

Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

April 19, 2022
8:30 am – 12:30 pm

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

Welcome/Introductions

Joseph A. Ladapo, MD, PhD, State Surgeon General, opened the Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council (Council) meeting. Dr. Ladapo thanked all members of the Council, designated appointees, and other participants for their continued partnership in this critical work and the meeting was opened for introductions with agency affiliations in lieu of a formal roll call.

The following members or designees were in attendance:

Joseph A. Ladapo, MD, PhD, State Surgeon General
Maggie Agerton for Ricky Dixon (Department of Corrections)
Jeffery Cece, MS, CPM for Shevaun Harris (Department of Children and Families)
Major Nathan Dinger for COL John Steele (Department of Military Affairs)
Dottie Grover-Skipper (Governor Appointee, Faith-Based Substance Abuse Treatment, HeartDance Foundation, Inc.)
Timothy Hay for Richard Corcoran (Department of Education)
Gary Howze for Ashley Moody (Office of the Attorney General)
Jennifer Johnson for Mark P. Fontaine (Governor Appointee: Substance Abuse Treatment, Florida Behavioral Health Association)
Judge Steve Leifman (11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida)
John McClellan for Rick Swearingen (Florida Department of Law Enforcement)
Lt. Christopher Proctor for COL Gene Spaulding (Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles)
Peggy Sapp (Governor Appointee: Substance Abuse Prevention, Informed Families)
Tracy Shelby, PhD for Eric Hall, Ed.D. (Department of Juvenile Justice)
Doug Simon for Chris Spencer (Governor's Office of Policy and Budget)
Roaya Tyson (Governor Appointee, Expertise in Drug Enforcement and Substance Abuse Services, Gracepoint)

Guests and Staff:

Brittany Blasko (Department of Health)
David Bullard (Florida Department of Law Enforcement)
Melanie Castro (Department of Children and Families)
P.J. Duncan (Florida Department of Education)
Nathan Dunn, MSA (Department of Health)
Jesseka Forbes (Agency for Health Care Administration)
Aaron Gerson (Office of the State Courts Administrator)
Cindy Huffman (Florida Department of Education)
Beth Jones (Agency for Health Care Administration)
Melissa Jordan, MS, MPH (Department of Health)
Natalie Kenton, MBA (Department of Health)
Ramon Maury (Informed Families)
Cassandra Pasley, BSN, JD (Department of Health)

Rebecca Poston, BPharm, MHL, FCCM (Department of Health)
Lori Reeves, MPH, Staff Liaison (Department of Health)
Kelly Rogers (Department of Health)
Estefania Rubio (University of South Florida)
William Sappenfield, MD, MPH (University of South Florida)
Kenneth Scheppeke, MD, FAEMS, Deputy Secretary for Health (Department of Health)
Anna Simmons, MSW (Department of Health)
Rita Smith, DNP, MPH, APRN, NP-C (Department of Juvenile Justice)
Ellen Snelling, MS (Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliance)
Stuart Waldo (Florida Department of Health)
Jennifer Wenhold (Department of Health)
Lauren Whiteman, MPH, CPH (Department of Health)
Troy Wolfer (Florida Department of Law Enforcement)

Opening Remarks

Dr. Ladapo 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. Work continues on the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) and the implementation of Priority Area Workgroups (PAWs), the Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) grant program, the Helping Emergency Responders Obtain Support (HEROS) program, and the partnership with the Florida Perinatal Quality Collaborative (FPQC) to reduce neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) statewide.

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

Business

1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 25, 2022:

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

2. Presentations:

a. Legislative Updates and Emerging Drug Threats – Doug Simon, Office of Drug Control Director, and Ellen Snelling, MS, Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliance Board Chair

Doug Simon presented an update on recent legislation related to controlled substances, mental health, and substance use disorder (SUD) via Senate Bill 282, which adds coverage for peer specialists. Mr. Simon reviewed Senate Bill 95 (SB95) which adds methamphetamine to the list of controlled substances and enhances penalties for the sale of a controlled substance within 1000 feet of a treatment center. SB95 increases mandatory minimum sentences for selling fentanyl or fentanyl analogs. SB95 had not been signed by the Governor at the time of the Council's meeting.

Ellen Snelling, MS, Board Chair of the Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliance discussed the emerging drug threat of delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), hemp-derived CBD products being sold throughout the state with lack of restrictions. Delta-8 THC products can be sold in packages nearly identical to popular candies, making them especially appealing and dangerous for children. Judge Steve Leifman entered a motion for the State Surgeon General to review the issue. Motion carried with no opposition.

b. Substance Abuse Education Resources – Cindy Huffman, Director of Healthy Schools, Bureau of Standards and Instructional Support, Florida Department of Education

Cindy Huffman presented on standards and instructional support for comprehensive health education that includes substance use and abuse education. Ms. Huffman demonstrated the Florida Required Instruction Portal at www.flrequiredinstruction.org. Educators, stakeholders, and the public can access standards for substance use and abuse education through the portal. Ms. Huffman reviewed the school assembly's toolkit for "The Facts. Your Future." The website www.thefactsyourfuture.org includes social

media tools, and a toolkit on resiliency to help teachers with the development of resilient and healthy students.

- c. **Florida’s Fentanyl Crisis: Law Enforcement Efforts and Overdose Deaths** – Inspector David Bullard, Statewide DARE Coordinator, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and Troy Wolfer, Crime Laboratory Analyst and Technical Leader, Florida Department of Law Enforcement
Inspector Bullard presented on updates to the Drug and Alcohol Awareness Education (DARE) curriculum to incorporate new information on the dangers related to emerging drugs as well as fentanyl. Mr. Wolfer discussed the chemistry of an emerging class of opioids nitazenes. Nitazenes, first identified in seized drugs in Florida in May of 2020, have been increasing in prevalence. Nitazenes are currently regulated as drugs that are substantially similar to fentanyl but can be 100 to 1000 times more potent than morphine, fentanyl is 30-100 times more potent than morphine.
- d. **Maternal Opioid Recovery Effort (MORE)** – William Sappenfield, MD, MPH, CPH, Florida Perinatal Quality Collaborative Director
Dr. Sappenfield presented an overview of the Maternal Opioid Recovery Effort (MORE), a hospital quality improvement initiative designed to address needs of pregnant women with SUD. Dr. Sappenfield shared data demonstrating rates of NAS in infants are leveling out, but associated changes are probably due to improvements in how newborns are diagnosed and treated, rather than a true decline in the total number of newborns exposed to opioids during pregnancy.

3. 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 updated that the opioid-related civil litigation cases have settled, apart from Walgreens. Walgreens is the twelfth and final defendant in the Office of the Attorney General’s cases against opioid distributors. As of the morning of the Council meeting, the trial is ongoing and being litigated by the Attorney General’s office with an expected positive outcome. Approximately \$3 billion has been secured by Florida in settlements and funds will be used for abatement, prevention, treatment, and recovery. A large majority of the funds are planned for distribution directly to counties and cities through Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) grants.

John McClellan, Florida Department of Law Enforcement

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) presented an overview of the agency’s role in providing investigative support to local, state, and federal law enforcement partners from headquarters in Tallahassee, Florida, and in seven regional operations centers (ROCs) around the state. ROCs are located in Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Orlando, Tampa Bay, Ft. Myers, and Miami. Within each ROC is a designated organized crime squad that specializes in illegal drug investigations and the squad works with law enforcement agencies in their Area of Responsibility (AOR) to combat local drug trafficking organizations. Also imbedded in the organized crime squads are FDLE special agents who are deputized as United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Task Force Officers (TFOs). TFOs have the same federal jurisdiction as DEA special agents to investigate international cartels that are responsible for the surging domestic supply of fentanyl.

FDLE remains committed to combatting the problem of illicit narcotics throughout the state, and welcome the opportunity to partner with state, federal, and local agencies to provide investigative, analytical, and crime lab assistance.

Timothy Hay, Florida Department of Education

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

Jeffrey Cece, Department of Children and Families

DCF's drug prevention activities continue to routinely reach large numbers of Floridians. During calendar year 2019, the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant set-aside funds to support (in total or in part) programs and strategies that reached 757,270 people. Those persons received individual-based prevention programming, including curricula-based skill-building programs for both youth and parents. Additionally, over 20 million people received population-based prevention programs and strategies (e.g., environmental strategies, one-time events like school assemblies, and the distribution of materials through health fairs).

From September of 2020 to April of 2022, DCF's prevention providers deployed State Opioid Response (SOR) grant-funded media campaigns, generating nearly 74 million media impressions. The media campaign provided information and strategies for safely using, storing, and disposing of prescription opioids and stimulants. The campaign included video, audio, and print ads that communities utilize to inform the public and begin conversations about prescription medication misuse and abuse.

DCF continues to collaborate with FDOH on the SHIP PAW on mental well-being and substance abuse prevention objectives. Focus areas include reducing deaths caused by opioid overdose and increasing the number of formal addiction stabilization centers statewide.

Jeffrey Cece recommends the need to focus on low-barrier access to antidotes for overdoses (naloxone) and medications for opioid use disorders (particularly buprenorphine). DCF's Overdose Prevention Program (OPP) aims to reduce opioid overdose deaths by distributing naloxone. Approximately 260 providers currently enrolled in the OPP have distributed 273,713 naloxone kits since 2016, with 16,795 rescues or reversals being self-reported, representing a fraction of the lives saved by this program.

DCF, FDOH, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), the Florida Hospital Association, and pharmacy representatives, among others, are part of an ad-hoc workgroup developing plans and protocols to expand access to naloxone (and buprenorphine) in emergency departments prior to discharge. This highly targeted naloxone distribution is in development as a priority going forward to increase the number of rescues and reversals.

Council member Major Nathan Dinger inquired regarding outcomes for Floridians if grant funds cease. Kenneth Schepke, MD, FAEMS, Deputy Secretary for Health clarified that addiction differs from dependence. Many chronic disease patients are dependent on medication and may encounter negative health consequences if treatment stopped, but do not have negative societal behaviors from treatment, as would occur in addiction. This is true for methadone and buprenorphine as well.

Maggie Agerton, Department of Corrections

The Department of Corrections had no updates for the Council.

Tracy Shelby, Department of Juvenile Justice

Rita Smith, DNP, MPH, APRN, NP-C is the new Chief Medical Officer for the Department of Juvenile Justice.

Lt. Christopher Porter, Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles has completed statewide distribution of naloxone, totaling approximately 2500 doses across the state. Lt. Christopher Porter updated that efforts continue daily to combat the emerging drug issues that were discussed today, and Lt. Porter stated that he would be happy to advise any members with questions.

Major Nathan Dinger, Department of Military Affairs

Major Nathan Dinger offered a suggestion regarding section 397.333, Florida Statutes, which specifies the Council shall submit a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 1 of each year, containing a summary of the Council's work during that year and the recommendations for the succeeding year. Interim reports may be submitted at the discretion of the chairperson of the Council.

Major Dinger suggested that the Council publish the report earlier or bi-annually to meet the timelines of all legislative bill submissions. Many bills are submitted as early as July and August. If the Council submits an interim report in June, prior to the submission of bills, the Council increases the opportunity to impact legislators before session begins.

Judge Steve Leifman, 11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida

Judge Steve Leifman updated that work continues on standards for problem-solving courts. In addition, Judge Leifman will be participating in the regional Conference of Chief Justices on making structural changes to help courts do a better job of serving people with substance use and mental illness.

Peggy Sapp, Informed Families

Peggy Sapp provided an overview of events that may be of relevance to the Council.

- **Family Day** (September 26, 2022) – Emphasizes regular family activities (such as eating dinner together) to encourage parent-child communication.
- **Red Ribbon Week** (October 23 – 31, 2022) – The oldest and largest drug prevention campaign is an ideal way for people and communities to take a visible stand against drugs.
- **Lock Your Meds** (January and February 2023) – Asks parents to secure medications, take inventory of medicine cabinets, safely dispose of unused medication, and spread the word to family and friends.
- **Safe Homes, Smart Parties** (March and April 2023) – Helps adults be aware and set firm guidelines surrounding acceptable choices and behaviors, especially during times when socializing peaks.

These four events provide year-round prevention activities and education focusing on the risks, protective factors, and prevailing drug trends. Drug trends change, but by focusing on protective factors for family, school, and community, when the next drug trend emerges, people will be prepared to respond appropriately. Ms. Sapp provided an infographic, to be added to the public book, and encouraged council members and guests to visit <https://www.informedfamilies.org/> for more information.

Jennifer Johnson, Florida Behavioral Health Association

The Florida Behavioral Health Association (FBHA) represents many of the mental and substance abuse agencies across the state. The SHIP objectives were approved at the end of March 2022, and are now in the process of developing activities, focusing on areas such as reducing opioid-related deaths around the state. Agencies interested in being involved with the SHIP may contact Lori Reeves, MPH, Staff Liaison. The SHIP ensures all appropriate partners are involved in the development and implementation of the PAWs.

Jennifer Johnson updated that the FBHA Conference will be held in August. This large conference hosts a diverse group of participants. The conference is occurring in Orlando and registration is open at <https://web.cvent.com/event/ceb9abd0-b7b6-432f-ada1-06472f3ae328/summary>.

FBHA is also assisting with administering opioid settlement dollars in partnership with DCF.

Dottie Grover-Skipper, HeartDance Foundation, Inc.

Dottie Grover-Skipper had the honor of standing with Governor DeSantis and First Lady DeSantis as the “The Facts. Your Future.” program was unveiled to schools. Ms. Grover-Skipper spoke as the parent of an adult child in recovery, discussed work in rolling out these programs in schools, and described the partnership efforts to facilitate a tremendous number of programs in all areas of substance use and addiction. HeartDance Foundation, Inc. is also working to secure and facilitate the “Drug Take Back Day” on April 30, 2022.

A new high school, Victory High School, enrolls students who have substance use disorders, and is graduating a first class this year in Pasco County.

Jesseka Forbes, Agency for Health Care Administration

AHCA has increased the amount of Narcan® a Medicaid patient can receive to four sprays (two kits) per 365 days.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has drafted an update to the prescribing guidelines from 2016 to ensure patients have access to safer, more effective treatment while also reducing SUD and overdose. The guidelines were reviewed, and it was determined that there is no effect on Florida Medicaid pharmacy policies at this time. A draft of the 2022 guidelines can be viewed at <https://www.regulations.gov/document/CDC-2022-0024-0002>.

4. Public Comments/Open Discussion:

No public comments received.

Lori Reeves, Staff Liaison, reminded the Council to review and revise the 2022 Annual Report. Following the meeting, materials will be distributed to each Council member to begin drafting proposed updates. The remaining Council meetings for 2022 will be held on July 19 and October 11, 2022.

5. Adjournment:

A motion was entered to adjourn. Motion carried with no opposition. Meeting was adjourned at 11:46 am.