

Atlantic County Opioid Task Force

Join Together Atlantic County

May 7, 2020 3:00 – 4:30pm

Zoom Meeting

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Chief Bruce DeShields & Captain Charles DeFebbo (Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office), Laurie Smith, Bob Zlotnick, Amber Cutano & Brian Wilson (JTAC/APR), Dorothy Bowker (EHT Schools/Eagle Academy), Rachel Campbell (South Jersey AIDS Alliance), Jen Pielhau (Atlantic County Municipal Alliance), Scott Gras (Hope One), Sean Kolins (Seabrook), Dylan Wulderk (AtlantiCare Foundation) and Jesse Dariano (JBRC/All Roads Recovery Center).

Laurie opened the meeting, welcoming the attendees and introductions were made.

Minutes from the last meeting were approved virtually and emailed prior to the meeting. If anyone did not have a chance to review them and see a change, email Laurie. The minutes are posted on the JTACNJ.org website.

Updates:

Grant Updates:

DFC: Federal grant, year seven renewal was submitted in April.

CARA: Federal opioid grant - year three activity plan was submitted and we received notice of award.

Most grants will not be holding us to specific deadlines. We are completing interventions that we can at this time and will make adjustments as necessary for the coming months.

AC LEAD Program: Scott reported the program is continuing with current clients but they have not added any new clients since March 18th due to COVID. Chief DeShields informed the group since our last meeting, another person has successfully completed the program so they now have two graduates.

Hope One: The new vehicle is at the COVID-19 testing site at the Hamilton Mall but is not yet being used yet in the communities. The team is still working remotely to help get individuals into treatment and some staff have started doing some street outreach with the homeless population. Scott is still working at the hospital so he has chosen to be cautious and not do street outreach right now. The first week this started they put about 18 clients into treatment and have definitely been seeing an increase in calls. The biggest increases seem to be alcohol related and they believe this trend will continue. They haven't had a problem getting anyone into treatment but it seems as though when people call in the expectation is that treatment centers are closed. Hospitals seem to be calling if a person overdoses and is brought to the hospital but if a person receives Narcan on the street and refuses treatment they are being let go. A lot of how overdoses are being handled by the hospitals right now depends upon the doctor that is on call at the time and what their procedure is. Scott said that during a 24 hour on call hospital shift, he is getting about 4-6 calls.

Chief DeShields reported with funding from the 2 Helping Hands grants, the sheriff's office hired two more recovery specialists that will start after COVID-19 pandemic has subsided and they bought two additional laptops for the Hope One vehicle. Hope One also received a donation from an individual.

Opioid Overdose Recovery Program (OORP) at AtlantiCare: Dylan reported business as usual and they have seen an increase in overdoses over the past few weeks.

Narcan Trainings/Deployments: Most Narcan trainings are on hold right now and the municipal alliance Narcan program has been frozen. Some counties up north have started to offer online trainings but it doesn't seem like anything like that is being offered in Atlantic County yet. Hope One has been meeting weekly with Rowan for their grant to get the train the trainer for Narcan up and running but their Narcan trainings are on hold right now. There was going to be another date in April for pharmacies to giveaway Narcan but that did not happen, most likely due to COVID.

Capt. DeFebbo reported there has been a slight decrease in overdoses (since the last meeting's report) from March 5th – May 6th with 63 Narcan deployments being done in Atlantic County. The deployments were as follows: Egg Harbor Township had the highest number of deployments with 22 (1 fatal), Galloway 8 (2 fatal), Hamilton Township 6, Absecon 5, Ventnor 4 (1 fatal), Hammonton and Mullica 3, Northfield 2 (1 fatal), Pleasantville, Atlantic City, Egg Harbor City and Margate 2, and Somers Point 1.

Brochure for Narcan Reversals: The brochure was finalized and because it was being done under the Helping Hands grant, Chief DeShields sent it to the Attorney General's office for review. The AG's office asked that one of the pictures be removed and a couple of other edits are being done, hopefully it will be approved by the state and printed shortly.

RX Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit: This four day in-person summit was changed to a three day virtual summit. Laurie, Chief DeShields, Jen Pielhau, and Kathy McFadden did the three day virtual summit and received a lot of information. The workshops are available on demand for one year so they can go back and watch any workshops they missed. Most sessions were 45 minutes long but some were 2 hours long and all of the power point slides are available to be downloaded as well.

Opioid Town Hall: This was scheduled to take place on March 18th but was cancelled. Laurie has reached out to Brian at Shore Medical Center, just to let him know that we are still willing to sponsor the event whenever it is rescheduled, even if it is changed to a virtual event. He thanked her for reaching out and said they still wanted to connect with the community in the future.

Youth Summit: Our annual youth summit was scheduled to take place at Stockton on April 7th. This event was canceled but we are turning it into a virtual event. The presentations for the summit will be recorded and the links to the presentations will be put on JTAC's YouTube channel. The links will then be sent to the schools and our hope is that going virtual may actually increase attendance this year. Participation will be tracked and 5-question quizzes will be included with each workshop for the schools to grade the students.

Parent Presentations: With all schools being closed for the end of the year, we were unable to do our annual prom/graduation parent presentations. We have been in contact with Tim McMahon who does a Hidden in Plain Sight presentation and are hoping to get a recorded version of his presentation to post and send out to the schools by the end of May/beginning of June.

Prescription Drop Boxes, Detera and Locking Medicine Cabinets: With most people being quarantined and spending more time at home, now is a great time to focus on proper medication disposal. Brian has been posting on the JTAC's Facebook page to increase awareness and asked if everyone could like/share the information. We are encouraging people to reach out to their local police departments by contacting the non-emergency number to find out if/when their drop boxes are available. Some departments have informed Brian that they are still having issues with disposal of liquids and syringes in the drop boxes. Some departments have installed the magnetic file bin on the side of the box to provide Detera for liquid disposal but if a person is caught improperly disposing of liquids or syringes in the drop boxes they could be fined. We are still available to give out Detera and/or locking medicine cabinets. Children's System of Care reached out and picked up cabinets to give out to parents. If you know anyone who is interested, have them call Brian and leave a message and he will set up a contactless pick up at our Absecon office. Brian is most likely going to set up these types of pickups for Thursdays but nothing has been decided yet. We are also hoping to do some pharmacy outreach to help pharmacies with the requirements of Charlie's Law by providing safe disposal methods to patients.

Laurie brought up a new Tide commercial that addresses properly securing cleaners/medications. This commercial was created in response to teens eating Tide Pods but also shows locking medicine cabinets so it is a good reminder about proper medication storage.

New Business:

Partnership for a Drug Free NJ/Horizon BCBS Foundation KOOA Town Halls: In-person town halls have been postponed from spring until fall but they have started a bi-weekly webinar series. This past week was about how the opioid epidemic started and the next one is about trauma and youth during COVID-19. If you are interested in these webinars, all of the information is posted on the PDFNJ's website.

SBIRT-Children System of Care: We had SBIRT in schools under the CARA grant but removed it because it was hard to achieve due to the active consent law in New Jersey. Laurie is going to look at doing SBIRT under our Partnership for Success grant because we work with the Children System of Care and she may be able to do a training to help the childcare workers implement the SBIRT with their clients. The Children System of Care has been seeing a decrease in child abuse calls but they fear this is only because it is being underreported with schools being closed.

Service Updates for All Agencies:

Atlantic Prevention Resources: The prevention office was closed and staff started working remotely in March, the treatment office remained open for a short time (7-10 days) but closed because of safety concerns. Everyone is now working from home and most meetings are now virtual. We are doing virtual groups for our treatment clients and Bob is hosting the Zoom IOP meeting tonight. Our treatment office has stopped doing urine drug screenings (UDS) for the time being because recovery court has seemed to suspend sanctioning anyone for not submitting or submitting a positive UDS right now. We did have to do one face-to-face evaluation for recovery court about two weeks ago and will do them as needed but are trying to keep any face-to-face meetings to a minimum for now. During the face-to-face we made sure we followed social distancing guidelines, wore masks and stayed 10 feet apart in our large group room.

Our program staff has moved all of their programs to virtual platforms and teachers have integrated our programs into their curriculums (Life Skills, Forest Friends, Strengthening Families, etc.). These programs

are being done through either Zoom or Google classroom. We are still doing our Strengthening Families program and are starting a military family one soon.

Our tobacco team is working remotely and our quit center is still up and running remotely too. Quitting now is extremely important because of the effects tobacco has on the lungs and increased risks of COVID-19 for smokers. Virtual counseling is taking place, and clients can still get free Nicotine Replacement Therapies (NRT's).

Bob will be doing a radio town hall on underage drinking and parents' role modeling during COVID-19 on Tuesday, May 12 from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. on WPG Talk Radio 1450AM/95.5FM/online. Laurie included a flyer for this event with the Thursday JTAC email.

Seabrook: All facilities are open and operational for all levels of inpatient and outpatient care. They are following all of the CDC's guidelines and all clients and staff have daily screenings where they have their temperature taken and meet with the medical team. They have an in-house cleaning team and initial screenings are much more thorough. They are only holding outpatient groups at their main campus where they have an abundant amount of space to properly social distance and all outpatient clients are thoroughly screened before entering, all other outpatient groups have been moved to Telehealth. Any outside vendors are screened and all packages are disinfected as well. This has been a huge task but they are doing it all day every day to keep everyone safe and so far they have not had any positive cases at any of their 4 locations. Initially they saw a small decline in new clients due to COVID-19 but are now starting to see a slight increase especially relating to alcohol use disorder.

John Brooks Recovery Center (JBRC)/All Roads Recovery Center: They have moved all groups to a virtual platform and Jesse posted a schedule with a lot of new groups in the chat (Mon. - Fri. – General Recovery Talk Group; M-F - 9 a.m. – Get Fit Recovery; Wednesdays - 12 p.m. – Recovery Yoga; Thursday – 4 p.m. – Faith-Based Recovery; Friday – 6 p.m. - Game Night; Saturday – 10:30 a.m. – Refuge Recovery). They are working hard to keep clients involved because they know how important having a routine is for those in recovery. Telephone one-on-one's and inpatient care are still being done but all outpatient groups have been moved to Telehealth. The new housing is going well, all of the guys were working but most of them lost their jobs due to the shutdown. A few of them have been able to find new jobs and have been working hard to keep busy. The 8 guys have been doing a lot of hiking and walking in the woods and staying active with groups. They have a full-time peer navigator who is working with their sober living houses to help with finding employment if someone has lost their job. To help lessen the financial burden, rent that isn't able to be paid now isn't going to be accrued and they are only taking percentages from people who can't pay their full amount right now.

South Jersey Aids Alliance/Oasis: Started working remotely on March 18th and are still doing some food deliveries to clients. SAP is now opened every Tuesday from 12-2 p.m. Last week they saw about 20 clients and that number jumped up to about 68 this week and they were able to give out about 40 Narcan kits. If the number of clients continues to increase, they will most likely open on Thursdays as well. They had their annual 3-day AID's Alliance Walk virtually and it really went well and they were still able to raise money.

Eagle Academy: Dorothy said virtual schooling has been really tough, parents, students and teachers are all struggling. She has been trying to stay connected with the students and has been posting resources for them and their parents. She has found that a lot of families are struggling financially and she has

been doing food deliveries to try to help with the burden. She feels that a lot of students/families are falling through the cracks but most parents seem to really appreciate all that they are doing for them.

Municipal Alliances: GCADA has indefinitely frozen all municipal alliance funding as of March 23rd so any work done up to that date is being paid but ongoing work is on a voluntary basis for now. Jen has continued to forward webinars/information to coordinators to have them share this information. They had worked on a deficiency plan but Jen got a deficiency list this morning and because of the stoppage of funding there will now be additional monies withdrawn from each of the counties again. The schedule for county employees has been left up to individual units to decide (every other day, every other week, or mornings/afternoons, etc.). IDRC is postponed until at least June and some counties are working on doing remote classes but Atlantic County is not. When IDRC classes resume, they will be done weekly to catch up and class sizes will be smaller.

Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office: Courts have mostly been shut down and most detention hearings are being done by video.

Announcements:

JTAC: JTAC meeting is Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. If you have any announcements you would like to share, please share them with Laurie before noon on Thursdays. If she receives anything after noon, it will be shared the following Thursday.

Peer Recovery Support Summit: This event was cancelled but NJPN has started The Confab, which meets twice a week (Tuesdays and Fridays) for peer recovery support, and information is posted on NJPN's website.

NJPN Annual Addiction Conference: Virtual on June 18th anyone who had previously registered will automatically have their registration transferred.

Additional Announcements:

Some county employees do not have email access from home, so if you are reaching out and haven't heard back keep this in mind.

Laurie thanked everyone for working so hard and continuing their services, please don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything.

Next Meeting:

TBD

Motion to adjourn the meeting: Bob Zlotnick 1st, Capt. DeFebbo 2nd, Meeting Adjourned