

Colorado Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force

May 7, 2021, 10:00 a.m.—11:30 a.m. (Via Zoom)

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Attorney General Weiser, Vice Chair for Treatment Lesley Brooks, Vice Chair for Criminal Justice Rick Brandt, Liz Hickman, Stazi Snelling, Jenny Wood, Ashley Idrees, Kathryn Wells, Julia Roguski, Melissa Gallardo, Rob Valuck

Guests: José Esquibel, Heidi Williams, Bella Brache, Annemarie Braun, Rebecca Chapman, Avani Dilger, Alex Wolff, Allison Rosenthal, Bethany Pace-Danley, Lindsey Simbeye, Meagan Hillman, Jessica Eaddy, Meredith Davis, Jack Reed, Emily Petoskey, Kent MacLennan, Annie Klein, Elizabeth Pace, Kathy Doht, Cindy Carter, Denise Vincioni

Welcome and Introductions

AG Weiser provided a welcome to begin the Task Force meeting, followed by a note of gratitude for former Vice-Chair of Treatment Avani Dilger and her work on the Task Force. He then announced the new Vice-Chair for Treatment, Lesley Brooks. Heidi Williams took attendance.

Review and Approval of Minutes

AG Weiser asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Liz Hickman made the motion, seconded by Jenny Wood. All present Task Force members approved.

The Opioid Crisis Response Plan Preview

Presented by Attorney General Weiser and Director of Opioid Response Heidi Williams

AG Weiser and Heidi Williams announced that the first settlement funds, \$10M, have been secured in a settlement with McKinsey and Company. The funds will support: prevention and education, treatment, recovery, criminal justice, harm reduction, and opioid abatement in rural Colorado.

The Department of Law is working with local governments and other stakeholders on a response plan. The work proceeds with an understanding that the better our state's local governments can work together, the more likely we'll receive the maximum amount of funds. A draft regional map for funds was then shown to the Task Force, with an emphasis on needing to finalize these regions as soon as possible.

Updates on the Office of Behavioral Health SAMHSA Funding

Presented by Jenny Wood

Jenny wood announced that as part of the COVID-19 Relief Act the Office of Behavioral Health received an additional \$27.1M for substance abuse prevention and treatment, and \$16.24M for community and mental health services. The funds must be spent by March 2023, and a list of potential projects is being developed.

Federal Buprenorphine Policy Change and Implications

Presented by Rob Valuck

Rob Valuck discussed the new buprenorphine practice guidelines that expand access to treatment of opioid use disorder. The Department of Health and Human Services announced they removed a training requirement that some have cited as a barrier for practitioners. The guidelines are an important step in ultimately helping more people find recovery.

Committee Updates

Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Intervention

This committee's updates included new outreach efforts, the creation of new resources, and safe disposal efforts. One of their provider education efforts includes working in rural areas with farmers and ranchers.

Substance-Exposed Newborns Committee

The Substance Exposed Newborn Committee shared that their hospital-based quality improvement collaborative now has 31 participating hospitals across Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana. The committee continues to work to create a space for all organizations working to combat prenatal substance exposure to collaborate.

State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup—SEOW

The Data Committee is currently working to appoint a new co-chair.

**Note: these notes were taken in May 2021 and finalized in August 2021. The SEOW Data Committee has since appointed Sharon Lui and Shaina Riciputi as co-chairs.*

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) Advisory Council

The SBIRT Advisory Council announced they had finalized their report on youth mental health metrics, specifically relating to COVID-19. The committee requested feedback on the report from the Task Force.

Closing Comments and Adjournment

Heidi Williams thanked everyone and called for last comments before wrapping up. It was briefly discussed that the next quarterly meeting could possibly be held in-person, depending on members' vaccination statuses. AG Weiser encouraged meeting participants to get vaccinated and concluded the meeting.