

COUNTY OF



ALLEGHENY

SARA INNAMORATO
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**Drug and Alcohol Planning Council
Meeting Minutes
Microsoft Teams
Wednesday, January 8, 2025**

Present: Bryan Bass-Riley, Charles Davis, Anne Cox, Daniel Garrighan, Josie Morgano, Pamela Weddington, Ivan Juzang, Fred Quinn, Gabby Warner, Tonisha Wilson; Stuart Fisk, Opioid Settlement Fund Consultant; Maisha Howze, Assistant Director, Bureau of D&A Services; Colleen Sokira, OBH Special Projects Manager; Sarah Bigelow, OBH Special Projects Assistant

I. Introductions, Attendance, and Minute Approval
Charles Davis called the meeting to order at 4:35 pm.

All present introduced themselves.

November 2024 minutes approved.

Council member Christine Naman submitted her resignation in November. Council members approved her resignation. Special Projects and OEE are working on the next steps to fill that vacant seat.

II. Connect Protect Recover Campaign

- Pam and Ivan from MEE Productions
- The campaign launched in June 2024
- Target audience – friends and family of someone with a substance use disorder
 - i. Broad definition of family – anyone who provides social supports in someone's life
 - ii. Also working with providers
- Technology and “humanology”
 - i. Technology – traditional media, things that get you scale
 - 1. E.g. social media
 - ii. “Humanology” - what gives you impact when dealing with complex impacts and behaviors around substance use
- Three phases of implementation
 - i. Get out the message – branding and awareness

ERIN DALTON, DIRECTOR

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- ii. Capacity building (Fall into early winter)
 - iii. Community events and building within communities (began piloting in November)
- Pain points
 - i. Need for capacity building and technical assistance with provider organizations
 - 1. Especially around cultural competence
 - a. Have done 6 sessions so far – very well received but feedback has been that even more are needed
 - 2. Goal for rest of this year and into 2026
 - ii. Technical assistance for smaller providers
 - 1. Lack of resources and staff capacity – especially for things such as social media, community outreach, etc.
 - a. CPR has been able to provide this for smaller organizations through this campaign
 - iii. Low level of awareness about what the different treatment options are
 - 1. Myths and misinformation about what treatments involve
 - 2. Focus area for next year: MAT
 - iv. Funded through opioid settlement dollars – but hearing from some communities (e.g. Latino community, some refugee communities) that other substances, such as alcohol, are most present and impactful
 - v. Bureaucracy and silos
 - 1. Within DHS, the county, and at the whole community level
 - 2. “People don’t care where the money is coming from, they just want to be helped and supported”
 - vi. How we capture the voice of people who care about their families and communities but who don’t fill out surveys or come to community meetings

III. Opioid Settlement Dollars Updates

- Overview
 - i. Purpose – to improve existing systems that treat and prevent SUD
 - 1. Must focus on opioid use disorder, but can and should talk about co-occurring disorders
 - ii. Funding is flexible – can be used to do innovative work that is not currently covered by Medicaid
 - 1. However, it cannot be considered a sustainable funding source
 - iii. Allegheny County aims to spend funds on programs and services that are evidence-based, data-driven, hard find by other sources
 - iv. Allegheny County invests over \$125 million in substance-use related services each year

1. While only ~7% of that is currently opioid settlement funds – its power is in its flexibility
- Payment 4 – December 2024 Details
 - i. So far received 2 payments totaling ~\$14 million
 - ii. December 2024 was third payment and by far the largest one - ~\$26 million
 1. \$10 million has a 42-month spending deadline (By June 2028)
 2. \$15.8 million has an 18-month spending deadline
 - a. Very quick! It is possible to request an extension if needed
 - iii. Purdue Pharma has not settled but can't rely on it
 - Investments so far have included
 - i. Increase access to treatment and recovery
 - ii. Support people in recovery
 - iii. Prevent misuse of opioids
 - iv. Can see the full breakdown on the [Allegheny Analytics Opioid Settlement page](#)
 - Community Listening Sessions – full report will be published in February, this is preliminary data
 - i. Did three in-person, public sessions, three in-person, closed group sessions (including in the county jail), and one virtual, public session in the latter half of 2024
 - ii. Engagement questions
 1. Assessing the problem – in your community, what are the most significant barriers to ending the opioid epidemic?
 2. Spending priorities
 - iii. Public sessions
 1. Biggest problems – negative stigma towards people who use substances, barriers to accessing treatment, limited support for family members impacted
 2. Spending – harm reduction, supporting people in treatment and recovery, education on substance use and risks
 3. Community priorities – housing and homeless supports (first by far), safe consumption site, safe drug supply and drug checking
 - Timeframe for decision-making for 2025
 - i. Need to continue previous projects that don't have other sources of funding, such as MOUD in the jail
 - ii. By mid to end of February should have a preliminary list of projects and ideas
 - iii. Put out RPFs for new projects

IV. Bureau Updates

- Spring Conference at DHS – late March/early April

- i. Have already reached out to some providers
- ii. Maisha will also be asking Council members to be present to speak about their work
- iii. Still in the planning phase but wanted it to be on your radar

V. 2025 Calendar

- All members should have received calendar invites to the following meetings
 - i. March 12 at the ~~Human Services Building~~ via Teams
 - ii. May 14 ~~via Teams~~ in person
 - iii. July 9 via Teams
 - iv. September 10 at the Human Services Building
 - v. November 12 via Teams
- Parking is available in the HSB lot for the two in-person meetings
 - i. Colleen will send instructions prior to these meetings
- Final decision about meeting location has to be made 7 business days in advance
 - i. Will change in person meeting from March 12 to May 14

VI. Announcements and Public Comments

- Prevention Point is celebrating 30 years of operation! Gabby will send invitations to the group soon

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:38.

VIII. Next Public Meeting

The next public Drug and Alcohol Planning Council meeting will be on **Wednesday, March 12** from 4:30 – 6 p.m via Teams.

Colleen Sokira will send out the Teams invite for this meeting the week before. There is also a link posted on the [DHS advisory board webpage](#).