

Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

Recovery Friendly Workplace Work Group Meeting

January 16, 2024 via Zoom

Participants:

David Shapiro and Dave Secunda, Co-chairs
Sarah Levine, Center for Health, Work and Environment
Brittany Lynner, Colorado State University
John Narine, Recovery Friendly Leader
Jeff Koch, CHEF Culinaricians Helping Entrepreneurial Folks
Melissa Woodring, Red Rock Recovery Center
Nele Cashmore, The Health Partnership
Coreen Braden-Johnson, Young People in Recovery
Waltrina DeFrantz-Dufour, Denver University
Jessica Angleson, Community Member
Michele Hawkins, Milestone Community Wellness
Jessica Scherden, Rocky Mountain Partnership
Marlo Alston, Ready to Work Aurora
Deirdre Sage, Office of Employment First
Stephanie Halvorson, The Steadman Group
Megan Colwell, Face it Together
Doreen Harris, Lockheed Martin
Kyle Tibbett, Gunnison County
Mila Long, Denver Recovery Group
Imo Succo, Indigenous Wellbriety Program
Trudy Hodges, Serenity Recovery Connection
Sarah Deering, Absolute Caulking
Zoey Terry, Larsons Ski & Sport
Amber Bartholomew, The Foundry
Jim Kuemmerle, CSU
Cole Cooper, Accenture
BHA: Alia Andrews, Danielle Gillespie
CHOW: Jasmine Parks-Papadopoulos, Jordyn Pearson
Southern Colorado Harm Reduction Association: Jude Solano, Terra Rodriguez
Consortium: Jose Esquibel, Gina Olberding, Jen Place, Hilary Brant, Shayna Micucci, Jennifer Mackender, Kristin Carpenter, Eric Barker, Rosemarie MacDowell

Absent: See attached roster.

Co-chair, David Shapiro, called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. A summary of the meeting agenda and additional information regarding the RFW Work Group is attached to the minutes.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the November 2023 work group meeting minutes. Motion approved.

Pending Legislation:

David briefly mentioned pending legislation, which includes potential certification for businesses that establish recovery friendly workplaces. Certification would involve businesses adhering to a set of standards. Another component of the legislation pertains to education and training for employees, supervisors, business leaders, and managers. Consortium staff is monitoring the legislation and will keep work group members informed of the opportunity to present testimony and/or contact legislators. Coreen Braden-Johnson volunteered to provide testimony on behalf of Young People in Recovery and Colorado peers. Work group members requiring assistance with testimony or legislator communications can contact Jose Esquibel or the work group co-chairs:

- Jose.a.esquibel@cuanschutz.edu
- David.shapiro@cuanschutz.edu
- David@avid4.com

To volunteer to provide testimony, contact Sarah Levine: sarah.levine@cuanschutz.edu

Second Regular Session, 74th General Assembly: <https://leg.colorado.gov/committees/business-affairs-labor/2024-regular-session>

RFW in Industry, Culinary Hospitality Outreach & Wellness (CHOW), Jasmine Parks-Papadopoulos, Head of Community, and Jordan Pearson, Program Director

- CHOW is a nonprofit organization founded in Denver in 2018 by John Hinman. Chow's mission is to support wellness within the hospitality industry and to improve the lives of their community members through shared stories, skills, and resources. Presentation highlights:
- CHOW now has a global reach since all programming is accessible online. People participate from all over the US and from foreign countries. Meetings typically last one hour.
- The organization provides members with education, peer-to-peer support groups, and programming related to mental health, wellness, and recovery.
- Many members are still involved in the hospitality industry.
- Substance misuses are generally ingrained within the hospitality industry; many businesses still operate with a model that incentivizes their employees to drink after work.
- CHOW supports harm reduction and other principles of recovery, including support groups.
- CHOW developed a free workplace wellness toolkit that is available for download on their website.
- CHOW partners with other organizations to create social initiatives within the community as well as referrals to other mental health organizations.

For additional information: <https://chowco.org/> or community@chowco.org

Comments:

Coreen Braden-Johnson asked if the organization assisted individuals with finding work. CHOW does not have employment as part of their programming, but can refer individuals to another partner organization.

Jude Solano, Co-Founder and CEO of the Southern Colorado Harm Reduction Association (SCHRA) and Terra Rodriguez, Case Manager:

A registered nurse by profession, Jude founded the organization along with retired ER physician Dr. Mike Nerenberg. Jude provided a summary of programs offered by her organization, including harm reduction and overdose prevention services. The harm reduction program includes syringe access. The organization offers educational and counseling services to youth as well as incarcerated individuals and partners with organizations offering medication-assisted treatment. Their wellness center will be opening at the end of April.

Terra Rodriguez oversees the SCHRA employment program. She provided examples of individuals she has helped find employment, including the unhoused and those with a criminal justice background.

For additional information: judy.solano@socoharmreduction.org
<https://www.socoharmreduction.org/>

RFW in Research: The R.O.A.D. to Recovery Friendly Workplaces, Brittany Lynner, Colorado State University

Brittany is a fourth-year PhD student in industrial and organizational psychology at CSU. She is concentrating on occupational health psychology. Most of her research lies at the intersection of workplace equity and employee well-being. Her recent work has focused on the role of the workplace and previously incarcerated individuals, including re-entry and re-integration, and support of employees in recovery. Brittany recently authored a white paper entitled “The R.O.A.D. to Recovery Friendly Workplaces” published by the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology. While at Ohio State, she helped develop recovery ally training for faculty, students, and staff and believes that recovery ally training could easily be adapted to a workplace environment. Brittany provided an overview of her paper:

- Organizational culture is at the root of recovery friendly workplaces; a culture of health is the necessary foundation.
- Recovery comprises early identification of substance misuse and the promotion of non-stigmatizing attitudes and language.
- Early identification can include helping supervisors and co-workers understand and recognize the symptoms of a substance use disorder.
- Ally training encourages the understanding of non-stigmatizing attitudes and language. While some language is not used to intentionally cause harm, it can often portray substance use disorders as a character flaw rather than a disease.
- Workplace tolerance policies are human centered and allow for the non-punitive disclosure of substance use disorders.
- Accommodation can be provided for those in recovery. The Job Accommodation Network <https://askjan.org/> includes a recovery accommodation plan. Several factors have been identified for a successful return to work.

- Leaders can and should communicate the value of recovery friendly workplaces through words and actions, which would include training supervisors on how to address employees with potential substance use disorders, active substance use disorders, and employees in recovery.
- When asked about accommodation needed to successfully perform their job duties, employees have cited their need for weekly meetings with supervisors as one of the most important resources for ongoing recovery.

For additional information: Brittany.Lynner@colostate.edu

Other Business/Announcements:

David said that the work group plans to have a table at the Colorado Restaurant Association Show in early April to talk about the recovery friendly workplace initiative. The show will be held in Denver April 2 and 3, 2024. David said that he would like to have someone in recovery present.

<https://corerestaurant.org/corerestaurantbarshow/>

Adjournment/Next Meeting:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:01 p.m. The next work group meeting will be held on Monday, March 18, 2024 from 2–3 p.m.

Attachments: Work group roster and information, Brittany Lynner presentation slides