

Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Advisory Council (AODAAC)

Meeting Minutes: Thursday February 11, 2021, 7:00- 9:00 pm

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Voting Members Present: Margaret Mattson, Ed “Bunny” Rich, Evelyn Saim-Lobos, Elyse Grossman, Larry Simmons, Dave Sidhu, Laura Mitchell, Cristina Rabadan, Nick Albaugh, Kabir Singh, Dave Sidhu, Cynthia Wright

Ex-Officio Members Present: Hardy Bennett, Corey Brandel, Gabriela Monzon-Reynolds, Robin Cody, Rose Burnhill, Man Cho, Kyle Potter, Celia Serkin & Ziva Azhdam of Mental Health Advisory Committee

Guests Present: Guests Present: Ali Taghavi Arise & Flourish, Sean Channer of Arise & Flourish, Elizabeth Leek of Narcotics Anonymous, Guest Speakers: Dr. Pamela Trangenstein, Macie Rush, Samantha Smith Karon

Call to order. Margaret Mattson, Chair, called the Microsoft Teams videoconference meeting to order at 7:08pm. Introductions followed. With 12 voting members, a quorum was present. AODAAC voting members voted and approved drafted November meeting minutes.

Speakers—Dr. Pamela Trangenstein, Macie Rush, & Samantha Smith Karon of UNC Chapel Hill:

****View the PowerPoint attachment for the full presentation.**

- Dr. Trangenstein asked the group about alcohol-related concerns. The theme of the responses was chipping away at restrictions that were once in place.
- The presenters discussed **alcohol outlet density** in Montgomery County. Alcohol outlets are places that sell alcohol to drink there or take home. Density is how many are in an area.
- A common narrative is that alcoholism is the problem of the person. But it is harder to make health-promoting decisions when the surrounding environment is stacked against a person.
- The higher the density of alcohol outlets, the more community harms. Studies in Boston, D.C., Baltimore, Atlanta, Sacramento, San Antonio, Seattle, etc. all point to this.
- Correlated community harms include: alcoholism, crime, underage drinking, traffic crashes, pedestrian injuries, suicides, hospital admissions, sexually transmitted disease, and violence.
- It is a health equity issue: there are more outlets in high-minority disinvested neighborhoods
- The prevention paradox: extreme drinkers cause the most harm on an individual level, but because there are so many more moderate drinkers than extreme drinkers, moderate drinkers cause more harm at a population level. Alcohol-related policies are effective to impact moderate drinker behaviors.
- Availability theory: more outlets drive competition among stores so they lower their prices. Price is the top determinant of alcohol use, and if more people drink more harms occur.
- Another issue is that bars release intoxicated patrons all at the same time at closing.
- In 2017 Maryland passed a bill to create agency stores which have not been put into place. This would be an extension of Montgomery County’s retail monopoly on alcohol, but would enable beer and wine stores to sell spirits if they complied with the no advertising, price control, less risky products, etc. stipulations. Montgomery County is the only one in

Maryland with a retail monopoly. Aside from taxes, state monopolies are most effective at reducing alcohol consumption.

- This simulation model serves as a feasibility study in real-time to see the consequences of opening a new store: <http://alist.nabca.org/scenarios/montgomeryToggle/index.html#>
- Literature shows that bundling significantly increases alcohol consumption. Bundling means being able to purchase alcohol while primarily buying other items like groceries or in pharmacies. A bill permitting alcohol sales in these locations could greatly increase consumption and harms.

Subcommittee Reports

Legislative

- Follow-up on testimony from last month's Legislative Retreat:
 - Submitted to House and Senate for SB0177 on flavored tobacco
 - Pending House hearing date for HB0235 on incarcerated women
 - Not submitted due to deadline for HB0088 on police officer EAP's
 - Not approved by County Interdepartmental Relations for HB0396 on places for safe consumption. County's rationale: "not approved because AODAAC would base its testimony on their interpretation of the legality of the bill, not on the subject matter expertise of the Committee"
- It is frustrating that testimony was written but not submitted on time. Corey has spoken with the legislative analyst who submits the testimony, who said there was a new system and more testimony than usual this year. She and Corey set up a system so that Corey will receive a screenshot whenever AODAAC testimony is formally submitted from now on.
- Dave will pursue independently submitting the testimony that was not approved.

Treatment & Recovery

- The Alcohol and Drugs 101 miniseries will be moved to September, which will allow it to be during Recovery Month.

Prevention

- Two people at MCPS are working on an optional plan for students after a first offense with substances at school to complete 4 sessions with a parent or guardian instead of being suspended. It can only be taken after a first offense; future incidents would result in suspensions that appear on their school record which goes to colleges they apply to. The exercises will include education on the cycle of addiction, refusal skills, etc. There would be a bus pass for them to participate when it is no longer virtual. They would like AODAAC input.
- Evelyn said The Landing, SASCA, and other programs already do a program for youth. Their location in the county determines which organization's program they are referred to.
- Sean from Arise & Flourish attended and discussed how students can receive SSL credit for watching 4 addiction-related videos. He shared a flyer on this to distribute.

Website Development

- Meetings will now be 2x per month. They set an achievable deadline to have significant changes made to the website by the end of the working year in June.

New Business

- There are 6 applicants for vacant AODAAC positions. Evelyn, Elyse, Hardy, and Corey will serve as the Interviewing Committee to interview candidates.
- Elyse discussed two letters that AODAAC may be interested in signing onto. One is against a bill called the Healthy Food Accountability Act of 2021, which would allow the sale of alcohol in grocery stores. Evelyn requested a vote, and Laura requested more data. Gabriella of Alcohol Beverage Services shared that in 55% of undercover visits, the person handing off to-go alcohol failed to ask for ID from a young-looking patron. The group decided to have interested individuals sign on instead since research and the letter were not available to review during the meeting.
- The Spring Forum will be held virtually via Zoom on Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 6pm. The focus will be access barriers to substance use and mental health services, and the 3 themes are equity, isolation, and the digital divide.
- AODAAC has representation on all 3 subcommittees of the Suicide Prevention Coalition: Youth, Adults, and Seniors.
- A board member proposed a change in the name of AODAAC to remove 'abuse'. Ideas included changing 'abuse' to 'addiction', which would allow the abbreviation to stay the same. Members voted to pursue a name change. Alternate names will be further discussed.
- Bunny and LaTonia shared that they attended a virtual Choices training on suicide prevention, which was held in New Hampshire.
- The MCPS Anti-Vaping event that was cancelled last year will be held on February 27 from 11:30AM-2PM. They will have a virtual tour of the C.O.P.E. trailer, only for the parents.

County and Agency Reports

Hardy Bennett

- Regina Morales was officially appointed Chief of Behavioral Health and Crisis Services, and with the addition of Dr. Santiago in December, the department now has its leadership positions filled. Additionally, Robin Cody was officially appointed Chief of Medical and Behavioral Health Services for the Department of Corrections (DOCR).
- County Executive Elrich's budget will be released in mid-March.
- Dr. Potter from Montgomery County Public Schools is a new AODAAC ex-officio member, as well as Celia Serkin and Ziva Azhdam of the Mental Health Advisory Committee.

Robin Cody

- Her former position of Deputy Chief is now open. There were 190 COVID tests conducted in the jails November through January. The current COVID count is 1 inmate who entered the jail with COVID. She anticipates 2 therapist postings in the jail, 1 for DHHS and 1 for DOCR. The medication assisted treatment (MAT) count is 5: 4 male and 1 female. 1 is on suboxone, and 4 are on methadone. She is participating in a presentation next week to the state on the first year of MAT, along with 3 other counties who have implemented it.

Man Cho

- The Board of License Commissioners is still conducting hearings virtually, meeting twice per month with the next meeting on February 18. They are open to the public.
- Of 2,265 inspections there were 65 violations, which is lower than last year. There has been an uptick in after-hours violations complying with the restriction on restaurants and bars selling alcohol after 10pm, and in bottle service violations at night clubs.
- Restaurants can now sell sealed containers for off-premise consumption when approved by the board.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05PM