

# Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

**February 2, 2023**  
**8:30 am – 10:30 am**

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams:  
<http://floridahealth.gov/DPACMeeting>  
Or call in (audio only): (850) 792-1375  
Phone Conference ID: 201 614 413#

## **Welcome/Introductions**

Joseph A. Ladapo, MD, PhD, State Surgeon General, opened the Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council (DPAC) meeting. Dr. Ladapo thanked all members of DPAC, designated appointees, and other participants for their continued partnership in this critical work. Dr. Ladapo asked that Shay Chapman, BSN, MBA, Staff Liaison Designee, proceed with roll call.

## **The following members or designees were in attendance:**

Joseph A. Ladapo, MD, PhD, State Surgeon General  
Melanie Brown-Woofter for Mark P. Fontaine (Governor Appointee: Substance Abuse Treatment, Florida Behavioral Health Association)  
Jeffrey Cece, MS, CPM for Shevaun Harris (Department of Children and Families)  
Dorothy Groover-Skipper (Governor Appointee, Faith-Based Substance Abuse Treatment, HeartDance Foundation, Inc.)  
Gary Howze for Ashley Moody (Office of the Attorney General)  
Julie Jean for Ricky Dixon (Department of Corrections)  
Captain Jordan Jerris for Major General James Eifert (Department of Military Affairs)  
John McClellan for Mark Glass (Department of Law Enforcement)  
Captain Derrick Rahming for Terry Rhodes (Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles)  
Peggy Sapp (Governor Appointee: Substance Abuse Prevention, Informed Families)  
Tracy Shelby for Eric Hall, Ed.D. (Department of Juvenile Justice)  
Doug Simon for Chris Spencer (Governor's Office of Policy and Budget)  
Andrew Weatherill for Manny Diaz, Jr. (Department of Education)

## **Guests and Staff:**

Kerri Bryan (Department of Health)  
Shay Chapman, BSN, MBA, Staff Liaison (Department of Health)  
Jesseka Forbes, PharmD (Agency for Health Care Administration)  
Oliver Grundmann, PhD (University of Florida)  
Beth Labasky, Member of the Public  
Ramon Maury (Informed Families)  
Christopher McCurdy, PhD, FAAPS (University of Florida)  
Jay McLaughlin, PhD (University of Florida)  
Ashley Peterson (Agency for Health Care Administration)  
Keshia Reid, PhD (Department of Health)  
Daniel Rocha, MPH (Department of Health)  
Abhisheak Sharma, M. Pharm., PhD (University of Florida)  
Anna Simmons (Department of Health)  
Rita Smith (Department of Juvenile Justice)  
Lori Stalker (Indivior)  
Jennifer Williams (Department of Children and Families)

## **Opening Remarks**

Dr. Ladapo provided an overview of the meeting agenda and the presentation to follow.

Dr. Ladapo reflected on the efforts within the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) related to DPAC's work to address substance use in the state of Florida. Increased partner collaboration is resulting in innovative programs across the state to address overdose from both a prevention and treatment perspective. One of these programs is the Coordinated Opioid Recovery (CORE) network. FDOH and the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) concluded the series of announcements on the implementation of this innovative, first-of-its-kind program into 12 Florida counties. Fostering innovative and collaborative initiatives, such as the CORE network, as well as increasing our understanding through research, is critical to helping end this deadly epidemic in our state.

## **Business**

### **1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes from October 27, 2022:**

A motion was entered to approve the meeting minutes. Motion carried, all in favor. Minutes were approved with no opposition.

### **2. Presentation:**

**Kratom Science, University of Florida Study Results** – Christopher McCurdy, PhD, FAAPS, Professor of Medicinal Chemistry, College of Pharmacy, University of Florida; Abhisheak Sharma, M. Pharm., PhD, Assistant Director of Translational Drug Development Core, Assistant Professor of Pharmaceutics, College of Pharmacy, University of Florida; Jay McLaughlin, PhD, Professor of Pharmacodynamics, College of Pharmacy, University of Florida; Oliver Grundmann, PhD, Clinical Professor of Medicinal Chemistry, College of Pharmacy, University of Florida

Dr. McCurdy and colleagues presented on studying the science of kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*), including the study of the plant and its chemistry. Kratom has been used to increase mood, stamina, energy, and decrease anxiety and pain. The historical use of kratom to prevent withdrawal and ween users from opioids is of great relevance to the current global opioid crisis. As kratom use has steadily increased in the United States, reports of adverse events have risen. Dr. McCurdy and colleagues conducted studies, supported by two grants from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and concluded that kratom has a low abuse liability when it is utilized in its pure leaf/plant material form. Dr. McCurdy believes issues arise from concentrated extracts and other formulations that utilize dried or cured leaf materials and the abuse liability in these products is most likely due to the varying concentrations of one alkaloid, 7-hydroxymitragynine (7OHMG).

Dr. McCurdy and colleagues believe that more studies on kratom are warranted before any decision is made to ban this substance.

### **3. Agency and Member Updates:**

#### **Gary Howze, Office of the Attorney General**

The Office of the Attorney General had no additional updates for DPAC.

#### **John McClellan, Florida Department of Law Enforcement**

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) updated that the 2021 Drugs Identified in Deceased Persons by Florida Medical Examiners Annual Report is finalized and available for review on the FDLE website.

#### **Jeffrey Cece, Department of Children and Families**

DCF updated on the Governor's Framework for Freedom Budget recommendations and that \$258 million has been suggested for prevention and recovery resources. DCF has also been reviewing primary prevention services across revenue streams and has found that there are over 100 prevention programs and strategies currently active across the state.

**Julie Jean, Department of Corrections**

The Department of Corrections had no additional updates for DPAC.

**Rita Smith, Department of Juvenile Justice**

The Department of Juvenile Justice had no additional updates for DPAC.

**Andrew Weatherill, Department of Education**

The Department of Education had no additional updates for DPAC.

**Captain Derrick Rahming, Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles**

The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles is currently working with the Office of Drug Control and DCF to secure grant funding for the drug recognition program which provides training for officers to recognize impaired driving beyond solely alcohol.

**Captain Jordan Jerris, Department of Military Affairs**

The National Guard had no additional updates for DPAC.

**Doug Simon, Governor's Office of Policy and Budget**

The Governor's Office of Policy and Budget updated on the Governor's crime bill and the increases in penalties for trafficking of any kind of fentanyl to children or minors, and also increases funding for local law enforcement for more interdiction efforts.

**Peggy Sapp, Informed Families**

Informed Families advised that the new Red Ribbon Week theme was announced on January 30, 2023.

**Melanie Brown-Woofter, Florida Behavioral Health Association**

The Florida Behavioral Health Association will be participating at Behavioral Health Week at the Florida Capitol next Wednesday and Thursday.

**Dorothy Groover-Skipper, HeartDance Foundation, Inc.**

HeartDance Foundation, Inc. will also be participating at Behavioral Health Week at the Florida Capitol next Wednesday and Thursday.

**Jesseka Forbes, Agency for Health Care Administration**

The Agency for Health Care Administration updated that they will be facilitating a no cost continuing education opportunity for providers on screening, brief intervention, and referral to training.

**4. Public Comments/Open Discussion:**

No public comments received.

**5. Adjournment:**

For closing items, Dr. Ladapo reminding DPAC members that the council operates in the Sunshine Law and members should not discuss DPAC business with other members outside of meetings.

The date for the next DPAC meeting is April 18, 2023.

A motion was entered to adjourn. Motion carried with no opposition. Meeting was adjourned at 10:13 am.