

Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

Criminal Justice Response Work Group Meeting Minutes

December 9, 2020 via Zoom

Present:

Lindsey Myers, CDPHE (Co-chair)
Jillian Dardani, US Attorney's Office, Colorado
Kala Bettis, Eagle Valley Behavioral Health
Sarah Fedishen, Bridges Program, 9th Judicial District
Marco Macaluso, The Steadman Group
P.J. Higgins, Community Health Partnership
Maggie Seldeen, Mind Springs Health
K.J. Bergfalk, Southern Colorado Harm Reduction Association
Keaton Sheagley, Southern Colorado Harm Reduction Association
Cori Wells, Central Colorado AHEC
Kristine Rubio, Central Colorado AHEC
Raymond Padilla, Colorado Drug Investigators Association
Allyson Gottsman, Department of Family Medicine, CU
Christine Zietvogel, Pueblo Community Connections-Pueblo LEAD
Susanna Velie, Christlife Ministries
Melissa Gallardo Divido, Department of Corrections
Emily Richardson, OBH
Andres Guerrero, CDPHE
Katie Ziegler, CDPHE
Alia Andrews, CDHS
Kelly Russell, OBH
Trisha Bush, Correctional Health Partners
Brandy Gilbert, Garfield County Jail
AmeriCorps: Julia Deziel, Grey Ayverson, Marie Hafner, Christine Charron, Grace Chacon,
Dane Hall, Marlee Yost-Wolff, Patrick Bebie
Consortium: Jose Esquibel, Gina Olberding, Tyler Payne, Jen Place, Jessica Eaddy, Susanna
Cooper, Lindsey Simbeye, Rosemarie MacDowell
Absent: See attached roster.

Co-chair Lindsey Myers called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the July 2020 work group meeting minutes. Motion passed.

Heroin Response Work Group Wrap Up:

Lindsey Myers opened the meeting with a brief history of the past year's activities and the intent to transition the work group to focus on criminal justice. One of the projects from the past year included a review of recommendations made by the Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice (CCJJ) Opioid Investigation Committee. In July, work group members were asked if they would recommend that the Consortium endorse the recommendations (copy of recommendations attached). Four of five work group members responding supported the recommendations.

Jose Esquibel indicated that the recommendations have been submitted to the legislature; however, the current status is unknown. It is likely that any items requiring funding will not be approved. The recommendations will also be discussed by the Substance Abuse Task Force during their February 2021 meeting.

It was agreed that the recommendations would be more thoroughly reviewed by the work group at future work group meetings in order to present them to the Interim Study Committee for their review when they meet in July of 2021.

Heroin Response Work Group Refocus:

Much of the past work included representatives from law enforcement and the effort to facilitate communications between law enforcement, public health, treatment, and recovery providers. Work also included data collection and reporting.

Jose said that a lot of groundwork was accomplished over the past several years regarding the criminal justice response to the opioid crisis, particularly alternatives to incarceration, changes in laws related to addiction, and jail-based opioid treatment. Continued treatment and support services upon release are now important issues that should be addressed. There is still a need to bring the various groups together to facilitate this transition and maintain the continuum of care, including funding and policy changes. Jose suggested the work group identify several project priorities related to assisting individuals involved in the criminal justice system. Some of the priorities might include re-entry programs, parole, and connecting individuals to support services.

Kelly Russell spoke about her past experience working with the jails. While not all jails share a commitment to treatment, she indicated that many of the larger jails have gone to great lengths to provide necessary treatment. Problems still exist with re-entry and access to community treatment services. She suggested this should be a project focus.

K.J. Bergfalk also acknowledged the above. She discussed her experiences in the criminal justice system, the level of mental health and medication services available within jails, and the lack of a continuum of care. She also spoke about the difficulty encountered in obtaining employment for those who have been released from incarceration and recommended this as a potential project focus.

Jose agreed that employment is a critical issue. He mentioned funding available for housing support through OBH and the Department of Local Affairs Division of Housing; however, some available housing is unaffordable. The OBH individual placement support program works with employers and individuals who have mental health issues by providing a job coach. Jose suggested the current program efforts could be presented during an upcoming work group meeting.

Brandy Gilbert mentioned barriers she has encountered when trying to admit individuals into residential treatment programs in the western slope area because of the lack of inpatient treatment programs. Some of the treatment programs are only open to referrals from parole or probation officers, not case managers. Some clients are sent to community corrections in Garfield County, which does not participate in MAT because they do not want medication in their facility. More MAT education is needed for law enforcement. For additional information: Brandy.gilbert@chpdelivers.com

Jose reported that a new Medicaid inpatient benefit will be going into effect in January 2021. This information should be provided to law enforcement so they are aware that providers will begin offering inpatient residential treatment services.

Allyson Gottsman mentioned the importance of informing law enforcement about regional community recovery organizations as a potential resource.

In January, Colorado Mountain Medical will begin handling Medicaid referrals for individuals released from incarceration. Individuals undergoing MAT will also be referred to recovery resources through the peer support program.

Melissa Gallardo spoke about the Department of Corrections goal to offer MAT upon release from incarceration. She also mentioned a MAT pilot program in a New Jersey prison that reported excellent results. The acceptance of MAT within jails is improving. She can provide examples of its success.

Jose recommended the work group consider a training program for clinicians involved in recovery and treatment. Training could focus on better coordination of available services. Melissa offered to collaborate with the Consortium to organize this training.

Alia Andrews provided information regarding the Individual Placement Support Program that helps people with mental illness and/or substance use disorders find and keep jobs and provides employers with access to employees. The program is not yet available in the Montrose and Gunnison areas.

Links:

<https://ipsworks.org/>

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdhs/individual-placement-and-support-ips-supported-employment>

Jose suggested the work group advocate for funding this type of program.

Lindsey Simbeye suggested the work group continue to focus on identifying gaps and identify opportunities for programs to fill some of the gaps.

Tyler Payne will summarize the work group action items in a Google document that will be disseminated to work group members.

National Opioid Settlement:

Jose reported that \$24 billion in settlement funding will be distributed across the US over the next 12 to 18 months. Funding is earmarked for opioid abatement, with a percentage allocated to state, local, and regional governments. Some of the funding will be used by the Attorney General's office for grants. Funds will be distributed annually over a period of 18 years. Some of the funds could be used for the projects discussed during today's work group meeting.

Work Group Co-chair and Participants:

Co-chair Tom Gorman has retired. Lindsey asked participants for replacement co-chair recommendations. Traditionally, one co-chair has been with a state department. She also asked work group members to suggest others who might want to join the work group.

Other Announcements:

Susanna Velie reported on SOR grant funds that will be available for SUD beginning in January 2021. 400 grant applications are accepted per month. Funds will pay for sober living facilities such as Oxford House (deposit and first month's rent). The living facilities must have a contract in place with their local MSOs. She is located in Pueblo and is available to help individuals with placement. Email: svelie@mychristlife.org

Jose suggested this topic for an online seminar in January.

Summary of Next Steps/Action Items:

Treatment:

- Continue to support treatment in jails
- Need for enhanced treatment services in the community
- Need better mental health treatment and quicker medication management
- Need connection with outpatient treatment
- Educate about suboxone in jails
- Training: HCPF SUD benefit that begins in January

Re-entry:

- Need employment opportunities for those with criminal records
- Training: Individual Placement and Support (IPS) program, Alia Andrews with OBH (Connect IPS program with key stakeholders in those designated regions)
- Training: Transitional housing, specifically OBH's housing voucher program (funding to be released in January)
- Susanna Velie, SOR Peer in Pueblo, could help connect people to housing benefit
- Training: Melissa Gallardo, Department of Corrections Parole, connect to resources and testimonies
- New program with SCHRA in Pueblo; KJ Bergfalk could speak about this when the program begins
- RCOs are a good community resource

Work Group Name Change:

To better reflect the work group change in focus, it was decided to change the name of the work group from Heroin Response Work Group to Criminal Justice Response Work Group.

Adjournment/Next Meeting:

The meeting adjourned at 11:59 a.m. The next work group meeting will be held in February 2021, date TBD.

Selected Chat Comments:

- Kala Bettis: I am in talks with Daniel Fuchs with Oxford House to create sober living opportunities in Eagle County
- Kala Bettis : Eagle County is doing wraparound services upon release from jail with peer support, with Mind Springs (also prescribing agency) and the Hope Center
- Jen Place : I'm curious about how IPS is helping clients with drug-related convictions. I continue to hear that is an ongoing barrier to employment
- KJ Bergfalk : SCHRA would love to present about the program we are going to be running at Pueblo County Jail
- Brandy Gilbert : I am looking for grant or funding opportunities to start a transitional housing program in Garfield County. Anyone have some information or contacts for this?
- Jen Place : Brandy, something to keep an eye on: <https://trone.house.gov/media/press-releases/rep-trone-chu-and-levin-introduce-legislation-expand-availability-high-quality>
- Gina Olberding : Brandy -- Lindsey Simbeye will get you info on the housing voucher program through MSOs

Attachments:

Work Group Roster

CCJJ Recommendations