

Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

July 19, 2022
8:30 am – 12:30 pm

Meeting Location:
4052 Bald Cypress Way, Conference Room 301
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Welcome/Introductions

Melissa Jordan, MS, MPH, State Surgeon General Designee, opened the Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council (Council) meeting. Ms. Jordan thanked all members of the Council, designated appointees, and other participants for their continued partnership in this critical work. Ms. Jordan asked that Nathan Dunn, MSA, Staff Liaison Designee, proceed with roll call.

The following members or designees were in attendance:

Melissa Jordan, MS, MPH, State Surgeon General Designee
Maggie Agerton for Ricky Dixon (Department of Corrections)
Joy Bennink for Eric Hall, Ed.D. (Department of Juvenile Justice)
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)
Elaina Cosentino for Representative Spencer Roach (Florida House of Representatives)
Dottie Groover-Skipper (Governor Appointee, Faith-Based Substance Abuse Treatment, HeartDance Foundation, Inc.)
Timothy Hay for Manny Diaz, Jr. (Department of Education)
Robert Heere for Senator Darryl Rouson (Florida Senate)
Gary Howze for Ashley Moody (Office of the Attorney General)
Major Bennett LaCour for COL John Steele (Department of Military Affairs)
Judge Steve Leifman (11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida)
John McClellan for Mark Glass (Florida Department of Law Enforcement)
Peggy Sapp (Governor Appointee: Substance Abuse Prevention, Informed Families)
Doug Simon for Chris Spencer (Governor's Office of Policy and Budget)
Kimberly Spence (Governor Appointee: Drug Enforcement, Keaton Corrections, Inc.)
Roaya Tyson (Governor Appointee, Expertise in Drug Enforcement and Substance Abuse Services, Gracepoint)
John Van Delinder, PhD (Governor Appointee: Faith-Based Substance Abuse Treatment – Sunshine State Association of Christian Schools)

Guests and Staff:

Grace Boran, Member of the Public
Kerri Bryan (Department of Health)
Shay Chapman (Department of Health)
Ryan Cox, Member of the Public
Nathan Dunn, MSA (Department of Health)
Jesseka Forbes, PharmD (Agency for Health Care Administration)
Aaron Gerson (Office of the State Courts Administrator)
Joanna Greene (Martin County Human Services)
Joe Anne Hart (Florida Dental)

Cynthia Henderson, Member of the Public
Alexandra Johnson (Florida Department of Law Enforcement)
Jennifer Johnson (Florida Behavioral Health Association)
Ramon Maury (Informed Families)
Cassandra Pasley, BSN, JD (Department of Health)
Ashley Peterson, Member of the Public
Danielle Rice (Florida Department of Children and Families)
Lori Reeves, MPH (Staff Liaison, Florida Department of Health)
Kenneth Schepke, MD, FAEMS, Deputy Secretary for Health (Department of Health)
Anna Simmons, MSW (Department of Health)
Ellen Snelling, MS (Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliance)
Stuart Waldo (Florida Department of Health)
Lauren Whiteman, MPH, CPH (Department of Health)
Jennifer Williams (Florida Department of Children and Families)

Opening Remarks

Ms. Jordan provided an overview of the meeting agenda and the presentation to follow.

Ms. Jordan reflected on the efforts within the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) related to the Council's work to address substance use in the state of Florida. Continued work on the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) and the Addiction Stabilization Centers (ASC) project has been added as a strategic objective in the Priority Area Workgroup (PAW) of Mental Well-being and Substance Abuse Prevention.

On July 8, 2022, FDOH issued a Public Health and Safety Alert regarding fentanyl overdoses. State agencies, including FDOH, Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), and Florida Department of Law Enforcement are working together to investigate and immediately address this public safety and health issue.

Business

1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 19, 2022:

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

2. Presentation:

Addiction Stabilization Centers – Kenneth A. Schepke, MD, FAEMS, Deputy Secretary for Health, Florida Department of Health

Dr. Kenneth Schepke provided an overview of the ASC project. Dr. Schepke shared personal experiences treating thousands of people with substance use disorders (SUD) and thanked the Council for their efforts to find answers for this widespread problem. Dr. Schepke's presentation provided an overview of how systems of care can be restructured to provide effective care including medication-assisted treatment (MAT). ASCs can remove barriers to care by concentrating resources and expertise into facilities that are staffed with addiction specialists and provide transitions for appropriate follow up and long-term care. ASCs can provide relief support to emergency departments (EDs) with patients transported directly to these facilities for treatment.

3. Discussion of 2022 Annual Report:

Nathan Dunn, Staff Liaison Designee, addressed the Council and provided an overview of the 2021 recommendations and requested input from the Council to be added to the 2022 Annual Report. The content of the report is a compilation of information from the members of the Council. The Council recommendations were addressed, and discussion followed.

Recommendation #1

Dottie Groover-Skipper reported that Recommendation #1 is complete with the appointment of Doug Simon as the Director of the Office of Drug Control.

Recommendation #2

Jesseka Forbes from the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) reported that many of the service flexibilities implemented during the pandemic have been extended through October of 2022, including the telehealth service options. Ms. Forbes will provide a comprehensive update to be included with the 2022 Annual Report. Recommendation #2 remains incomplete for 2022.

Recommendation #3

Melanie Brown-Woofter noted that workforce issues continue to be challenging for the mental health and SUD service areas, but efforts are underway to increase recruitment and retention. The Florida Behavioral Health Association is also exploring physician extenders to expand the clinical workforce. Progress is ongoing but recommendation remains incomplete for 2022.

Recommendation #4

Peggy Sapp provided an overview on the Red Ribbon Week campaign. Occurring every year in October, the campaign has widespread participation. Red Ribbon Week is accessible for all to participate in and increases visibility. Red Ribbon Week is an opportunity to collect large quantities of unused prescription drugs from homes. Ms. Sapp suggested expanding the recommendation to birth to 25-year old. Ms. Sapp discussed the importance of prevention along with intervention strategies. Progress has been made under Recommendation #4 but needs further discussion, including the consideration of a prevention sub-council.

Judge Steve Leifman suggested that messages be created on evidence-based practice to ensure good outcomes, that trauma-related issues that affect drug use among youth be addressed and add to the recommendation the need to increase screening among youth, particularly those with trauma issues. Recommendation #4 remains incomplete for 2022.

Recommendation #5

Peggy Sapp discussed the Alcohol Literacy Challenge™, which is a certified, brief, classroom-based program currently available in Florida, and the Red Ribbon Certified Schools program, which is recognized by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration as certified by science. Throughout the school year, four modules are completed together to help educate about healthy environments. The Red Ribbon Certified Schools program helps people create a positive school environment. Ms. Sapp suggested coordinating additional prevention education efforts through a statewide council, perhaps facilitated by the Office of Drug Control. Recommendation #5 remains incomplete for 2022.

Recommendation #6

The Council had no additional updates for Recommendation #6, remains incomplete for 2022.

Recommendation #7

Peggy Sapp suggested creating a single database with one QR code that can be used to locate medication disposal drop boxes within communities. Ms. Sapp suggested a statewide Lock Your Meds campaign in partnership with pharmacies and retailers. Recommendation #7 remains incomplete for 2022.

Recommendation #8

During the last session, the legislature appropriated \$600,000 to provide education at two universities. The Council will confirm details on funding to determine if this action completes Recommendation #8.

Recommendation #9

Dottie Groover-Skipper provided an update on kratom which is known around the world for its stimulant effects and as an opioid substitute. The United States Drug Enforcement Administration includes kratom on its list of substances of concern, which are not illegal but that pose risks to persons who abuse them. Kratom is not federally regulated, and quality is not measured or reinforced. Kratom is banned in some states and municipalities, others have imposed age restrictions, and Sarasota County in Florida banned kratom in 2014. Kratom is recognized as an addiction drug with no medicinal benefits. Florida has seen several efforts to pass legislation around kratom in recent years, but all bills have failed. Ms. Groover-Skipper suggested changing the recommendation to regulate any kratom, without regard to specific derivatives. A full ban might prevent youth from obtaining kratom and suffering potential physical or criminal repercussions. FDOH has a section on kratom at [kratom-final-faq-2021.pdf \(floridahealth.gov\)](#). Kratom is widely available in smoke shops and other retail facilities and is prominently advertised.

There are concerns about quality control and regulation versus a complete ban. Banning something entirely is not always the most efficient way to move forward and could substantially increase felony charges for possession and use of kratom. Jeffrey Cece spoke against a full ban, due to the potential unintended consequences of criminalizing possession of kratom. Council members advocated for additional research to examine the number of deaths from kratom to develop an evidence-supported recommendation for moving forward. Recommendation #9 remains incomplete for 2022.

Recommendation #10

Jeffrey Cece provided an update on expanding access to naloxone to prevent deaths from overdose. DCF is implementing a naloxone saturation plan. The first tier would focus on distribution at syringe exchange programs, and the second tier would distribute at EDs and floor units. DCF is expecting over 20,000 kits to be distributed through hospital EDs, and an additional 30,000 kits through hospital floor units. The goal is to get kits in the hands of Floridians rather than a prescription, which can be difficult and expensive to fill. A DCF lead workgroup of state level partners has identified all barriers that have prevented hospitals from participating. DCF will also focus on Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC). Currently, there are 10 out of 45 FQHCs participating, which have distributed 4,000 kits so far. Since the inception of the program in 2017, DCF has distributed over 340,000 kits into the community, and more than 21,000 people have reported a life was saved. In addition to the program funded through State Opioid Response dollars via DCF, the state of Florida funds the Helping Emergency Responders Obtain Support (HEROS) program to distribute kits through first responders. Recommendation #10 is complete for 2022.

A question was asked regarding the Council's role on weighing in on how opioid settlement dollars should be distributed in Florida. Mr. Cece recommended that there might be a role for the Council to provide guidelines for the program, however, the settlement itself already provided guidelines. The settlement also establishes a task force to oversee distribution of funds.

Recommendation #11

There is legislation that enables counties and cities to implement syringe exchange programs. Recommendation #11 is complete for 2022.

Recommendation #12

One of the key obstacles to building effective bridge programs is ED providers not starting a course of MAT if there is no community mental health service that will manage the patient after hospital discharge. FDOH is working to institutionalize the model of ASCs and is preparing to roll out the statewide program in 12 pilot counties. There are strong examples in several counties with partnerships between EDs and managing entities and there are 15 certified community behavioral health programs. Housing and other social determinants must be addressed in the treatment process and are included in the comprehensive models

in collaboration with community partners. Some of the Medicaid health plans are addressing housing for their enrolled members. Recommendation #12 will continue for 2022.

Recommendation #13

Nathan Dunn indicated that information regarding Addiction Medicine Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs had previously been provided by Dr. Joan St. Onge, who served on the GME workgroup of the Council of Florida Medical School Deans. Although no new information had been received regarding fellowships, the American College of Academic Addiction Medicine indicated three ongoing programs in Florida: HCA Healthcare/University of South Florida Morsani College of Medicine GME in Brandon, the University of Florida Addiction Medicine Fellowship Program in Gainesville, and the Larkin Community Hospital Palm Springs Campus Addiction Medicine Program in Hialeah. Florida’s physician survey results indicate that 33 more physicians identified a specialty in Addiction Medicine since last year, bringing the total number to 168. Physicians completing the survey practice in the areas of Anesthesiology, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Neurology and Psychiatry. Recommendation #13 continues for 2022.

Recommendation #14

Some legislation was passed in 2022, but the Council will need more information.

Recommendation #15

Jesseka Forbes from AHCA discussed that access to MAT therapy has been expanded. Products are available through an automated process that looks for a diagnosis of opioid use disorder or SUD, and when present, Medicaid will pay. However, after a period of time, the drug may need to be authorized again.

Recommendation #16

Recommendation #16 has been carried forward for several years with no action to date.

Recommendation #17

DCF continues to support the Recovery Oriented System of Care. This system also provides training on naloxone administration. Recommendation #17 is largely complete.

Recommendation #18

The Council had no additional updates for Recommendation #18.

Recommendation #19

Major legislation introduced last year related to Recommendation #19 made it through several committees and is being refiled for 2023 with some adjustments. Judge Leifman will share bill language with the group once it is out of bill drafting and there is a bill number. The bill is recommending changes to expand Baker Act criteria a small amount to better enable treatment after Baker Act implementation. The bill will also merge processes to provide inpatient or outpatient treatment for both Baker and Marchman Acts ensuring accessibility for individuals to get assistance and ensure continuity of care. Recommendation #19 continues for 2022.

Recommendation #20

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline went into effect July 2022, but full implementation could take decades. Florida needs legislation to fund 988 to enable implementation throughout the entire state. Recommendation #20 continues for 2022.

4. Agency and Member Updates:

Doug Simon, Governor’s Office of Policy and Budget

The Governor’s Office of Policy and Budget had no additional updates for the Council.

Gary Howze, Office of the Attorney General

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

John McClellan, Florida Department of Law Enforcement

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement is working with teams to use the HEROS grant to support distribution of naloxone and to encourage family members of people at risk to use naloxone.

Jeffrey Cece, Department of Children and Families

DCF is utilizing all available tools to work in partnership to develop ASCs, low barrier access models to buprenorphine, and other efforts to work more effectively across agencies.

Maggie Agerton, Department of Corrections

The Department of Corrections is working with DCF to get naloxone in the hands of probation officers and into prisons, as well as getting treatment started in prison. Ms. Agerton proposed inviting Dr. Schepke to present to staff on the science of this approach and said the Department of Corrections is working to implement these changes over the next year.

Joy Bennink, Department of Juvenile Justice

The Department of Juvenile Justice is working in collaboration with the HEROS program to get naloxone into all 21 juvenile detention centers as well as residential commitment programs.

Timothy Hay, Department of Education

The Department of Education had no additional updates for the Council.

Major Bennett LaCour, Department of Military Affairs

The National Guard remains committed to working with coalition partners like DCF and the Department of Education as a no-cost resource to the state. Major Bennett LaCour stated that National Guard programs are primarily federally funded.

Robert Heere, Senator Rouson's Office

Robert Heere reported that House Bill 5013 passed through the budget process and created the Opioid Settlement Trust Fund for depositing settlement funds. There is currently no budget authority, but the bill requires the trust fund to be subdivided as outlined in the bill and dispersed or transferred to abate the opioid epidemic. Mr. Heere noted that there are no more specific guidelines as of the morning of the meeting.

Elaina Cosentino, Representative Roach's Office

Representative Roach's office had no additional updates for the Council.

Judge Steve Leifman, 11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida

Judge Steve Leifman stated that the Supreme Court system is working to ensure that courts are using evidence-based practices and tying practices to funding. Problem-solving courts will be required to be certified to ensure the judges are appropriately trained, and staff are using best practices. Judge Leifman volunteered to present on this at a future meeting. Construction is coming to completion in Miami-Dade County on a new mental health diversion facility that will be a medical home incorporating crisis stabilization for mental health and addiction, job skills training, health clinics, courtrooms, trauma services, housing and more.

Peggy Sapp, Informed Families

Informed Families is assembling physical and social media toolkits for Family Day, the 4th Monday of September, and the Red Ribbon Campaign week is October 23-31, 2022. The campaign theme of “Celebrate Life” was designed by students.

Melanie Brown-Woofter, Florida Behavioral Health Association

Melanie Brown-Woofter noted that the Florida Behavioral Health Association currently partners with many of the agencies represented on the Council and is available for continued partnership when needed.

Dottie Groover-Skipper, HeartDance Foundation, Inc.

HeartDance Foundation, Inc. continues supporting First Lady Casey DeSantis’ campaign, “The Facts, Your Future.” The Hillsborough County Drug Alliance continues work on awareness, along with other alliance partners throughout the state. Statewide campaigns and efforts are essential in connecting people who need treatment with evidence-based programs.

Kimberly Spence, Keeton Corrections, Inc.

Keeton Corrections, Inc. had no additional updates for the Council.

Roaya Tyson, Gracepoint

Roaya Tyson stated that workforce issues continue to be a challenge. Gracepoint is encountering difficulties to find nursing and other staff, and the issue has become critical for community substance use and behavioral health providers throughout the state.

John Van Delinder, Sunshine State Association of Christian Schools

The Sunshine State Association of Christian Schools had no additional updates for the Council.

Jesseka Forbes, Agency for Health Care Administration

Jesseka Forbes updated that there is a new naloxone product called Kloxxado® that provides 8mg instead of 4mg of naloxone for patients who may need a higher dosage due to fentanyl exposure. Kloxxado® has been added to the Florida Medicaid Preferred Drug List effective July 1, 2022.

5. Public Comments/Open Discussion:

No public comments received.

6. Adjournment:

For closing items, Ms. Jordan reminded the Council that written updates on current recommendations, language for new recommendations, and background information to support new recommendations should be submitted to Lori Reeves no later than September 1, 2022, to be incorporated into the draft of the 2022 Annual Report for review at the October 11, 2022, meeting.

A motion was entered to adjourn. Motion carried with no opposition. Meeting was adjourned at 11:11 am.

Additional Department of Health Staff in Attendance:

Avalon Adams-Thames, DrPH, MPH

Mohammad Alak, MPH

Williams Barrs

Brandie Bockwoldt, MPH

Suzanne Bring, MA

Marianne Dean, MS

Steven Diaz, MSW, RSWI

Reem El-ankar, MPH

Courtney Ellis, MPH, BSN, RN
Amanda Evans, MPH
Carol Ferranti, MAEM
Helena Girouard
Samantha Goodfellow
AnnJeanette Haro
Carmen Hernandez, MHA, CWWPM, CWWS, TTS
Todd Hockert, BS, NRP
Heather Huffman, MS, RDN, LD/N, IBCLC
Natalie Kenton, MBA
Adrian Kinkead, MPH
Nina Mattei, MS, APR, FPEN
Kimberly Pace
Mark Pagnotto, MPH, CPH
Houston Park
Kristin Peacock
Patricia Pearce
Vanessa Phillips
Mary Porter
Concha Prieto, MPH
Diana Prieto, MPH, CPH
Daniel Rocha, MPH
Rachael Shaw, MPH
Alexandria Stevenson, MPH
Kayla Thomas
LaTerica Thomas
Carolynn Wilhite, CAPM, PMP
Mary Zeni, ScD