

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Ron DeSantis
Governor

Scott A. Rivkees, MD
State Surgeon General

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

**January 26, 2021
8:30 am to 12:30 pm**

GoToMeeting Information Meeting Link:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/677651173>

Dial-in number: 877-568-4106

Access code: 677-651-173 Go-to-Meeting

The following members or designees were in attendance:

Scott A. Rivkees, MD, Chair, State Surgeon General
Jeffrey Cece, MS, CPM for Chad Poppell (Department of Children and Family Services)
Lt. Jason Britt for Terry Rhodes (Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles)
MAJ Nate Dinger for COL Michael Ladd (Department of Military Affairs)
Mark Fontaine (Florida Behavioral Health Association)
Doug Leonardo (Chrysalis Health)
Dotti Groover-Skipper (HeartDance Foundation, Inc.)
Annie White for Rick Swearingen (Florida Department of Law Enforcement)
Peggy Sapp (Informed Families)
Maggie Agerton for Mark Inch (Department of Corrections)
Walter Liebrich (Office of Policy and Budget)
Judge Steve Leifman (11th Judicial Circuit of Florida)

Guests and Staff:

Tim Buehner, PhD (Agency for Health Care Administration)
Nathan Dunn, MSA, Staff Liaison
Christna Hoffman (Department of Health)
Melissa Jordan (Department of Health)
Rachel Kamoutsas (Office of the Attorney General)
Eric Mountain (U.S. Attorney's Office)
Susan Williams (Agency for Health Care Administration)

Business

- Welcome/Introductions/Opening Remarks:** Dr. Scott Rivkees opened the meeting of the Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council (Council) and thanked all Council members, designated appointees and other participants for their partnership in this critical work.

Dr. Rivkees reflected on efforts related to COVID-19 and stated that 1.6 million Floridians had been vaccinated as of the morning of the meeting, January 26, 2021 (1.3 million having received the first

dose). As the Governor has announced, our priority is to protect our most vulnerable residents (age 65+); more than 75% of Floridians who have received the vaccine at this time are 65 and older.

2. **Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes from October 28, 2019 and November 19, 2019:**

There was one question regarding the action steps from the prior meeting. Once this was clarified, the meeting minutes were approved.

3. **Presentations:**

a. **Laura Corbin, Chief of the Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida, on Electronic Cigarette Use**

Laura Corbin stated that there are four primary goals: 1.) prevent youth initiation of tobacco, 2.) eliminate secondhand exposure, 3.) promote quitting among all users and 4.) strengthen statewide infrastructure (outreach). The 2020 youth tobacco survey showed an increase in e-vaping from 2014–2020. In September 2018, the FDA declared vaping an epidemic due to the rising levels in 2017. Aggressive marketing and appealing flavors are two contributing factors to the recent popularity of vaping. These flavors create the misconception that because the flavor masks the nicotine taste, it is less harmful. In November of 2018, the FDA announced action against companies that market products with flavors, such as Juul. In February of 2020, the FDA banned flavor cartridge-based devices except for menthol, mint and tobacco; however, this did not include disposables.

Questions/Comments: A question was asked: Why is there not a list of retailers who sell these products? Laura Corbin clarified that unlike traditional tobacco, vape sellers do not need a license, making it difficult to identify the number of retailers. It was also noted that Recommendation 5 (comprehensive e-cigarette plan) could be edited next year to propose the same restrictions on e-cigarette and vapes as on other tobacco products.

b. **Dotti Groover-Skipper, HeartDance Foundation, Inc., on Drug Addiction in relation to Human Trafficking**

Dotti Groover-Skipper stated that drug addiction is used as a coercion tactic for human trafficking—the business of exploitation of vulnerabilities and the illegal trade of human beings. These victims are often sold for purposes of sex, illegal adoptions and labor. Ms. Groover-Skipper referred to sex trafficking as modern-day slavery. Force, fraud or coercion does not apply to victims under 18. There is no such thing as a child prostitute. LGBTQ+ is becoming high on the list of targets. About 10,000 children are sold each day globally. Human trafficking is the most financially lucrative business endeavor in the world. There are over 1.5 million trafficking victims in the U.S. Florida is third in the nation for instances of human trafficking, following California and Texas. She discussed the process of grooming (isolation, psychological abuse and drug addictions) and branding as well. The presentation covered ways to recognize sex trafficking and resources that may be used if someone were to come into contact with anyone in this industry.

Questions/Comments: A question was asked: Are there extra precautions being taken for the Super Bowl weekend? Ms. Groover-Skipper explained that there are partnerships between companies like Uber and Air BNB to help raise awareness.

c. **Tim Buehner, Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), on Florida Medicaid**

The Agency for Health Care Administration representative wanted to comment on recommendations and other aspects of the 2020 Annual Report to highlight some aspects of the Medicaid program and better inform people about how limitations and programs operate. Medicaid serves over 4 million of Florida's most vulnerable, and this number continues to grow during COVID-19. The Agency enacted a number of flexibilities during COVID-19 to maintain/ensure access to medical/behavioral services. The first recommendation is that state agencies and private payers permanently adopt COVID-19 flexibilities. One recommendation is permanently adopting the ability to waive prior authorization requirements and service limits for all behavioral health services. Another recommendation is to expand and maintain coverage of telehealth services to include telephone audio-only communications when being rendered by licensed psychiatrists. The next recommendation is that AHCA should report to the

legislature on the availability of Medicaid coverage. The final recommendation is that the state health agency health plans and commercial insurances remove prior authorization requirements for evidence-based medication assisted treatments.

Questions/Comments: Clarification was provided regarding the process at the end of a prior authorization time period—another prior authorization will need to be issued/renewed in order for the patient to continue with the medication/treatment.

4. **Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) Update (Broward County):** Laura Whiteman provided an OD2A update, addressing the following strategies:

Strategy 3: Implement Innovative Surveillance

This strategy aims to disseminate timely and actionable surveillance data. Efforts include working closely with the Broward Sheriff's office, working to hire a community educator and working to provide mini grants to 18 EMS agencies in the county to promote data collection and data sharing.

Strategy 4: Introduce Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs

This strategy involves increased measurable collaboration and communication, increased application of data to drive prevention and response activities between state and local efforts and increased linkages with other data sources and/or systems.

Strategy 5: Integration of State and Local Prevention and Response Efforts

This strategy involves increased local and state capacity for sustainable surveillance and prevention efforts, increased understanding of context, resources and needs in city/county/state, increased understanding of evidence-based scalable response approaches and increased focus on highest risk groups.

Strategy 6: Establish Linkages to Care

This strategy involves identifying systems-level strategies in healthcare, focusing on emergency departments and referring clients to services in outpatient settings.

Strategy 7: Providers and Health Systems Support

This strategy involves increasing provider awareness of recommended prescriber guidelines.

Strategy 8: Partnerships with Public Safety and First Responders Data

This strategy involves improved coordination of Public Safety and First Responder efforts and creating greater awareness of the opioid overdose epidemic and evidence-based approaches by public safety and first responder partners.

Strategy 9: Empower Individuals to Make Safer Choices

This strategy focuses on awareness of the risks of prescription and illicit opioids, and awareness of non-opioid medications and non-pharmacologic treatments among prescribers and other clinical care partners.

Strategy 10: Prevention Innovation Projects

This strategy involves increased capacity to collect and disseminate data from accidental overdose cases within one month of death.

5. Agency and Member Updates:

Rachel Kamoutsas, Office of the Attorney General

The Office of the Attorney General is focusing on raising awareness during Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Efforts include working with Tampa International Airport (pushing for awareness campaign signage in the airport) and pushing out resources that enable truck drivers to better

recognize trafficking. On the opioid front, the office joined 40 other attorneys general in asking for an update from the FDA in response to provision of the support act.

Maggie Agerton, Department of Corrections

On January 13, 2021, a budget request was presented to legislation which included 2 million recurring dollars for in-prison substance abuse treatment programs.

Annie White, Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)

The FDLE continues to monitor legislation to see how it effects the drug control mission.

Jeffrey Cece, Department of Children and Family Services

The most important development relates to news on federal appropriations, the federal 2021 appropriation bill COVID relief section (added supplemental funding). It appears Congress is going to double the amount, roughly an extra \$100 million, for the block grant. The scope of eligibility has expanded for opioid response grant funds. The State Opioid Response (SOR) grant is using funds to support the overdose prevention program.

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

The FLHSMV partnered with Attorney General Moody to improve outreach efforts. These efforts will come in two phases and will include involving multiple groups of people, including truck drivers.

MAJ Nate Dinger, Florida National Guard

Prevention programs are still active even though most students are at home. The Guard is still able to help with community agencies and other community groups.

Judge Steve Leifman, 11th Judicial Circuit of Florida

The circuit recently held a six-part educational program for judges and partners with experts from around the country. They also began the Champions Training Academy with judges that are on both their drug courts and problem-solving courts. The focus is for the courts to use evidence-based best practices. Some of their standards have been approved by the Florida Supreme Court, and they are receiving funding to ensure that all of their courts are prepared to deal with very serious issues.

Mark Fontaine, Florida Behavioral Health Association

Mr. Fontaine discussed the legislative session, flexibility in relation to COVID-19, working with the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the opioid summit which took place this past fall.

Peggy Sapp, Informed Families

Peggy Sapp discussed the idea that all opioid prescriptions include inserts from pharmacies. They continue their outreach to the public, decision makers and grass roots groups. They have advertised on 32 bus benches with drug-related information. In addition, they have sold masks with the slogan "Be happy, be drug free".

Dotti Groover-Skipper, HeartDance Foundation, Inc.

The 13th judicial circuit is trying to implement a human trafficking treatment court modeled after the veteran's treatment court. The Florida Recovery High School is a brand-new school that gives youth another opportunity to be clean and sober as they move on in life.

Doug Leonardo, Chrysalis Health

The continued use of telehealth as the primary way to deliver care was discussed, as most people are still unwilling to do face-to-face visits because of COVID-19.

6. Public Comment/Open Discussion:

Susan Williams with the Agency for Health Care Administrators (AHCA) spoke for Dr. Tim Buehner to clarify that any medications that are listed for prior authorization must be renewed by a doctor at the end of the authorization period.

Eric Mountain with the United States Attorney's Office wanted to thank the council for continuing to invite their office to participate as a guest, and he pledged their support.

11. Next Steps:

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, April 20, 2021.

A motion was entered to adjourn the meeting. The motion was carried.