

# Governor's Advisory Council on Opioids, Substance Use, and Addiction

## Meeting Minutes

Date: 08/02/2023  
Location: In person – Duluth, MN

## Participation

### Participating members

**In-person:** Beth Elstad, Colin Cash, Kyle Christianson, Autumn Dillie, John Donovan, Wendy Jones, Jeffrey Lind, LaTricia Tate, Farhia Badul, Pamela Lanhart, Kimberly Stokes, and Trave Winship.

**Absent:** Bill Messinger, Arden Two Bears, Fiyyaz Karim, Anderson Saint Georges, and Bobby Marines

**Office of Addiction and Recovery (OAR), Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) Department of Human Services (DHS), and staff:** Jeremy Drucker, Jennifer Blanchard, and Stacy Sjogren

**Presenter:** Eric Grumdahl, Assistant Commissioner at Department of Human Services

## Welcome and Opening Announcements

Members and guests were welcomed, and Beth Elstad and Jeremy Drucker provided opening remarks.

**Roll call and introductions:** Roll call was taken, and introductions were made.

**Review of agenda:** Agenda and objective for the meeting were reviewed.

**Approve minutes:** Members voted to approve June 2023 meeting minutes.

**Updates:** Jennifer Blanchard provided an update on the council SharePoint site and reminded council members there is a shared calendar where individuals can post notices about upcoming events in their community. Members were encouraged to submit a request for reimbursement.

## Council Engagement

Council members participated in a World Café activity to learn more about one another and the communities they serve. Members were asked:

- A. **Priorities:** In communities you represent, what are the priorities or highest needs?
- B. **Goals:** What goals do you have for the communities you represent?
- C. **Successes:** What is going well with the communities you represent?
- D. **Challenges:** What are the current challenges facing the communities you represent?

Take-aways included:

A. **Priorities:** In communities you represent, what are the priorities or highest needs?

- Housing
- Consistent funding – not grant based
- More detox options
- Capacity building around processes (RFPs, Medicaid reimbursement)
- Mental health services with recovery focus
- Recovery oriented systems of care
- Awareness of recovery support for families
- Access to harm reduction services
- TA for tribes for building capacity for reimbursable services
- Background issues causing barriers to housing/employment
- Educating communities of care – value of families in treatment and recovery

B. **Goals:** What goals do you have for the communities you represent?

- Money/funding
- Increased collaboration
- Recovery oriented systems of care
- More options for rural communities
- Reduce stigma and shame
- State agencies come into community
- Predictable, stable financing,
- Reduced bureaucracy
- Investment in equity – measurable reduction of disparities
- Federal service areas for tribal people
- No barriers to access care
- Resolve jurisdictional issues between tribal
- Collaboration, not competition

C. **Successes:** What is going well with the communities you represent?

- Support for harm reduction
- More collaboration with primary care, community partners
- Awareness to reduce stigma
- Building allies
- Naloxone mandates and prescribing changes

- Legislative outcomes
- Increased MAT programs

D. **Challenges:** What are the current challenges facing the communities you represent?

- Lack of:
  - Housing
  - MAT
  - Recovery services
  - Infrastructure in tribal communities
  - Youth support
  - Detox options
  - Coordinated care i.e., with Vet orgs.

Members broke into small groups to further discuss their values, whether they were reflected in the council's guiding principles, and how they would "walk the talk" to ensure their actions reflected the guiding principles. Overall, council members reported that the guiding principles align with the values members shared. However, to follow through and ensure the principles guided their work, members must recognize their privilege and bias, and hold one another accountable to making decisions the center equity.

## Council Education and Engagement

Presentation and discussion:

DHS Assistant Commissioner, Eric Grumdahl presented a slide deck on the current financing of Minnesota's behavioral health system. During the presentation he outlined the role of the Behavioral Health division; the continuum of publicly funded SUD services and how they are currently paid for; and the benefits, opportunities, and challenges with the current financing structures. He then asked the council to discuss what alternative could they imagine for funding behavioral health services that help build a response to addiction and recovery; mitigate the drawbacks of existing funding approaches; and maintain a quality and accountability about the care provided with public funds.

## Council Work

Council members were asked to think through how key priority areas identified during previous meetings result in actionable next steps. The group was asked to think through what priority areas they want to advise the subcabinet on; which areas they want to dive deeper into and develop recommendations on in the short term; what areas they want to be kept informed of; and how the council could engage and seek the voice of people with lived experience to contribute to their work on an on-going basis. Overall, council members expressed a desire for more real-time, rapid cycle, opportunities to advise the subcabinet; and want to focus on high impact, high feasibility, priority areas that center equity, hit the "sweet spot", are ripe for influence, address immediate

needs, and reduce stigma and raise awareness. An initial priority area was identified based on the discussion and a debrief with the council chair and vice chair. The council will focus the remainder of 2023 on:

- Justice involved populations
  - Access to MOUD in jails and prisons
  - Background study reform

In addition to taking a “deep dive” into this priority area, council members discussed their commitment to community co-created public policy and how they could engage people with lived experience; identified additional priority areas they would like to consider in early 2024; and several that have longer time horizons but are equally as important. The council also identified which priority areas they would like to be kept informed of as their work continues and discussed next steps in engaging people with lived experience to inform the work.

### **Public comment**

No public comment

### **Next meeting and adjourn**

The Advisory Council meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday October 4, 2023, from 12:00 – 4:00 pm. The meeting will be in-person in St. Paul, location TBD.