mentioned that that almost 100% of terminations of parental rights in Logan County have involved methamphetamine.

Commissioner Wendy Buxton-Andrade discussed that DANCR within the court systems has been helping with the cases where parental drug abuse has involved the with the criminal justice system. This is elective program with the principles of drug court has drug screening combined with wrap around services.

Amy Kingery, from the Office of the Court Administrator, discussed DANCR efforts, which includes working to move those principles into the actual courts so DANCR doesn't have to exist anymore, as well as focusing on making this key in the dependency and neglect system. This is a form of a problem-solving court. The Colorado Judicial Branch has a grant to help record and track within an information database – alcohol and meth are at the top of the list of drugs of abuse, followed by heroin and opioids. These efforts aim to build bridges between judicial and other organizations. Amy also mentioned she is sitting on a national board of court officials and judges seem receptive to changes in handling cases of parents who are abusing substance and are involved in the criminal justice system.

Stazi Snelling of Rise Above Colorado mentioned that teens want to be informed with the real facts and are appreciative of positive messaging (what are you saying yes to, as opposed to just say no).

Diane Carlson of Smart Colorado said that the youth feel like the adults don't know about drugs. Smart Colorado is doing a lot of parental education and engage kids in the policymaking.

Sharon Liu, Office of Behavioral Health, shared that the Office has messaging that encourages kids to talk to trusted adults – parents think that they are talking to their kids and the kids don't think that they're actually talking to them.

Melissa Gallardo mentioned that State Parole is walking the line between all of these issues. There are different procedures between counties on testing suspected drugs and different ideas about what they want to do. Some agencies are completely hands off and will only look at suspected drugs in a lab, others are picking up drugs found in the possession of parolees and using an evidence locker in their cars for storing the drugs.

Vice Chair Condojani mentioned because the Task Force has representation of County Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police, they can help suggest guidelines for use by parole officers.

### **Methamphetamine and Environmental Contamination Clean-up of Housing**

This topic was moved to the August meeting agenda.

### **Substance Abuse Public Awareness Campaigns Coordination**

Cristen Bates, Office of Behavioral Health, Colorado Department of Human Services, has reached out to all communications staff across several state departments that fund and sustain public awareness campaigns to understand current efforts. This group meets quarterly and the goals are to inform and assist with each other's campaigns. The group is also looking at where the money is going, how to not overlap efforts, and ways to support each other.

Vice Chair Esquibel suggested looking a way to get information about the campaigns shared with Task Force members to pass along throughout networks. One way to start this is by having representation from the Task Force on the campaign coordination group. Stazi Snelling of Rise Above Colorado is willing to serve as the representative and Kent MacLennan can assist with Stazi.

### **Substance Exposed Newborns Committee**

Jade Woodard mentioned that there are now 18 hospitals involved in the Colorado Hospital SEN Collaborative. Caring for Colorado provided a grant to Illuminate Colorado to provide technical assistance to the participating hospitals in quality improvement processes in working with pregnant women who are abusing or addicted to drugs.

### **Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention**

Dr. Rob Valuck, the consortium Director, announced that José Esquibel has been hired at the Consortium and is serving as the Assistant Director. Also, with a combination of funds from the Colorado health Foundation, CO BANK, the Office of behavioral Health, and the State of Colorado, there are resources being allocated to implement priorities of the Consortium related to public awareness, MAT expansion, harm reduction efforts, and recovery support.

The Consortium is currently working to launch a Naloxone public awareness campaign this summer that will run through November. More details will be shared at the August meeting.