

## Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

### Affected Families & Friends Work Group Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2022 via Zoom

#### **Present:**

Tracey Ritter, Co-chair  
Waltrina DeFrantz-Dufor, University of Denver  
Sabine Dordick, Sober AF Entertainment  
Julie Wright, Maddie Wright Foundation  
Voices for Awareness: Andrea Thomas, Coco Peterson  
Friends of the Haven: Daniele Wolff, Abigail Smith  
Consortium: Gina Olberding, Jen Place, Shayna Micucci, Jessica Eaddy, Lindsey Simbeye, Rosemarie MacDowell

**Absent:** See attached roster.

Work group Co-chair, Tracey Ritter, called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. She reviewed the work group mission statement.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

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

#### **Resource Guide Approval:**

Tracey reviewed the updated Resource List and ask work group members to suggest additions or updates. Waltrina DeFrantz-Dufor mentioned a potential addition and said she would obtain the contact information.

The most recent version of the Resource Guide is available on the Consortium website: <https://corxconsortium.org/wp-content/uploads/Affected-Families-and-Friends-Resource-Guide.pdf>

#### **Friends of the Haven Presentation (Daniele Wolff and Abigail Smith):**

Tracey Ritter introduced the speakers and provided information about their professional backgrounds.

The Haven was established 11 years ago to provide support for women and assist them with childcare. Since that time, the organization has also provided financial and volunteer support. Fundraising to support the organization is done on an annual basis.

The Haven's Reflections for Woman treatment program provides residential substance use treatment in addition to specialized services for pregnant women with infant children. There are many barriers to treatment that exist for women, especially women with children and women in the criminal justice system.

The Haven was developed first as a therapeutic community with a 20-bed facility for women sentenced as diversion clients (sentence diverted from prison to treatment) or individuals who

transitioned from prison once they were eligible. The Haven is considered a 3.5 level of care (intensive residential treatment).

#### Presentation Highlights:

The 90-day program for Colorado women is primarily covered by Medicaid. The Haven is working on contracts with insurance companies.

A year-long program for criminal justice clients is paid through the Department of Justice. Payment is made on a per diem basis, with an enhanced rate for treatment services. Payments do not cover all the program costs. Some funding has been available through Signal Behavioral Health. Grants help to fund peer support.

Many women in the program are involved with DHS and are allowed to bring their child if they have custody.

The organization provides referrals to outpatient programs and provides information on housing resources.

Many Haven clients began drug use when they were about 12 years old; 30 days of residential treatment is not long enough to change the behavior. The first 60 days of treatment focuses on building a treatment plan while making sure the client is stabilizing their mental health. Most of the women have co-occurring disorders, such as bipolar issues, anxiety, depression, PTSD.

Fentanyl now appears to be the drug of choice. The Haven refers women to medication-assisted treatment clinics.

A psychiatrist and a nurse practitioner are available as well as psychiatric fellows who are trained through the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. The therapist is full time, 40 hours per week. All staff are required to have at minimum a Master's degree or a CES to serve as a counselor. A case manager is available to help find resources for families.

Many of the women do not have family support and need to learn how to become self-sufficient. Counselors work on skills by helping women obtain their GED and build their resumes and interviewing skills.

Programs accept transgender women; however, there have only been a few transgender clients. The criminal justice system is getting better about advocating for transgender clients and referring them to the right program.

A question was raised regarding barriers to medication assisted treatment and the perception of replacing one substance for another. Client education and support is essential to counter this misperception. Methadone use was also discussed.

For additional information: <https://www.havenfriends.org/about-us/>

#### **Fentanyl Awareness Day (Andrea Thomas):**

The work group will be collaborating with Andrea for the Fentanyl Awareness Day event scheduled on August 21<sup>st</sup>. Andrea provided an overview of the preparations in process, including the distribution of informational materials and collaboration with the DEA, the CDC,

and messaging efforts through United Airlines to their employees. Voices for Awareness also produced a PSA that can be shared widely on social media and TV networks. Duke Rumely, with Sober AF Entertainment, will be involved in the event. Going forward, Fentanyl Awareness Day will be an annual event.

Andrea also spoke briefly about the work her organization is doing with coroners to review autopsy and toxicology reports and provide assistance to affected families.

**Adjournment and Next Meeting:**

The meeting adjourned at 1:04 p.m. The next work group meeting will be held on Friday, July 15, 2022 from noon to 1 p.m. The speaker will be Jody Nowicki, Rocky Mountain Partnership.

Attachments: Work group roster