

# Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

## Treatment Work Group Meeting Minutes

May 26, 2022 via Zoom

### **Present:**

Steve Young, MD, Angela Bonaguidi, Co-Chairs  
Maria Bertino, Youth Advocate Programs  
Sarah Prager, AllHealth Network  
Sabine Dordick, Sober AF Entertainment  
Andrea La Rew, Colorado Chiropractic Association  
Ernest Bilinski, CDPHE  
Front Range Clinic: Clark McCoy, Donna Goldstrom, Dayna DeHerra-Smith  
Consortium: Jose Esquibel, Jen Place, Rosemarie MacDowell

**Absent:** See attached roster.

Co-chair Steve Young called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

A motion was made to approve the January 2022 meeting minutes. Motion approved.

Three challenges for your organization now or anticipated challenges. How are these legislative changes going to impact the treatment needs and provides across Colorado. How can the twg help.

### **ARPA Funding & Legislation Update (Jose Esquibel):**

Jose provided a brief history of the work done by Senator Pettersen and Representative Kennedy to allocate ARPA funding for behavioral health. The \$550 million in funding needs to be encumbered by December 24, 2022. Funds will become available beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Jose reviewed the 11 bills that are relevant to the work of the Consortium.

- SB 22-147 Behavioral Healthcare Services for Children
- SB 22-148 Colorado Land-based Tribe Behavioral Health Services Grant Program
- SB 22-177 Investments in Care Coordination Infrastructure
- SB 22-181 Behavioral Healthcare Workforce
- SB 22-196 Health Needs of Persons in Criminal Justice System
- HB 22-1281 Behavioral Healthcare Continuum Gap Grant Program
- HB 22-1283 Youth and Family Behavioral Healthcare
- HB 22-1302 Healthcare Practice Transformation
- HB 22-1303 Increase Residential Behavioral Health Beds
- HB 22-1326 Fentanyl Accountability and Prevention
- HB 22-1386 Competency to Proceed and Restoration to Competency

A copy of the presentation, detailing the funding for services, is attached to the minutes. Jose asked work group members to comment on the bills and what might be relevant to the Consortium's work.

Comments:

Angela Bonaguidi: HB 22 1326 Fentanyl Accountability and Prevention may present some opportunities for the Treatment Work Group. Jose said that he would review the bill requirements and funding allocations and suggested the work group could take a lead in this area. Some additional funding might also be available.

Clark McCoy: The felony now attached to finding trace amounts of fentanyl in drugs may result in many patients being jailed. This is a concern.

Jose Esquibel: Jails are not the best place to provide services. They have been held in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by the US Attorney's office for not providing adequate services. He suggested involving JBBS in a future work group meeting to determine their interpretation of the requirements.

Steve Young: Providing MAT in jails can be complex. Jose said there are guidelines that should be reviewed as there is a provision in the final bill that mandates all the FDA approved medications must be made available, and that the continuity of care must be assured for those being incarcerated and for those being released from incarceration.

Dayna DeHerrera-Smith said she has found it very confusing or challenging to get a clear answer on whether incarcerated individuals still have access to their Medicaid benefits.

Work group members discussed how assistance might be provided to the jails regarding provision of services. Jose said he would provide additional information to assist work group members in determining priorities related to the forthcoming funding. He said he would also explore available literature related to MOUD treatment.

Clark McCoy said that while the media has focused on fentanyl contamination of drug supplies, the majority of their clients are seeking treatment for authentic fentanyl use as their primary drug of choice since heroin is difficult to find. Getting someone off fentanyl onto buprenorphine has become very complicated. In addition, there is no reimbursement for these kinds of extra withdrawal management services.

Steve Young said their clinics are also seeing more young people who are starting fentanyl use.

Jose suggested assistance might be provided through the MAT program at a number of statewide clinics, particularly in determining proper guidance. Funds for the program amount to \$3 million per year for three years.

**Work Group and Consortium Announcements:**

Sarah Prager asked about grant application notifications.

New work group members provided introductions.

Clark McCoy brought up the difficulty involved in reimbursement related to SUD treatment, particularly with an inflation rate of close to 10% the past year and how it relates to workforce retention. Jose said there is funding available for recruitment and retention in one of the bills mentioned above. He will provide additional information.

Steve Young agreed that reimbursements are a challenge and are not keeping up with salary levels. Angela Bonaguidi also mentioned the lack of resources for housing, transportation, and mental health.

**Adjournment and Next Meeting:**

The meeting adjourned at 1:01 p.m. The next work group meeting will be held on Thursday, July 28, 2022 from 12–1:00 p.m.

Attachments: Work group roster, Legislation Presentation