

Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

Harm Reduction Work Group Meeting Minutes

May 13, 2025 via Zoom

Present:

Maggie Seldeen, Co-chair
Coreen Braden Johnson, Young People in Recovery
Samantha Hawkins, Adams County Health Department
Kristin Doneski, Access Point
Annie Ruiter, Chaffee County Public Health
Keri Vignale, Region 15 Opioid Abatement Council
Becky Milanski, Boulder County Public Health
Nicole Marcantonio, Community Medical Services
Astrid Sylvanas, Colorado Health Network
Lisa Barczak, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
Vibes Volansky, Access Health
Shelley Marie, Health District of Northern Larimer County
Amy Walker, Stout Street Health
Joseph Laxson, No. Colorado Health Network
CDPHE: Sam Bourdon, Haley Klein, Cody Brown, Jericho Dorsey, Sophie Feffer, Teresa Will
Consortium: Jose Esquibel, Jessica Eaddy, Eric Barker, Hilary Bryant, Jen Place, Michael Davidson, Shayna Micucci, Rosemarie MacDowell

Absent: See attached work group roster.

Program Manager Jessica Eaddy called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the March 2025 work group meeting minutes. Motion approved.

Legislative Updates (Jose Esquibel):

Jose Esquibel provided a summary two bills that relate to harm reduction: SB25-164 <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-164> and HB25-1293 <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1293>

SB25-164 pertains to naloxone in schools. The Youth Advisory Council serves in a quasi-advisory capacity to the Board of Health. The bill allows schools to acquire and maintain a stock supply of naloxone and repeals the requirement for a school employee or agent to have naloxone training prior to administering an opioid antagonist (likely to enable a response to an emergency situation). The bill repeals the list of eligible entities able to receive free Naloxone from the bulk fund. The list now has to be approved by the Board of Health. CDPHE's Chief Medical Officer will be allowed to grant a standing order for listed entities. Funding issues might affect the number of eligible entities. The bill includes general immunity for those rendering assistance.

Jericho Dorsey, CDPHE, said attempts will be made to lessen the administrative burden for issuing standing orders. Currently, orders are issued to one agency at a time based upon requests received.

HB25-1293 pertains to drug overdose education in schools. Current health education standards that address substance use do not include drug overdoses. Updating the standards will require funding the Board of Education \$20,000 for related costs. Representative Jamie Jackson has been involved in this effort. She is also COO of The Naloxone Project. Jose asked work group members to let him know if they would like to be involved in volunteering as subject matter experts in order to ensure the standards include evidence-based information. Email:

jose.a.esquibel@cuanschutz.edu

Future harm reduction efforts and policy ideas were discussed, including the following: the need to update the outdated statute language pertaining to clean needle exchanges, syringe service programs, support of a statute that would not allow prohibiting of service programs in the state, the Good Samaritan Law (clarity related to immunity for undocumented persons administering naloxone), and clarification of controlled substance handling by harm reduction groups.

With reference to the Good Samaritan Law, consideration is being given to not requiring the presence of law enforcement along with EMS during an overdose. An exception would be made if a crime is being committed. There has been some confusion among EMS personnel who believe it is mandatory to hospitalize anyone who has had a non-fatal overdose. This may also have to be clarified in statute.

A ballot initiative to make any amount of fentanyl possession a felony is being sponsored by Advance Colorado. It is intended to felonize individuals, not drug dealers. Jose will provide a summary of the group's plans. <https://www.advancecolorado.org/>

Work group members discussed the legality of local law enforcement arresting undocumented individuals. Maggie commented about the importance of working to improve relationships with law enforcement and EMS personnel.

Policy ideas will be discussed further in preparation for meetings with legislators over the summer.

A copy of the Legislative Analysis & Public Policy Association (LAPPA) Model Syringe Services Program Analysis is attached to the minutes.

Colorado Overdoses Since March (work group member comments):

Maggie Seldeen: I believe there were eight overdose deaths in the Denver Metro area in the first week of March. There has been a continuation of fatal and non-fatal overdose deaths in rural Colorado over the past several months. There is a rumor about powdered fentanyl mixed in with stimulants and xylazine in the Front Range area.

Becky Milanski: There has been an increase in overdoses in Boulder County as well. There were three overdose deaths in April.

Eric Barker: Over a recent weekend, the Delta, Montrose, and Mesa areas had an increase in arrests and seizures. The Delta Police Department reported carfentanyl.

Jessica Eaddy: There are differences in Colorado regions. Xylazine seems to be prevalent in cities. There are some excellent webinars about sedative overdose reversals.

Astrid Sylvanas: We have seen very few confirmed reports of xylazine-type wounds in the past year.

Kristin Doneski: We haven't seen any xylazine in our fentanyl samples in Denver over the last month.

Sophie Feffer: Shifts in the drug supply, including changes in potency and additions of non-opioids (like xylazine), demand better support for overall drug user health.

Resources for Naloxone Training in Spanish:

Becky Milanski and Coreen Johnson have presentations available in Spanish. For information: rmilanski@bouldercounty.org and coreen.braden@youngpeopleinrecovery.org

Kristin Doneski has slides in English on xylazine related specific opioid overdose responses and xylazine withdrawal.

Good Samaritan Law Updates/SAP Surveys:

Jessica provided the background of issues related to the Good Samaritan Law enforcement across the state and the efforts related to law enforcement education and policy changes. The AG's office asked the Consortium to establish training protocols for the Peace Officer Standard Training website. Training includes videos, slides, and tabletop exercises. The work group will continue to be involved in curriculum development.

The Good Samaritan Law survey was initially intended to inform presentations for the Interim Study Committee this summer; however, the ISC meetings have been cancelled. The survey results might still be useful for future policy meetings.

Coreen Johnson spoke about a planned Good Samaritan Town Hall and other education efforts she has been involved in related to Naloxone and the Good Samaritan Law.

Jessica said the Consortium has a small amount of funding available to compensate for the survey completion. YPR also has funding available.

Sophie Feffer spoke about CDPHE surveys related to funded agencies, including the SAP participants.

Samantha Hawkins said Adams County Health Department surveys their participants and might be able to provide additional information about compensation offered.

Member Updates:

Maggie Seldeen, High Rockies Harm Reduction: Weekly services are being conducted in six cities throughout the Roaring Fork Valley. Another monthly location in Rifle will be added next month. A Spanish-language Naloxone training will be held in Rifle in July. Other training will be held in Leadville, Breckenridge, Dillon, Edwards, and Eagle once a month. An event for Overdose Awareness Day is planned in Glenwood Springs on August 31st.

Coreen Johnson, YPR: YPR will be co-hosting a Good Samaritan Town Hall along with the Arapahoe County Health Department Harm Reduction Division on Tuesday, May 20th at the Altura Building in Aurora. Virtual attendance will be available.

Amy Walker, CCH/Stout Street Health: The Colorado Coalition for the Homeless MAT clinic has been operational for the past several years. Peer coaches are also available. CCH has an eye clinic and a dentist available. The MAT clinic is open for new clients. For information: aw4478@yahoo.com

Nicole Marcantonio, Community Medical Services: CMS is an outpatient opioid treatment center in Colorado. They have seven clinics located in North Glen, Greenwood Village, Lakewood, Englewood, Aurora (2), and Westminster. Available services include MOUD treatment, counseling, and services for pregnant women. Walk-ins are accepted. Medicaid assistance is also provided. For information: nicole.marcantonio@cmsgiveshope.com

Becky Milanski: Focus Re-Entry in Boulder and the Re-Entry Initiative in Longmont offer support, classes, peer support, therapy, and clothing for those transitioning from incarceration. For information: rmilanski@bouldercounty.org

Jen Place: The Consortium Recovery Work Group will be offering a series of lunch and learn training sessions for peer support specialists: <https://corxconsortium.org/PEER-SUPPORT-LUNCH-AND-LEARNS/> For additional information: Jennifer.place@cuanschutz.edu

José Esquibel: The national and statewide decrease in overdose deaths represents a great victory. While overdoses continue to increase, more people are surviving them.

National Overdose Prevention Network Webinar “Behind the Numbers: Making Sense of Trends in the Drug Supply and Overdose Rates” video: <https://nopn.org/webinars/behind-the-numbers-making-sense-of-trends-in-the-drug-supply-and-overdose-rates>.

Adjournment/Next Meeting:

The work group meeting was adjourned at 2:29 p.m. The next work group meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 8, 2025 from 1 to 2:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Attachments: Work group roster and Legislative Analysis & Public Policy Association (LAPPA) Model Syringe Services Program Analysis

Relevant Chat Comments:

Gabriella Turnbull: National Drug Early Warning System - <https://ndews.org/>

Eric Barker: Carfentanil found during a stop in Delta County. The seizures were shortly before fatal overdoses in the area. - <https://rockymountainvoice.com/2025/03/delta-mesa-co-deputies-disrupt-drug-distribution-activities-in-western-colorado/>

Coreen Johnson: Good Samaritan Data Survey Tool - <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/11w3Bb-SoMKxWXUinxUCPmKMddNiEj8WzVS1-rNUiEbo/edit> Abbreviated version - <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1bdyOV5SpsUZ5EunVmb373m39GxyFiWJJwIPalgQHFPg/edit>