

Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

August 24, 2023

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams:

<http://floridahealth.gov/DPACMeeting>

Or call in (audio only): (850) 792-1375

Phone Conference ID: 411 239 429#

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 Shay Holloway, BSN, MBA, to proceed with the introduction of new members and roll call.

Newly Appointed Members

The following members were appointed by Governor Ron Desantis on June 29, 2023.

Melanie Brown-Woofter is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Florida Council for Community Mental Health. She is the Immediate Past President of the Tallahassee Kiwanis Club and a current member of the National Council for Behavioral Health. Ms. Brown-Woofter earned her bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Florida.

Sheriff Chad Chronister is the Hillsborough County Sheriff. He was the Vice Chair of the Hillsborough County Public Safety Coordinating Council and the Criminal Justice Subcommittee Chair of the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking. Sheriff Chronister earned his bachelor's degree and master's degree from Saint Leo University.

Sheriff Peyton Grinnell is the Lake County Sheriff. He is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps. He serves on the Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission and the Lake-Sumter State College Foundation Board of Directors. Sheriff Grinnell earned his bachelor's degree in organizational management from Warner Southern College.

Dean Inserra is the Founding and Lead Pastor of City Church Tallahassee. He is an Executive Committee Member of the Southern Baptist Convention and previously served on the Florida Baptist Association Board of Trustees. Inserra earned his bachelor's degree in biblical studies from Liberty University and his master's degree in theological studies from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Rabbi Meir Kessler is the Director of the Jewish Recovery Center and a Chaplain at Caron Renaissance. He has dedicated almost 20 years to advocating on behalf of recovering addicts and addicts in need of treatment. Rabbi Kessler earned his Rabbinical Ordination from Central Yeshivat Tomchei Temimim Kfar Chabad.

Sheriff Chris Nocco is the Pasco County Sheriff. He is a member of the United States Department of Homeland Security's Advisory Council and the Florida Human Trafficking Task Force. He previously served on Florida's Constitutional Revision Commission. Sheriff Nocco earned his bachelor's degree in criminal justice and his master's degree in public administration from the University of Delaware.

The following members or designees were in attendance:

Joseph A. Ladapo, MD, PhD, State Surgeon General
Joe Spataro for Ashley Moody (Office of the Attorney General)
John McClellan for Mark Glass (Department of Law Enforcement)
Jeffrey Cece, MS, CPM for Shevaun Harris (Department of Children and Families)
Maggie Agerton for Ricky Dixon (Department of Corrections)
Tracy Shelby for Eric Hall, Ed.D. (Department of Juvenile Justice)
Timothy Hay for Manny Diaz, Jr. (Department of Education)
Captain Derrick Rahming for Dave Kerner (Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles)
Captain Jordan Jerris for Major General James Eifert (Department of Military Affairs)
Doug Simon (Governor's Office of Policy and Budget)
Sheriff Peyton Grinnell (Governor Appointee: Drug Enforcement, Lake County Sheriff's Office)
Peggy Sapp (Governor Appointee: Substance Abuse Prevention, Informed Families)
Melanie Brown-Woofter (Governor Appointee: Substance Abuse Treatment, Florida Behavioral Health Association)
Rabbi Meir Kessler (Governor Appointee: Faith-Based Substance Abuse Treatment, Jewish Recovery Center, and Caron Renaissance)
Dean Inserra (Governor Appointee: Faith-Based Substance Abuse Treatment, City Church Tallahassee)
Sheriff Chad Chronister (Governor Appointee: Expertise in Drug Enforcement and Substance Abuse Programs and Services, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office)
Sheriff Chris Nocco (Governor Appointee: Expertise in Drug Enforcement and Substance Abuse Services, Pasco Sheriff's Office)
Nicholas Carper for Representative Spencer Roach (Florida House of Representatives)
Aaron Gerson for Judge Steve Leifman (11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida)

Guests and Staff:

Shay Holloway, BSN, MBA (Florida Department of Health)
Jon Conley (Florida Department of Health)
Ashley Conrad (Florida Department of Health)
Maggie Dilger (Florida Department of Health)
Jesseka Forbes, PharmD (Agency for Health Care Administration)
Melissa Jordan, MS, MPH (Florida Department of Health)
Brett Kirkland, PhD (Florida Department of Law Enforcement)
Beth Labasky (Informed Families)
Ramon Maury (Informed Families)
Shelby Meaders (Guest)
Bob Minotti (Fentanyl Fathers)
Megan Neel (Florida Department of Law Enforcement)
Anna Simmons (Florida Department of Health)
Amy Vanness (Florida Department of Corrections)
Stuart Waldo (Florida Department of Health)
Jennifer Williams (Florida Department of Children and Families)

Opening Remarks

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

August 31 is International Overdose Awareness Day followed by National Recovery Month in September. Dr. Ladapo spoke about the Coordinated Opioid Recovery (CORE) network, which focuses on sustained recovery. This model, originally piloted in Palm Beach County, reduced overdose rates to zero percent among patients after two years of care.

During its first year, the initial 12 CORE network counties: emergency medical providers connected 25,000 overdose patients to long-term recovery; nearly 550,000 services were provided that support patients' overall sustainable long-term recovery, including disease treatment, dental care, primary care, psychiatric evaluation, and maternal care; and 52% of patients were placed on Medication-Assisted Treatment, or MAT, which has saved over 300 lives.

The momentum being achieved should continue through increased partner collaboration and additional resources. Addressing substance use disorder as a multifaceted, statewide approach will allow Florida to continue saving lives and support sustained recovery both now and in the long-term.

Business

1. Presentations:

a. Drug Identified in Deceased Persons by Florida Medical Examiners 2022 Interim Report – Brett Kirkland, PhD, Chief of Policy and Special Programs, Professionalism Division, Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

Dr. Kirkland provided an overview of the Drug Identified in Deceased Persons by Florida Medical Examiners 2022 Interim Report. Dr. Kirkland noted the following general statewide trends: total drug-related deaths decreased by 5% (373 less) when compared with the first six months of 2021; 3,969 opioid-related deaths were reported, which is a 7% decrease (313 less); 3,003 opioid-caused deaths were reported, which is a 10% decrease (333 less); 4,568 individuals (7% decrease, 344 less) died with one or more prescription drugs in their system; and 3,033 individuals (10% decrease, 349 less) died with at least one prescription drug in their system that was identified as the cause of death.

The drugs that caused the most deaths were fentanyl (2,744), cocaine (1,230), methamphetamine (1,088), ethyl alcohol (676), benzodiazepines (437, including 260 alprazolam deaths), amphetamine (418), fentanyl analogs (390), and oxycodone (223).

Deaths caused by fentanyl decreased by 9%. While fentanyl is a prescription drug, data indicate that at least 86.8% of fentanyl occurrences were illicitly obtained. Deaths caused by cocaine also decreased by 9%. Deaths caused by methamphetamines increased by 8%. Deaths caused by alprazolam (Xanax) decreased by 25%.

Morphine was the third most occurring opioid with 458 occurrences, a 28% decrease. Occurrences of heroin decreased by 58%, and deaths caused by heroin decreased by 62%. Occurrences of fentanyl analogs increased by 35%, and deaths caused by fentanyl analogs increased by 38%. Occurrences of oxycodone decreased by 5%, and deaths caused by oxycodone decreased by 10%. Occurrences of cathinones decreased by 21.5% (56 less), and deaths caused by cathinones decreased by 13% (22 less). The majority of cathinones reported were N, N-Dimethylpentylone, and its metabolite, pentylone. Occurrences of gabapentin decreased by 9.5%, and mitragynine decreased by 1%. There was a total of 13 occurrences of difluoroethane reported for January – June 2022. There was a total of 218 occurrences of xylazine.

b. Fentanyl Fathers – Bob Minotti, Co-founder and Director of Florida Program Development of Fentanyl Fathers

Fentanyl Fathers is a non-profit working to educate students and warn communities about the dangers of fentanyl and counterfeit pills through the lens of bereaved parents.

The organization's mission is to establish a world where no adolescent succumbs to fentanyl poisoning or overdose, by raising awareness about the dangers of fentanyl, counterfeit pills, and effective overdose response measures.

The group has partnered with several South Florida high schools and is hoping to expand its reach by creating partners around the state. In addition to explaining the dangers related to fentanyl and how a person's body reacts to the drug, the school presentation also explains what to do if someone is experiencing an overdose, the Good Samaritan Law, how to administer nasal naloxone, and avoiding fentanyl at all costs.

The presentation noted the following statistics: Seven out of 10 street drugs tested had a lethal amount of fentanyl; high school-aged overdose deaths rose by 114% between 2019 and 2021 (fentanyl accounted for 77% of those deaths); and among adolescent overdose decedents (ages 10 to 19) only 35% of them had previous opioid use history, yet 90% of deaths were opioid-related (1 in 4 had evidence of counterfeit pill involvement).

2. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 18, 2023:

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

3. Review and Updates of Recommendations 9–16:

Shay Holloway asked DPAC members to consider/evaluate if each recommendation should continue as the DPAC moves forward.

- a. Recommendation 9:** Shay Holloway further discussed CORE and the Department's partnership with the Florida Department of Children and Families to expand the program to 17 additional counties in the coming year using the opioid settlement dollars.

Melanie Brown-Woofter voiced her support of CORE and shared opioid use disorder treatment providers on the community side are participating in each county and are looking forward to expanding. She also noted that as the DPAC moves forward, there should be a discussion regarding drug classification and what to include as there are varying dosages of naloxone.

- b. Recommendation 10:** No updates provided for recommendation 10.

- c. Recommendation 11:** Melanie Brown-Woofter explained there is some disparity in the commercial plans, but there was a step in the right direction this last legislative session. She is looking forward to this good work continuing.

- d. Recommendation 12:** This will be the appropriate recommendation to discuss the strength of new drugs. The Agency for Health Care Administration noted that medications are still accessible with an automated prior authorization process, but most are still available on the Medicaid side.

- e. Recommendation 13:** No updates provided for recommendation 13.

- f. Recommendation 14:** Jeffrey Cece will provide written updates. Melanie Brown-Woofter voiced approval for the expansion of a Recovery-Oriented System of Care and the support the Florida Behavioral Health Association has received.

- g. Recommendation 15:** No updates provided for recommendation 15.

h. Recommendation 16: Maggie Agerton with the Florida Department of Corrections mentioned Judge Leifman is still moving forward with this initiative. There is also a workgroup within the Florida Department of Children and Families that is working on updating statute language. Jeffrey Cece is working on soliciting updates as well.

4. Agency and Member Updates:

Joe Spataro, Office of the Attorney General

Monday, August 21, was Fentanyl Awareness Day, and the Attorney General had a press conference to shine a light on the dangers of the drug.

John McClellan, Florida Department of Law Enforcement

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement updated the DPAC about the State Assistance for Fentanyl Eradication (S.A.F.E.) in Florida program, funded through a grant provided by the Florida Legislature in 2023. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement will oversee the program. Through S.A.F.E., state and local law enforcement can request reimbursement for overtime-related benefits, travel costs, and purchase of investigative supplies for any fentanyl-related law enforcement investigations.

Jeffrey Cece, Department of Children and Families

The Department of Children and Families updated the DPAC that team members attended the Florida Behavioral Health Association Conference. The last day included an opioid and stimulant summit where accomplishments under the State Opioid Response Grant were discussed. Nearly 15,000 individuals with opiate or stimulant use disorders are being served annually through treatment and recovery support services.

The Overdose Prevention Program has distributed more than 675,000 naloxone kits and is approaching nearly 36,000 reported reversals. There were 988 binders distributed for those interested.

Tracy Shelby, Department of Juvenile Justice

The Department of Juvenile Justice updated the DPAC that naloxone is in all 21 detention facilities and residential programs, and they have partnered with the Florida Department of Health. They are working on getting naloxone in all the juvenile assessment centers and Juvenile Probation Officer screening units. The last leg is to equip probation officers with naloxone.

Timothy Hay, Department of Education

The Department of Education discussed the positive work being done in our schools and within the DPAC to educate and empower responsible decisions.

Captain Derrick Rahming, Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles provided the update that the Florida Highway Patrol, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the Florida National Guard, and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection have been participating on a strike force at the direction of Governor DeSantis, named Operation Safe Highways. There have been six operations this year. In June of 2023 in Columbia County, there were 286 traffic stops. During these stops approximately 1,500 grams of fentanyl, 41 grams of cocaine, 1,000 grams of heroin, 4,000 grams of marijuana, and over 150 grams of methamphetamine were seized. A total of 42 arrests were made, consisting of both felony and misdemeanor charges. Additionally, three vehicles were seized, four guns were recovered, and eight undocumented immigrants were arrested during that week.

Captain Rahming noted the good work the Florida Department of Law Enforcement is doing through the relationships built to keep Florida safe.

Captain Jordan Jerris, Department of Military Affairs

The Florida Department of Military Affairs updated that Captain Jordan Jerris will move to a new assignment, and a new member will assume his DPAC role for the next year.

Melanie Brown-Woofter, Florida Behavioral Health Association

The Florida Behavioral Health Association hosted over 1,700 clinical treatment professionals to learn about innovations in behavioral health and how to treat substance use disorders while continuing to look at best practices.

The Florida Behavioral Health Association is working closely with the Department of Children and Families on continuing the State Opioid Response Grants and the opioid settlement funds that are coming through the Department of Children and Families to increase the services available for medication-assisted treatment and to keep individuals in recovery.

Addressing substance use disorders is a multi-pronged approach that includes preventative efforts, and a special thanks was given to the meeting presenters and law enforcement's efforts.

Doug Simon, Governor's Office of Policy and Budget

The Governor's Office of Policy and Budget commented on the Drug Identified in Deceased Persons by Florida Medical Examiners 2022 Interim Report. The numbers have been shared with the Governor's staff and a special thank you was given to the effort of the entire team (prevention groups, community coalitions, treatment and recovery programs, health professionals, law enforcement).

Sheriff Peyton Grinnell, Lake County Sheriff's Office

Lake County Sheriff's Office had no additional updates for DPAC.

Rabbi Meir Kessler, Jewish Recovery Center and Caron Renaissance

The Jewish Recovery Center and Caron Renaissance had no additional updates for DPAC.

Dean Inserra, City Church Tallahassee

City Church Tallahassee had no additional updates for DPAC.

Sheriff Chad Chronister, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office

Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office had no additional updates for DPAC.

Sheriff Chris Nocco, Pasco Sheriff's Office

Pasco Sheriff's Office had no additional updates for DPAC.

Nicholas Carper, The Florida Senate

The Florida Senate expressed gratitude to the work of the group at the grassroots level, especially those working with students and schools to ensure preventative measures are taken.

Aaron Gerson, 11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida

The 11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida had no additional updates for DPAC.

Jesseka Forbes, Agency for Health Care Administrative

The Agency for Health Care Administration had no additional updates for DPAC.

Maggie Agerton, Department of Corrections

The Florida Department of Corrections updated the DPAC that it has been working with the Department of Children and Families, and they are in the process of putting Narcan emergency kits in the hands of every probation officer. Currently, those kits are only in probation offices.

The Department of Corrections is also working with the Florida Behavioral Health Association to share medication-assisted treatment with probation staff. The Department of Corrections reported it is moving forward with a medication-assisted treatment pilot for two male facilities and one female facility.

The Department of Corrections has also conducted meetings with the Agency for Health Care Administration about possible grant opportunities.

The legislature provided the Department of Corrections an additional \$5 million for its substance-use treatment budget between in-prison and community base.

Peggy Sapp, Informed Families

Informed Families reminded the DPAC that Family Day is September 25, 2023, and the Red Ribbon Campaign is October 23–31, 2023. DPAC members are encouraged to find ways to participate and collaborate.

5. Public Comments/Open Discussion:

No public comments were received.

6. Adjournment:

For closing items, Dr. Ladapo reminded DPAC members that the DPAC 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 October 25, 2023.

A motion was entered to adjourn. The motion was carried with no opposition. The meeting was adjourned at 10:42 a.m.