

Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Advisory Council (AODAAC)

Meeting Minutes: Thursday September 9, 2021, 7:00- 9:00 pm

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Voting Members Present: Ed Bunny Rich, Margaret Mattson, Doreen Rubin, Cristina Rabadan, Laura Mitchell, Evelyn Saim-Lobos, Elyse Grossman, Valerie Adelson, Denyse Dillon

Ex-Officio Members Present: Hardy Bennett, Corey Berman, Dr. Kyle Potter, Dr. Rolando Santiago,

Celia Serkin, Brent Kearney, Rose Burnhill, Gabriella Monzon-Reynolds, Erin Fashion, Man Cho **Guests Present:** Ann Ellis of Narcotics Anonymous

Call to order. Laura Mitchell, Chair, called Zoom videoconference meeting to order at 7:04pm. With 12 voting members, a quorum was present. Voting members voted and approved minutes from the April and June AODAAC meetings.

Discussion

Written Ex-Officio Report Template

- Laura proposed having ex officio members submit typed reports prior to AODAAC meetings, so that AODAAC members can review them ahead of time and discuss/ use the report information during meetings. She screenshared to show what the proposed form looks like. She also said it will allow for consistency, to see how shared information compares over time since the last meeting (e.g., how overdose numbers shared by police have changed).
- Elyse raised that ex-officio members should weigh in to make sure they are willing to do so.
- Ex-officio member Celia of MHAC supports the idea for the collaboration it enables between groups. Hardy also expressed support, calling it a user-friendly and concise template
- Elyse stated that the reports will be beneficial if the information is truly provided in advance. Laura stated that she and Corey will work together to send out the completed ex-officio reports to the full AODAAC group the Monday before each meeting.

Speakers

- Laura asked AODAAC members for their thoughts on whether to have speakers present during AODAAC meetings. Margaret proposed having a speaker every-other month to make sure there is enough time in between to get work done. Laura discussed the importance of having speakers for a purpose by bringing in groups willing to collaborate and including them in both subcommittee and full committee work. Laura asked whether AODAAC should start bringing in the same group twice, once for a presentation and then the next month to work on the collaboration. Cristina agreed that she likes presentations but there needs to be a clear intention, purpose, and follow-up. She suggested that subcommittees identify speakers who directly connect to the topics and actions of the subcommittee's priorities for the year.
- Doreen suggested having speakers come in with an idea of how AODAAC can support them. Laura agreed that e-mail communication beforehand is important so that organizations have talking points ready to discuss collaboration.
- Valerie suggested opportunities for AODAAC to engage with the medical community around issues like primary care physicians adequately interviewing patients about substance use.

Subcommittee Reports

Treatment & Recovery

- Evelyn shared that the subcommittee was unable to meet over the summer, so the planned 3-part 101 series on substances will be held in the spring rather than this September. It will hopefully be held in person, with virtual as the backup plan. It will still be a 3 part series.
- Subcommittee Priorities:
 - Connecting to the community with the [COPE](#) trailer, community opportunities to voice opinions, and connecting people to services via resource fairs.
 - Monitoring the status of access to medications like buprenorphine, as well as overdose prevention tools like naloxone and fentanyl strips.
 - Advocating for a full-services substance use treatment center for adolescents
- Laura mentioned that the COPE trailer currently can only have 2 guests plus 1 guide in at a time due to COVID. She shared an idea to put the Narcan training video on the TV outside of the trailer along with Narcan handouts so they can get trained and pick up Narcan while waiting to enter the trailer. Lt. Kearney suggested talking to 2 COPE trailer point people about this idea, one of whom is Captain Stacey Flynn.

Prevention

- Valerie asked whether Narcan is present in every school, with someone trained to administer it always present. Laura confirmed that there was a Maryland act (Start Talking Maryland Act (2017; HB1082, CF SB1060) that went into effect in 2017 requiring that Narcan be in every school with trained staff on hand at all times. Erin confirmed that she supplied Narcan to all Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) before last school year and that those Narcan kits are not expired. Her plan is to swap out their kits every year with newer Narcan kits so that the older kits can be distributed at Narcan trainings for more immediate use. The point person on the school side is AODAAC ex-officio member Dr. Kyle Potter.
- Valerie discussed making the COPE trailer available to the PTA. Denyse asked about the Handle With Care program. Laura explained that in this program, if a first responder goes to a scene where a school aged child is present, the responder collects information on the child that they were already collecting for their report: name, age, and what school the child goes to, to send to MCPS. MCPS routes a message that says "Handle (child's name) with care" to the school that child attends, so that hopefully a trusted adult can take the child for a friendly walk and evaluate the level of impact from trauma, and whether the child may need extra services. There are no privacy violations, every first responder in West Virginia does this as state law. 17 other counties in Maryland already use this program, but Montgomery County is behind on it. State police also should adopt it for intercounty cases. A District 6 Gaithersburg school was set to start the Handle With Care program, but the memorandum of understanding is still in the county attorney's office and hopefully will be rolled out soon.
- The third area discussed was the language of substance use and the name change proposal. Laura shared that there is a county charter review through May 1, 2022, and this could be a good opportunity to look for stigmatizing words like abuse to eliminate from the charter.

Legislative

- Elyse shared the following priorities for the subcommittee:
 - The legislative retreat if AODAAC members are interested in continuing it

- Creating a newsletter twice per year to send to elected officials summarizing what is happening within the county in terms of substance use that AODAAC is working on.
- Equitable coverage of substance use under Medicaid and Medicare
- Possibly writing a letter to advise on the use of opioid settlement funds

Action Item

- **Laura requested that at next month's meeting, all subcommittees discuss action steps, resources needed (not money), a timeline for their projects, any contacts or help needed from other agencies, speaker ideas etc. and set up a way to track project progress**

Ex-Officio Reports

Hardy Bennett, Montgomery County DHHS, Behavioral Health & Crisis Services (BHCS)

- Dr. Santiago, Chief of Behavioral Health & Crisis Services, has been in his position for 1 year, and his biggest project has been expanding mobile crisis outreach teams. Originally there was only 1 location in Rockville at the Crisis Center. Now there is a Downcounty location on Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring and a Germantown location in the Midcounty building. A criticism is that treatment locations are too central to Rockville, so now there are 2 more teams in other areas and the ultimate goal is to expand to 5 total MCOT teams (mobile crisis outreach teams)
- The ACCESS to Behavioral Health program has been the county's screening assessment referral and treatment hub. For years it was located at 255 Rockville Pike, but now it is among 7 county programs that are moving into the Grey Courthouse at 27 Courthouse Square in Rockville, which underwent a \$25.5 million renovation. The other 6 agencies are: Department of Finance Treasury Division and the Office of Procurement, Office of the County Executive's Innovation Team, Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions Enterprise Resource Planning, Office of Human Resources (OHR) Training and Organizational Development Division, OHR Occupational Medical Services, Fire Rescue Occupational Medical Services.
- The specialty behavioral health programs and drug court which for years were at 981 Rollins Avenue in Rockville are now as of August 31 moved to 1500 East Gude Drive. The programs need to be reaccredited at new address before they can be fully operational, by CARF and the DEA since methadone is involved.
- Robin Cody, the ex-officio member representing the Department of Corrections, is currently on scheduled leave, but is anticipated to be present at the next meeting.
- A number positions where staff have retired are now fully filled. Dorne Hill is officially the senior administrator for crisis intake and trauma services. Viviana Azar is now manager of adult as well as child and adolescent behavioral health services. Now the whole lifespan is under 1 manager rather than adult under 1 and child/adolescent under another management structure. Hopefully the integration will improve service delivery in long run. There was a ribbon cutting for the Grey Courthouse on 9/8. Dr. Raymond Crowel and Dr. Rolando Santiago were present.

Rose Burnhill, Montgomery County Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA)

- Operations manager Rebecca Garcia retired. Sarah Rose has become operations manager now. The LBHA is meeting with mental health and substance use treatment providers monthly, and meeting with Optum to discuss trends and issues that affect providers.

Erin Fashion, Montgomery County DHHS, Prevention and Harm Reduction

- One of the newest rollouts is the expansion of the Leave Behind program with fire and rescue. Now all fire and rescue first responders have Narcan kits on their trucks and in the station to provide to individuals for use with their family, friends, or others who they encounter. The fire and rescue program started 2-3 weeks ago and there has been a big change, a lot more kits have been delivered into community with individuals walking into fire stations asking for kits even. 435 kits have been provided through this program, so the county has been supplying them with more to replace distributed kits.
- It is recovery month and Monday is the Evening of Remembrance. If the weather is good, DHHS Treatment & Prevention (Erin Fashion and/or Ben Stevenson) will be there to provide info and kits. They will participate in Poolesville Day on 9/18, and the City of Rockville will hold a Drug Takeback Day that DHHS will attend and provide Narcan and information. There are 3 different Narcan trainings this month, one during lunchtime and 2 in the evening. There is a QR code to easily sign up for Narcan Training or to get a replacement kit shipped. They have been shipping 30-60 kits per month. Last July they gave 230 kits to MCPS, and they are about to replace those kits with ones that won't expire for 2 years. Rockville goes purple has started and the Rockville Town Center is now lit in purple. The County Council has a proclamation on 9/14 to declare September as Recovery Month in Montgomery County.

Lt. Brent Kearney, Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD)

- MCOT has been a great asset in Silver Spring where there has been great need for treatment and there is now much better access to it.
- Nonfatal overdoses are up 47% year to date (YTD) at 175, and fatal overdoses are up 16% YTD at 72 total. Per toxicology, 95% of overdoses include fentanyl or a fentanyl related compound. He is part of a unit that goes out to overdose scenes to see if there is any evidentiary value and mitigate.
- The COPE trailer is a wonderful tool for putting out info. There was a press conference for drug overdose awareness in collaboration with the COPE trailer, which was a huge success and was well-received. Captain Stacey Flynn has taken over leading the COPE trailer effort. Lt. Kearney is happy to help facilitate communication between her and AODAAC. Nationwide, fentanyl is a huge issue, and there has been a huge uptick in Western Maryland. A lot of arrests are being made on the street, but these are only a fraction of all drug activities.

Gabriella Monzon-Reynolds, Alcohol Beverage Services (ABS)

- In July 2021, legislation passed allowing restaurants to sell alcohol-to-go. The department expected a lot of applications to sell alcohol for carryout to-go or curbside, but only received 89, so despite the hype it is turning out not to be extremely popular among restaurants. ABS developed a survey to understand what sorts of alcohol is selling and if they are seeing an increase in alcohol sales. Restaurants are selling more sealed bottles/containers than mixed drinks. ABS is still working to deliver round pause stickers to seal alcohol containers over the straw hole or to put on bags, which say "Pause: Do not consume this while driving, please wait until you are home". ABS distributed 500 stickers and received requests from certain businesses to translate the stickers too. ABS put together a chart of the survey results to understand who is selling and put more in place for these businesses.

Man Cho, Board of License Commissioners

- The board is ensuring that businesses have clear alcohol policies in place before issuing any licenses. They emphasize the unique resources in Montgomery County for business licensees, alert them to courses such as a free educational course tailored to Montgomery County's rules and regulations. Montgomery County is 1 of 2 counties who offer this for free, so they encourage businesses to take advantage by getting their staff trained. There are 5 inspectors on the board now, and each covers about 200 establishments. The only action that the board is not implementing currently is compliance checks, where they send inspectors with law enforcement and an undercover minor to see if the business would sell alcohol to that minor. Given current circumstances around COVID that program is on hold, but they hope to continue soon. Recent violations have mostly been related to documentation, 7 of the 11 citations this fiscal year were for failure to display a liquor license where it is visible to the public.

Celia Serkin, Mental Health Advisory Committee (MHAC)

- Dr. Daniel Dodgen, Senior Advisor for the US Department of Health and Human Services in preparedness and response, attended the most recent MHAC meeting to discuss mental health in the context of climate change, such as impacts from Hurricane Ida, COVID, flooding, fires, etc. MHAC has a subcommittee on the Environmental Impacts on Wellbeing. Trauma from environmental disasters especially impact impoverished communities, children, farmers, immigrants, people with limited mobility, people in coastal areas, indigenous peoples, veterans, firefighters, EMS, healthcare workers, even those who gather human remains. He presented a PowerPoint that includes an action plan on the topic.

New Business

- **Laura** asked AODAAC voting members to let her know if they are interested in being a subcommittee chair. Elyse has been the chair for the Legislative subcommittee and Cristina has expressed interest for the Prevention Subcommittee, but there is room for co-chairs and formal voting for a chair. AODAAC members should also consider moving to the Legislative Subcommittee which currently only has 2 members and would benefit from more.
- **Laura** will send out the ex-officio report form to Corey for ex-officios to complete prior to AODAAC meetings.
- **Bunny** shared that the Tree of Hope Association is holding recovery hope training for peer recovery specialists, including ethics training this Saturday and Sunday, and a virtual speaker jam on multiple pathways to recovery from 9am-11pm the following Saturday 9/18. If interested, he will share the flyer for the event and the website is www.treeofhopeassn.com
- **Anne Ellis** asked Erin a question about whether her department is tracking the effectiveness and frequency of use of the Narcan kits that have been distributed to all county schools. Erin said she does not track this data; the schools request enough kits for each school plus a few back-ups and she distributes these to them. When the kits get used, the Montgomery County Public Health Officer (formerly Dr. Gayles) receives this information, which is probably made publicly available with all identifiable information about any students involved removed. The numbers would be interesting to see.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.