

Opioid Crisis Recovery Funds Advisory Committee Meeting

February 28th, 2024

Meeting Minutes

Members: Attorney General Phil Weiser, Cristen Bates, James Mobley, Gordon McLaughlin, Andres Guerrero, Rob Valuck, Jude Solano, Dr. Morgan Medlock, Ashley Absmeier-Koppenhafer, Sue Hansen, Julie Shimonek, Dmitry Kunin, Jeff Kuhr, Jim Schoettler, Wendy Buxton-Andrade, Curt Hayes, Kevin Bommer, Douglas Heller,

Department of Law Staff: Jamie Feld, Jack Patterson, Natalie Sandoval, Mindy Baumgardner

Guests: Andrea LaRew, Cloe Wells

Welcome

Jamie Feld welcomed the committee and reminded everyone that this is a public meeting and public comment will be available at the end of the call.

Attorney General Phil Weiser expressed appreciation to the committee members of their input for this work.

Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) in Jail Challenge Launch & 2024 Opioid Abatement Conference

AG Weiser shared the Medication Assisted Treatment Services for Colorado County Jails awards will be given to Colorado jails for medication assisted treatment, recognizing the high risk that individuals leaving incarcerated settings face.

Jamie Feld shared that up to five jails will be awarded and each award is \$50,000 and hope to announce the awardees at the 3rd Annual Colorado Opioid Abatement Conference.

Jamie also shared the 3rd Annual Colorado Opioid Abatement Conference has a tentative date of Monday, September 30th, 2024. The conference this year will only be one day instead of several days, hosted in the Embassy Suites in Loveland to highlight the work being done in Northern Colorado. On the following day, October 1st, 2024 Rethinking Addiction conference will be held at the same location.

AG Weiser shared that the goal of the conference is to learn how to build a community of practice and that was done by bringing in individuals with different backgrounds, such as law enforcement, public health, medical providers, and people with lived experience. AG Weiser asked Commissioner Sue Hansen for feedback from the 2023 conference to better understand what went well and what could have been better.

Sue Hansen shared that the two biggest highlights from the last conference was the peer recovery presentation and law enforcement. The peer recovery presentation was very popular and should be expanded at next year's conference and the law enforcement should have more personnel involved and

to hear what their experiences have been across the state. Overall, felt the conference was very well done and looking forward to the 2024 Opioid Abatement Conference.

Jose Esquibel added that one thing to consider is the need to prepare for orienting new County Commissioners and other elected officials.

Rob Valuck shared that the 'bootcamp' is something that his team has done before and would be happy to participate in it and have done the basics.

AG Weiser thanked Rob Valuck for his willingness to participate.

Cristen Bates shared that she had a great conversation with 'motivated folks' around opioid overdoses and their ideas but ran into challenges due to the legislation period. Cristen also shared there may some value of educating people on the state budget timelines and legislative expectations as an idea cannot be brought forward to HCPF if the individual did not do the back work of getting a constituency, working with the advocates, and working with all of the stakeholders.

State Share Settlement Funds Update

AG Weiser shared there are more settlements since the last meeting and now estimates to be about \$770 million that was brought back from the settlements.

Jamie Feld shared that there are new recent settlements with Publicis, Hikma, and Kroger, and the Kroger settlement will require participation forms from all the local governments.

Jamie Feld shared status on the state share, noting that there currently an open strategic impact grant with \$8 million available which closes on March 8th, 2024. The State has also funded the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain tribes with over \$2 million in funds from the state share, which is separate from funds that the tribes may receive from the specific tribal settlements.

The Connect Effect, ad Youth and Adult Opioid;/Fentanyl Prevention Campaign is currently in it's second phase, which will include mini grants. Jamie Feld encouraged attendees to share out the campaign and reach out if there is an interest in campaign materials.

The State has also executed a contract in January 2024 with the Department of Correction (DOC) to provide \$3.9 million in funds to support the delivery of Medications for Opioid Use Disorder and Medicaid care coordination in DOC facilities over 2 years. The goals are to support the health and safety of individuals who are incarcerated with OUD and with MOUD Treatment, and to increase Medicaid care coordination services for individuals with OUD.

Exhibit E – Open Discussion

Jamie Feld opened the discussion of Exhibit E, the list of Approved Purposes for Opioid Settlement funds from the national settlements, noting that the state has previously been working with Exhibit A which is an early version of Exhibit E that was included in the Colorado MOU. Exhibit E is more specific as it relates to law enforcement approved uses. Both lists are non-exhaustive.

Jamie Feld shared that there is a need to submit national reporting using Exhibit E, and there is a benefit to using Exhibit E to align better with national standards. The Colorado Opioid Abatement Council has voted to use Exhibit E moving forward for expenditure reporting.

Jamie Feld asked if there were any questions about Exhibit E, as well as if there were any recommendations as to the best ways to communicate Exhibit E to stakeholders.

Jose Esquibel commented that there are a number of audiences, decision makers, stakeholders, folks in the field, and that there was number of ways to promote this information, noting it's important for folks to understand how opioid settlement funds can be expended so that the impact can be maximized.

2024 Expenditure Reporting and Colorado Opioid Abatement Council Updates

Jack Patterson shared that all parties, including local governments and regions, submitted all reports by the February 9th, 2024 deadline. Based on the submitted reports, over \$14 million has been expended through the end of 2023 and is working on this data so it can be published on the website via a dashboard by Spring 2024.

Jamie Feld expressed appreciation for Jack and the team to get all reports in by the deadline of February 9th, 2024. Jamie shared an article from Pennsylvania that Colorado is on the forefront when it comes to expenditure reporting, noting that Colorado has been recognized for the commitment to a 100% transparency model.

Jamie also shared that the Infrastructure Share was awarded to 14 different organizations, which totals to about \$4.4 million when combining the first and second round of the infrastructure share. The infrastructure share is meant to help build capital infrastructure or operational assistance.

Jamie Feld noted that for Regional Opioid Abatement Councils, their next opportunity to request funds is March 15th, and that the Colorado Opioid Settlement Dashboard contains information on how Region's have planned to expend funds as well as has the primary contacts for each of the Regions.

JAMIE Feld added that there is a data workgroup of the Colorado Opioid Abatement Council which is led by local government representatives to look at what we can do at the state level to better inform where the gaps and needs are in data related specifically for opioids. The COAC has authorized the use of Infrastructure funds to support the data workgroup.

State Share Expenditure Reporting

Jamie Feld shared state expenditures through June 2022 and this information can also be found on the COAG.gov website. From July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023, Jamie also shared the new expenditures that have occurred and highlighted how the funds have been expended, which include the previously mentioned funding for the tribes, the Department of Corrections, and the Connect Effect campaign. Other costs include the regional planning efforts from the State, which may be further broken out to call out some administrative costs, and the two opioid abatement conferences.

The Colorado Attorney General's Office has also provided in-kind support in a number of areas. The largest in-kind support received has been through the internal financial services team, followed by the Division of Community Engagement, Information Technology (IT), building operations, and the consumer protection section. Jamie asked the committee if there were any sections of the in-kind support they

would like for her to go more in-depth on or if they see any value of her sharing the type of in-kind support received.

Jamie Feld shared that anticipated expenditures for the state include the second year of the Connect Effect campaign, as well as the Innovation Grants that begin in 2024 which have been executed and are awaiting reimbursements.

Public Comment

Jose Esquibel shared that he believes that things are very well organized and coordinated in the state for this response. With overdose deaths continuing to increase and likely to be at a 10% increase from last year's data, there needs to be a way to help measure success and how to focus on the 'hot spots' of overdoses, such as in Denver.

Sue Hansen added that this work has gone a long way, and that specifically with staff of the Opioid Response Unit engaging with the different regions. Sue also added there should be some sort of guide made for new elected officials so they are aware as this work may not be on their radar at all.

Julie Shimonek shared that she has some ideas of the 'root causes' and why this is happening in the first place and is linked back to happiness as that is not something that is taught in school. A professor from Yale University offers a class, "Science of Well-Being for Teens" and she has been able to attend three, virtual sessions. Julie continued to share that she has some ideas for this work, and she has been studying this topic and wonders if she would be able to speak to someone regarding her ideas.

Meeting Conclusion

Jamie Feld shared the next OCRF meeting is June 26th, 2024 from 10:30 am – 12 pm and encourages for the committee to reach out to opioids@coag.gov with any questions or assistance.