

Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

Harm Reduction Work Group Meeting Minutes

May 14, 2026 via Zoom

(The following minutes and discussion are for informational purposes only and do not represent the position of the University of Colorado.)

Present:

Mugsy Seldeen, Co-chair
Nikki Brooker, YANAM2M
Margaret Rich, Crossroads Turning Points
Kelley McCandless, Weld County Public Health
Christine Zeitvogel, Pueblo County Public Health
Izzy Pike, CHN
Michael Davidson
La Plata County Public Health, Sierra Andrews, Mikaela DiGiorgio
Blue Skies United: Zakk Shapiro, Ruth Scullion
CDPHE: Jericho Dorsey, Teresa Will, Cody Brown, Sophie Feffer
Gigi (no last name provided)
Consortium: Jen Place, Jessica Eaddy, Hilary Bryant, Shayna Micucci, Kristin Carpenter, Rosemarie MacDowell

Absent: See attached work group roster.

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

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the March 2026 work group meeting minutes. Motion approved.

Harm Reduction Co-Chair Recruitment:

Jessica announced that Zach Jenio will be stepping down as work group co-chair. The work group will be recruiting a replacement. Jessica asked that anyone interested in becoming a co-chair contact her directly: Jessica.eaddy@cuanschutz.edu

Mugsy Seldeen summarized co-chair responsibilities, noting that the Consortium staff members provide significant support. She indicated that the work group will be shifting efforts and focusing on educational opportunities related to harm reduction.

CDPHE Updates (SAMHSA Dear Colleague Letter and SAP Summit):

Jessica reported on changes at the federal level that will impact syringe access programs. She included a link to the SAMHSA letter dated April 24, 2026 outlining the agency's shift away from harm reduction and practices:

https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/dear-colleague-letter-updated-hr-funding-guidance.pdf?utm_source=SAMHSA&utm_campaign=6f41f2445f-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2026_04_24_03_30&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_6f41f2445f-169606785

Sophie Feffer said SAMSHA also issued a communication related to MOUD, but that she would only be addressing the letter pertaining to harm reduction. In order to adhere to the guidance set forth in SAMHSA's April 24th letter, test strips can no longer be purchased with SOAR funds, which was the only funding available for the no-cost distribution program. CDPHE is currently in discussions with the Attorney General's office to see if settlement funds might be able to support the program.

Jessica added that the SAMSHA communication also prohibits xylazine test strips and federal funding for overdose hotlines.

Sophie also reported that the Syringe Action Program Summit was not chosen for funding by the Attorney General's office; however, CDPHE does have funds that can be allocated.

Jessica informed work group members that discussions regarding a harm reduction and syringe access subgroup are ongoing as they determine when and how to meet.

Member & Legislative Updates:

Jessica reported that a syringe access program in Northern Colorado is encountering resistance from the local city council and commissioners related to zoning restrictions. She invited Izzy Pike to provide additional information.

Izzy said CHN had started syringe access services in July of 2023 with the understanding that the Loveland location was still part of Larimer County and the Larimer County Board of Health had given approval to operate the program. The program was in operation for over a year and a half until the city attorney (via an email from the Director of Public Health) said the stakeholder engagement necessary to operate the program was never conducted. CHN then worked with the city officials to conduct the appropriate stakeholder engagement and eventually the issue was resolved. After the resolution, some program participants started receiving tickets for their paraphernalia under an outdated municipal code (not under county or state code). A new city council and mayor are planning an ordinance with SAP restrictions that include prohibiting a location close to a school or any children and a licensing fee. The city manager and the city attorney remain supportive, given that all of the requirements were met with the earlier stakeholder engagement. Izzy will provide updates regarding the situation.

Jessica attended the city council meeting and is available for questions. She will provide information on upcoming city council meetings.

Christine Zeitvogel spoke briefly about the SAP programs in Pueblo. Izzy said conversations with the Pueblo mayor and city council have been beneficial and the local drug user health hub has provided treatment and wound care in collaboration with the Southern Colorado Family Medicine Center.

Blue Skies United provides mobile harm reduction services in Trinidad, Colorado and in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. Zakk Shapiro said Access Point has been a huge resource for them. His organization has conducted educational outreach to businesses and stakeholders, and these good faith efforts have proved very helpful.

High Rockies Harm Reduction has a position open that will serve Lake, Eagle, and Summit counties. The ideal candidate will be based in Leadville, as a partnership is being established

with the Public Health Department in that location. The position will be supported by regional opioid abatement funds. For information: maggie@highrockiesharmreduction.com

Gabrielle de la Gueronniere, Vice President of the Legal Action Center recently spoke to the Recovery Work Group about upcoming Medicaid cuts that will affect individuals with SUD. The minutes of the meeting and the LAC presentation and action worksheet were emailed to the Harm Reduction Work Group members on May 18th.

The Rural Health Transformation Grant RFAs will be issued in June.

Blue Skies United is working with the Trinidad Ambulance District (Zakk Shapiro is President and used to be an EMT). Zakk explained the excellent working relationship that has developed over time as the service embraced harm reduction efforts.

The Consortium was just awarded funding for two years to support the grant writing assistance program. The Colorado Opioid Abatement Council awarded the funds to support small nonprofits in good standing and small local public health agencies. Jen indicated that grant opportunities could be at the level of the Regional Opioid Abatement Council (ROAC) or the Colorado Opioid Abatement Council (COAC), although it is unlikely that federal opportunities will be available for syringe access. There may be way to make up some of the lost funding for harm reduction in what is called Schedule B, a list at the COAC level of approved uses for ROAC funds. Jen provided the following information:

The following is outlined in the "Approved Uses" of COAC/ROAC funds - so folks would be eligible for grant writing to support doing these things (Under Harm Reduction section):

9. Syringe service programs and other evidence-informed programs to reduce harms associated with intravenous drug use, including supplies, staffing, space, peer support services, referrals to treatment, fentanyl checking, connections to care, and the full range of harm reduction and treatment services provided by these programs.

11. Supporting mobile units that offer or provide referrals to harm reduction services, treatment, recovery supports, health care, or other appropriate services to persons that use opioids or persons with OUD and any co-occurring SUD/MH conditions.

Jen will send an email to the Consortium listserv when the grant writing assistance program website is active and asked work group members to let Jessica know if they have any suggestions for grant writers who should be on the contact list.

Educational Sessions – Topic Suggestions:

Jessica reviewed past suggestions for the work group to potentially provide educational sessions and asked for comments.

Zakk suggested information about the harm reduction legal landscape and the experiences of other organizations would be of help in navigating the system.

Jessica suggested the Harm Reduction Legal Project as a good source of information, The Network for Public Health Law: <https://www.networkforphl.org/>

Harm Reduction Legal Project: <https://www.networkforphl.org/resources/topics/projects/harm-reduction-legal-project/>

Mugsy suggested the Drug Policy Coalition <https://www.codpc.org/> She also said it would be important to discuss how the law is being interpreted by harm reduction communities and to consider inviting supportive county commissioners, mayors, and district attorneys to provide their insights at a work group meeting.

Jen mentioned Colorado legislators will be on recess during the summer months and might be interested in attending a work group meeting.

Work group members were asked to send any additional ideas or suggestions to the co-chairs:

maggie@highrockiesharmreduction.com

Jessica.eaddy@cuanschutz.edu

Adjournment/Next Meeting:

The work group meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m. The next work group meeting will be held on Thursday, July 9, 2026 from 1 to 2:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Attachments: Work group roster

Selected chat entry:

CDPHE Harm Reduction Legislation: <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/prevention-and-wellness/colorado-public-health-harm-reduction-legislation>