

Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Advisory Council (AODAAC)

Meeting Minutes: Thursday October 8, 2020, 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, Cynthia Wright, Laura Mitchell, Anaum Khan, Cristina Rabadan, Katrina Busk

Ex-Officio Members Present: Hardy Bennett, Corey Brandel, Ruben Rosario, Ingrid Gonzalez, Gabriela Monzon-Reynolds, Robin White, Yasmeen Mabry

Ex-Officio Members Present: Hardy Bennett, Caryn “Corey” Brandel, Yasmeen Mabry, Ruben Rosario, Ingrid Gonzalez

Guests Present: Guests Present: Arlene Rosenbusch, Debbie Santini, Elizabeth Leek, Hayley Flores, Dr. Gerald Marti, Sean Channer of Arise & Flourish

Overview: The goal of the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Advisory Council (AODAAC) is to express the views of the community in the formulation and administration of alcohol and other drug abuse prevention and treatment services in Montgomery County. Members of the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Advisory Council serve as community representatives, who provide guidance to the County Executive and the County Council in identifying prevention and treatment needs and reviewing the county’s efforts in addressing those needs. The Advisory Council will make recommendations in support of, or to improve, current prevention and treatment efforts. The AODAAC also serves as the local drug and alcohol abuse council and submits a bi-annual strategic plan to the State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration.

Call to order. Margaret Mattson, Chair, called the Microsoft Teams videoconference meeting to order at 7:07pm. Introductions followed. With 11 voting members, a quorum was present. AODAAC voting members voted and approved drafted June and September meeting minutes.

Updates

Report on 10/1/2020 Virtual Forum “Many Pathways to Family Recovery”

The Fall Forum collaboration between AODAAC, the Mental Health Advisory Committee, and Citizens Review Panel for Children was a success. There were 57 attendees at the event, with informative presentations from Dr. Jason Martin of Sheppard Pratt and from LaTonia Rich of Tree of Hope Association. The Forum Planning Committee will hold a post-event follow-up meeting to debrief about the event and finalize surveys to get feedback from event attendees and registrants.

Testimony before County Parks and Planning Commission

Elyse gave written and oral testimony at a Montgomery Planning Board meeting. The board voted on whether to expand the Picnic in the Park program which permits restaurant deliveries—including alcohol sales—at public parks. The board voted 4 to 1 in favor of expanding the program.

Planning for BCC Priorities Report and Further Discussion of Projects & Priorities

The Health and Human Services Boards, Committees, and Commissions (DHHS BCCs) will have a meeting to discuss priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. AODAAC's one-page priorities statement is due to Leslie Frey by November 3. AODAAC needs to select two main priorities for this statement. Margaret provided a list of six priorities that were discussed at the September meeting. There was one edit: the Marijuana and Vaping Forum event will be split into multiple events to provide more in-depth "ABC's" of substance misuse programming.

Elyse noted that the 6 priorities listed are policies and projects that fit into broader priority categories, e.g., education, advocacy, community engagement. Corey e-mailed the priorities from the previous year to the group as a template. Dr. Marti suggested that COVID and substance-specific addiction behaviors should be considered within the priorities. Laura recommended highlighting connections and partnerships with outside organizations, and Margaret added that it should include partnerships with other BCCs as well. Margaret said that in the next week or so, she will send a draft of the priorities letter for AODAAC to review.

Subcommittee Reports

Legislative Subcommittee

Elyse (Subcommittee Chair) shared the following:

- She and Dave discussed continuing the Legislative Retreat which happens in January, to draft written and oral testimony and to discuss bills at the county and state levels.
- One change they plan to make is putting the bills on a drive so people can view them prior to the retreat and research them beforehand.
- Dave proposed writing a quarterly legislative letter to county executives and policymakers about substance use related legislation, so that AODAAC becomes better-known by them and hopefully more of the issues are addressed.

Treatment & Recovery Subcommittee

Evelyn (Subcommittee Chair) shared the following:

- They discussed turning the Marijuana Forum into a mini series with sessions focused on specific substances, stigma, the impact of addiction on families, the addiction process, and what recovery looks like as the body starts healing.
- Dr. Marti mentioned that there is a reoccurring FAES course for teachers that goes in-depth into alcohol use disorders, which could be adapted for this community. He will try to locate the syllabus to share. He also recommended a lecture by Dick Brody through Towson University in partnership with Kolmac Clinic.

Prevention Subcommittee

Margaret shared the following:

- They did not formally nominate chairs because they want to include a new member who was absent in the decision. They will email amongst themselves to select a chair.
- The group discussed a collaborative partnership educational initiative with the Parent-Teacher Association. They plan to collaborate with other groups like Everymind and WRAP to push out the resources and spread the message about safety in the home.

Website Development Subcommittee

Anaum (Subcommittee Chair) shared the following:

- The subcommittee held its first meeting last week. The priority is to focus on the content of the AODAAC website and the layout of the front page.
- A potential idea is to have sections of the website dedicated to specific populations, such as a section for students, a section for parents, etc. with resources tailored to them.
- All are welcome to contribute website content ideas. The group meets monthly on the Monday before each AODAAC general meeting date, at 4:30pm.

County Reports

Hardy (Health and Human Services DHHS) shared the following:

- HSS is still in the midst of recruiting a Chief for Behavioral Health and Crisis Services. The final candidate that was interviewed will have a confirmation hearing with the County Council during the month of October.
- The newly renovated Avery Road Treatment Center has a final inspection on October 23, and a ribbon cutting ceremony is being organized.

Yasmeen (Local Behavioral Health Authority LBHA) shared the following:

- The LBHA had been offering biweekly calls until the end of September where providers could talk about issues they are having with Optum, COVID, personal protective equipment (PPE), etc. The acting manager of the LBHA Regina Morales then shifted to having individual meetings with providers to make the meetings more productive, and they have held two such meetings so far. The LBHA continues to get requests for PPE as well as technical questions about telehealth, and they are still giving technical assistance to providers.

Robin (Dept. of Corrections DOCR) shared the following:

- COVID has been the main focus in the jails. She is happy to report that currently there are no inmate or employee cases of COVID.

Lt. Ruben Rosario (Police) shared the following:

- Nonfatal overdoses are up by 29% to date compared to last year (132 vs. 102), and fatal overdoses are up 8% (56 vs. 52 last year). 9 cases are still pending toxicology.

Ingrid Gonzalez (Parole & Probation) shared that offices are open and they are doing drug testing. There have been some challenges with treatment due to COVID.

Additional Comments

- **Debbie** represents the Maryland Coalition of Families, a statewide nonprofit with peer specialists in every county in the state. They support families who have a loved one struggling with addiction to substances or gambling. They provide resources to families and teach them to self-advocate. It is harder for their organization to reach people during COVID, so they are taking additional efforts to outreach to people who need it. They have online support groups and trainings on topics like the stages of change; and a naloxone training on October 20. Anyone in the state can join the trainings at mdcoalition.org.
- **Elizabeth** represents Narcotics Anonymous (NA), which holds over 60 weekly virtual meetings in Montgomery County, over 350 in the DMV area, and thousands globally. NA is the original peer-to-peer, and now people can sign on anonymously from home.
- **Bunny** shared that Tree of Hope offers recovery coach weekend trainings. October 17-18 will be on ethics, Oct. 31-November 1 will be on spirituality for peer recovery coaches, and Nov. 21-22 will be on professionalism.
- **Margaret** plans to have speakers at upcoming AODAAC meetings. She asked members to suggest/nominate speakers, who do not need to be local since meetings are virtual.
- **Dave** shared that the county is doing a great job advocating for Medicaid providers.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27PM.