

Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Florida Department of Health
4052 Bald Cypress Way, Room 301
Tallahassee, FL 32399
July 20, 2021
9:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Welcome/Introductions

Scott Rivkees, MD, Chair, State Surgeon General, opened the meeting of the Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council (DPAC). Dr. Rivkees thanked all Council members, designated appointees, and other participants for their partnership in this critical work and attention to the important issue of substance abuse and drug policy. Dr. Rivkees asked that Lori Reeves, MPH, Staff Liaison, proceed with roll call.

The following members or designees were in attendance:

Scott A. Rivkees, MD, Chair, State Surgeon General
Joy Bennink for Josefina M. Tamayo (Department of Juvenile Justice)
Jason Britt for Terry Rhodes (Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles)
Jeffery Cece, MS, CPM, for Shevaun Harris (Department of Children and Families)
Allen Craig for Major General James O. Eifert (Department of Military Affairs)
Jesseka Forbes (Agency for Health Care Administration)
Ute Gazioch for Mark Fontaine (Governor Appointee: Substance Abuse Treatment, Florida Behavioral Health Association)
Rachel Kamoutsas for Ashley Moody (Office of the Attorney General)
Judge Steve Leifman (11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida)
Ramon Maury for Peggy Sapp (Informed Families)
Vence Monlyn for Kimberly Spence (Governor Appointee: Drug Enforcement, Keaton Corrections, Inc.)
Kim Riley for Mark Inch (Department of Corrections)
Melissa Rudd (Department of Military Affairs)
Andrew Weatherill for Richard Corcoran (Department of Education)
Susan Williams (Agency for Health Care Administration)

Guests and Staff:

Avalon Adams-Thames, DrPH, MPH (Department of Health)
Brittany Blasko (Department of Health)
Kerri Bryan (Department of Health)
Nathan Dunn, MSA (Department of Health)
Aaron Gerson (Office of the State Courts Administrator)
Brett Kirkland, PhD (Department of Law Enforcement)
Chad Lucas (Department of Law Enforcement)
Laura Molina (Florida Association of Nurse Anesthetists)
Megan Neel (Department of Law Enforcement)
Lori Reeves, MPH, Staff Liaison (Department of Health)
Keshia Reid, PhD (Department of Health)
Amy Suralis (Florida Association of Nurse Anesthetists)
Stuart Waldo (Department of Health)

Opening Remarks

Dr. Rivkees reflected on efforts related to COVID-19 and vaccination updates. Dr. Rivkees stated that as of the morning of the meeting, July 20, 2021, three vaccines are approved and being administered statewide. The virus continues to highly affect persons age 65+ in Florida. Currently, 85% of Floridians age 65+ are fully vaccinated. Forty percent of all eligible Florida adults remain unvaccinated. There are 2,000+ active vaccination sites across the state. More information is available at floridahealth.gov. There is also a vaccine locator for visitors.

Opioid prescribing rates are decreasing in Florida due to increased utilization of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP).

Dr. Rivkees gave an overview of the meeting agenda, including the presentations that would follow.

Business

1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 20, 2021:

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

2. Presentations:

- a. **Drug Overdose Trends in Florida** – Avalon Adams-Thames, DrPH, MPH, Overdose Data to Action Senior Epidemiologist, Florida Department of Health
Dr. Adams-Thames provided a PowerPoint presentation of the recent data released from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on nationwide provisional drug overdose death counts and the current provisional data for Florida. Overall, there was a 37% increase in fatal overdose deaths in Florida from 2019-2020.
- b. **Drugs Identified in Deceased Persons by Florida Medical Examiners 2020 Interim Report** – Brett Kirkland, PhD, Chief of Policy and Special Programs, Florida Department of Law Enforcement
Dr. Kirkland provided a PowerPoint presentation overview on the interim data for the 2020 Florida Medical Examiners annual report on overdose deaths that was published April of 2021. All reports can be viewed by visiting <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/MEC/Publications-and-Forms/Documents/Drugs-in-Deceased-Persons>. The report included data from the first half of 2020, and showed increases in overdose deaths from fentanyl, methamphetamines, alprazolam, and other drugs. 2020 was the first time in many years that any other single drug (fentanyl) surpassed alcohol as a cause of death in Florida.
- c. **Opioid Free Anesthesia** – Amy Suralis, DNP, CRNA, APRN, Associate Clinical Professor, University of North Florida
Dr. Amy Suralis, speaking on behalf of the Florida Association of Nurse Anesthetists (FANA) provided a PowerPoint presentation on non-opioid alternatives and supplemental FANA initiatives including legislative advocacy, task force, pain fellowships, and the Society for Opioid Free Anesthesia (SOFA).
- d. **The Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Model, Innovation in Behavioral Health Care** – Ute Gazioch, Senior Director Behavioral Health Policy, Florida Behavioral Health Association
Ute Gazioch provided a PowerPoint presentation on the CCBHC Model to expand and improve behavioral health care. Ms. Gazioch reflected on the impact the CCBHCs had nationally and the impact to date in Florida.

3. Discussion of 2021 Annual Report: Lori Reeves, Staff Liaison, addressed the Council and provided an overview of the DPAC's progress to date on the 2020 recommendations and requested input from the Council to be added to the 2021 Annual Report. The content of the report is a compilation of information from the members of the Council.

Selected recommendations were addressed, and discussion followed.

The Council needs to ensure that it is submitting measurable recommendations by building in more specificity.

Lori Reeves asked if there was a new or current recommendation a member would like to start with or proceed with reviewing current recommendations. Nathan Dunn suggested review and confirmation of recommendations that can be marked complete, and then proceeding with updates on recommendations in progress.

Recommendation #4

Judge Steve Leifman suggested an update to Recommendation #4 to include assessments for middle school aged youth and those who have experienced trauma.

Andrew Weatherill stated that Florida schools are receiving funding for substance use disorder, and that those funds were increased this year. Schools receiving funds are required to provide updates on outreach and prevention efforts.

Ute Gazioch posed the question of how the Council might target youth for prevention needs and education?

Allen Craig requested a possible future update on how the Florida Department of Education has been affected during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Judge Steve Leifman would like to ensure a tracking component for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) be included. There is a need for an assessment tool to identify what youth need treatment.

Jeff Cece updated that the Department of Children and Families has resources available that can help identify youth with ACEs.

Dr. Rivkees noted there is an opportunity for additional potential partners to be identified and engaged to offer training on ACEs as well as provide insight on what is currently being applied, what resources are currently utilized, and what are the additional needs. Suggestion of the American Academy of Pediatrics and primary care providers.

Recommendation #5

Allen Craig noted that Recommendation #5 is largely complete. However, community level prevention efforts need to continue.

Recommendation #6

Lori Reeves provided an update to Recommendation #6. In collaboration of the Opioid Use Disorder, Maternal Outcomes, and Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Initiative (OMNI) and the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), activation of billing codes for Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) has completed. Billing codes for SBIRT were made active in April of 2021 and retroactive billing is approved from January 2021. AHCA is also in the process of developing a continuing medical education (CME) course for providers on SBIRT codes. This recommendation is essentially complete, with both AHCA and Florida Department of Health planning for ongoing monitoring and support.

Recommendation #9

Jeff Cece suggests marking Recommendation #9 as complete in its current form. Prevention and harm reduction content needs to be readdressed.

Judge Steve Leifman recommends modification to include a template of essential elements needed to develop and establish syringe exchange programs to encourage other county health departments.

Recommendation #13

Lori Reeves noted that there has been much movement on this recommendation over the year. Gaps have been identified in willingness of providers to prescribe medication-assisted treatments (MAT). The Florida Perinatal Quality Collaborative held listening sessions for obstetric providers, who have conveyed challenges regarding normalizing conversations around screening and treatment, and the need for training at the primary care level and to residents.

Recommendation #18

Nathan Dunn confirmed that the updates and improvements to the Florida Substance Use Dashboard are mostly complete. Lori Reeves confirmed a preview of the dashboard will be added to the agenda for the October DPAC meeting.

Recommendation #19

Rachel Kamoutsas noted that the ODMAP system needs to link to the Helping Emergency Responders Obtain Support (HEROS) program.

Dr. Avalon Adams-Thames confirmed that the use of ODMAP was interrupted with an anticipated reconnect for the fall of 2021. County health departments are currently utilizing Biospatial data.

Recommendation #20

Judge Steve Leifman recommended implementing the Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers model throughout Florida and would like to highlight Recommendation #20 for the improvement of the Marchman Act. Judge Leifman noted that there is a study available from the University of South Florida on the ineffective system of care that the Marchman Act allows. Judge Leifman will provide suggested updated language to Lori Reeves via email.

Lori Reeves ended the commentary with a request for specific language modifications and recommendations to be submitted via email after reviewing the current 2020 progress report. The Council was asked to fill in gaps and offer additional recommendations.

Nathan Dunn reminded the Council that the goal is to present a predominantly complete report at the October DPAC meeting.

4. Agency and Member Updates:

Rachel Kamoutsas, Office of the Attorney General

Attorney General Moody has continued to work to resolve the opioid litigation on behalf of our state. On the prevention side, Attorney General Moody partnered with Florida Association of District School Superintendents to showcase afterschool programs that are aimed at drug prevention for youth once the school day is over. With respect to enforcement and legislation efforts, Attorney General Moody recently urged congress to pass the FIGHT Fentanyl Act. The act would permanently schedule fentanyl analogs as a class 1 controlled substance. Finally, Attorney General Moody has remained vigilant and concerned with the increasing presence of fentanyl. The Office of the Attorney General stands ready and willing to support law enforcement and prosecution efforts in taking on difficult drug cases.

John McClellan, Florida Department of Law Enforcement

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) continues to provide investigative assistance to local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Florida to combat drug crimes and dismantle drug trafficking organizations. FDLE agents have been assigned as full time Task Force Officers to the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and they are working drug investigations at the federal level to keep Florida safe. FDLE currently has 20 members, primarily special agents but also criminal analysts, deployed to the southeast border. This is the second wave of members that FDLE has sent, and it is anticipated that a third wave will also deploy. They are stationed at the border for approximately two weeks per wave along with our state law enforcement partners, the Florida Highway Patrol, and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The link below is an open-source article where a special agent from the DEA explains why Atlanta remains a hub for fentanyl.

<https://www.11alive.com/article/news/local/dea-explains-why-atlanta-ga-popular-hub-among-drug-cartels/85-a13c4d0b-11f0-4611-a5b8-30e90845b774>

Jeffrey Cece, Department of Children and Families

The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) is working on the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment grant of \$101 million which includes allocation of a prevention component.

There are also two rounds of supplemental funding, including round one of the COVID-19 relief act, which resulted in a total award to Florida of \$104.3 million for the funding period of March 2021 to March 2023, and round two that includes funds from the American Rescue Plan which total \$90.1 million for the funding period of September 2021 to September 2025. DCF will provide a line item budget at a later date with further details. DCF is continuing to work through the challenge of budget authority for some of the funding.

Much of the funding's primary intent is for prevention efforts through DCF managing entities. Priority areas include maintaining the primary set aside, with funds for headquarters to manage the grant, provide transitional vouchers (housing support), suicide prevention, workforce development, and comprehensive service arrays (assessments, outreach, community needs). DCF's priorities also include prevention of child abuse and neglect, services to families, reaching and engaging families sooner, preventing behavioral health issues, with a focus on the substance exposed newborn population, and supporting the neonatal abstinence syndrome initiative. DCF will ensure funding is resource driven and linking Floridians to the resources they need.

Kim Riley, Department of Corrections

Kim Riley stated that the recent primary focus for the Department of Corrections (DOC) had been end of year activities including ensuring service contracts are in place and completing a needs assessment document that includes reflection on ACEs.

DOC will be partnering with providers in the communities to utilize the assessment tool when complete.

Joy Bennink, Department of Juvenile Justice

Joy Bennink has served as the Interim Director of Mental Health Services with the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) since January of 2021. Trauma care is a focus for DJJ and a community assessment tool (needs assessment) is being developed. Currently, DJJ facilitates mental health screenings at every point of entry and is utilizing a screening tool for ACEs as well.

Andrew Weatherill, Department of Education

The Florida Department of Education (DOE) standards were adopted at the last board meeting. The Youth Mental Health Awareness Training (YMHAT) Plan and the Mental Health Assistance Allocation (MHAA) Plan are to provide supplemental funding to districts so schools can establish, expand and/or improve mental health

care, awareness and training and offer a continuum of services. This funding will build on the recommendations of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act. School districts will be required to report cases and progress DOE. Workforce continues to be an issue. Additional funds are being allocated to support 18 districts identified with ratio concerns to meet access and availability of support services.

Allen Craig, Department of Military Affairs

The Florida National Guard Drug Demand Reduction Outreach Program (FLNG-DDRO) assisted the United States DEA in collection of 13,893 pounds of old and expired prescription medication in the current calendar year of 2021.

Judge Steve Leifman, 11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida

As part of the circuit's opioid initiatives, the circuit has hired a full-time director who will train and retrain all judges in the area. Zoom access and virtual platforms allow for utilization of experts from across the country to engage in training sessions. The Champions Training Academy program is ongoing and continuing to engage with community partners.

There is a National Association of Drug Court Professionals Conference in August. The circuit is working to plan a state conference in the near future.

Lt. Jason Britt, Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV) continues to work on drug traffic enforcement. Efforts continue from highly trained special drug teams of 70 members that include 30 K9 team members. Teams have seized 22 pounds of cocaine, 100 pounds marijuana, 100,000 methamphetamines, and \$200,000.00 in currency since January of 2021.

Teams have been tracking the influx of fentanyl in Florida. Most of the fentanyl in Florida is currently coming across the border in Texas, then travels through Atlanta before making its way to Florida.

Ute Gazioch, Florida Behavioral Health Association

The Florida Behavioral Health Association (FBHA) is continuing to successfully administer contracts with DCF and the Office of the State Courts Administrator for MAT services. Anecdotally, demand for MAT is increasing, but provider naloxone distribution has decreased with the increase in services delivered via telehealth.

In June 2021, the FBHA hosted the Floridians for Recovery's first Recovery Leadership Summit, bringing together Recovery Community Organizations, service providers, and contributors to link statewide recovery initiatives and create a roadmap for Florida's recovery movement. The FBHA will also host several events in August, including the Florida Behavioral Health Conference and the 4th Annual Opioid Summit in Orlando, Florida. Policy focus is currently on implementing the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) model throughout Florida as an innovative solution designed to improve access to evidence-based, integrated health care for persons with mental health and substance use disorders, and addressing numerous workforce issues such as high vacancy rates, shortage of behavioral health professionals, and the minimum wage increase.

Ramon Maury, Informed Families

Informed Families is working to expand partnership with Miami-Dade middle and high schools. There is a need to collaborate and work with DCF and the Department of Education to expand and provide better services to children in Florida. The mental health crises have seen a significant increase during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Vence Monlyn, Keaton Corrections, Inc.

Keaton Corrections has revised their interview process to include using ACEs for better outcomes and expanded treatment programs to address mental health and suicide. Currently establishing and implementing staff drills and practice for overdose response efforts for all Keaton Corrections team members.

Susan Williams, Agency for Health Care Administration

Susan Williams will be retiring, and the Agency for Health Care Administration updates and duties will be turned over to Jesseka Forbes who was also in attendance.

5. Public Comments/Open Discussion:

A question was asked about whether Advance Practice nurses are eligible for increased reimbursement for SBIRT/MAT, and the answer was yes. MDs, DOs, PAs, and ARNPs are eligible for the additional reimbursement.

Lori Reeves noted that the October DPAC meeting could possibly return to the previous full day format, but the Council will be updated upon Chairperson's approval.

6. Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 12:30 PM. The next Council meeting will be held on October 19, 2021.

Motion was entered to adjourn. Motion carried.