

Atlantic County Opioid Task Force

Join Together Atlantic County

January 7, 2021 3:00 – 4:10pm

Zoom Meeting

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Chief Bruce DeShields (Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office), Laurie Smith, Bob Zlotnick, Kathleen McFadden, Amber Cutano & Brian Wilson (JTAC/APR), Jen Pielhau (Atlantic County Municipal Alliance), Sean Kolins (Seabrook), Dylan Wulderk (AtlantiCare Foundation), Assemb. John Armato (NJ State Leg), Lindsay Komar (HopeOne and AC LEAD)

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

Minutes from the November meeting were approved via email but there were some minor changes so Laurie emailed them a second time. If anyone did not have a chance to review them and finds additional changes, email Laurie. The minutes are posted on the JTACNJ.org website.

Updates:

Grant Updates: Federal Grants-Drug Free Communities Grant (DFC) and CARA (opioid prevention) have been going smoothly with the change to the CDC.

Opiate and Athlete prevention grant- The workgroup for this workshop has been working hard to get presentations recorded. Five presentations have been recorded including Sgt. Jen Cugini, Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office, Dave Sholler, Philadelphia 76ers, Joe Bunting, Bunting Family Pharmacy, Don Rogers, Advanced Recovery Systems and Melanie Mackleer, APR. Laurie has to record an intro and the group will be meeting again next week, then we will do a press release and the prerecorded presentations will be sent out to Athletic Directors/coaches and schools. We chose to do prerecorded presentations due to the unknown of whether or not sports would be held in-person or not. This format allows the coaches and athletic directors to have students watch the videos based on their schedules. The videos will also be available on our website for parents to watch and we will have a section for any questions for the presenters. We are also continuing with our advertisements in Glory Days magazine.

AC LEAD Program: Lindsay Komar reported the program is continuing, they have two participants right now, one is set to complete the program next week and the other is currently in treatment. With COVID, arrests are down on some offenses and participation has been pretty slow but they believe it will pick up soon.

Hope One: Lindsay Komar reported that they have really expanded the program and have a minimum of 10 case management services being provided to their clients. They are training Enlightened Cafe in Ventnor on Narcan and are available for trainings if anyone is interested. They are continuing to formulate new partnerships and are currently partnering with Ocean Inc in hopes of having transportation provided to clients and Rowan has partnered with them to provide HIV and Hep-C testing. Numbers have been increasing and they have been super busy due to COVID. People seem to be relapsing and looking to get into treatment because meetings have been shut down and they are not meeting with others for support.

Narcan Trainings/Deployments:

Chief DeShields did not have the year-end deployment numbers from Capt. DeFebbo yet so he will either email them to Laurie or we will discuss them at the March meeting.

Hope One is available for Narcan trainings, if you are interested, contact Lindsay Komar or Susan Long directly. Lindsay will work on getting a flier to Laurie with this information.

Jen Pielhau reported the county can no longer provide the Narcan training through the alliance program but they are able to make the trainings available through the county grant. They restarted virtual trainings and held their first one last month through the Hamilton Township Municipal Alliance, it went well. Jen and Brian have scheduled another one for JTAC's faith-based leaders. The only issue is that Jen cannot mail the Narcan to participants so logistics have to be worked out on how to get the kits to the participants after the training is done. The county does have quite a bit of kits available so reach out to Jen if your organization is interested in doing a training.

Opioid Overdose Recovery Program (OORP) at AtlantiCare: Dylan didn't have updated numbers because they are usually provided mid-month. Program is still running and they are still offering patients Naloxone (Narcan) kits through Rutgers.

Prescription Drop Boxes, Deterra and Locking Medicine Cabinets:

Hamilton Township Police Department's DEA waiver has been completed and we are just waiting on scheduling a date/time to have the box delivered and installed. The hope is this will be done sometime next week and the box will be unveiled and available to the public soon. The total amount of medications collected in 2020 so far is 1,500 lbs, we are still waiting on a few departments to report their numbers. This is a pretty good number so far, considering the COVID restrictions were in place for most of the year. Brian is going to follow up with a pharmacy in Hammonton about having a drop box installed. The issue with some of the pharmacies is that after the first four liners and box is purchased by JTAC, the pharmacy will be responsible for the cost of additional liners. Brian reached out to Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals to see if they would be interested in or if they have any programs that could offset the cost of the liners but they did not. They did however suggest that they may be able to provide an additional donation of Deterra. This donation would allow us to adjust funding and use it to offset the liner cost as opposed to purchasing Deterra. The Somers Point Police Department suspended their drop box program due to officer safety. We attempted to work with them on some changes and made suggestions to help with these issues but they decided it was still in their best interest to suspend the program and have the box removed. Brian will be picking up the box in the next week or two. Bunting Family Pharmacy had their box placed in September and it seemed to start off slow. After doing an interview with the Press of Atlantic City in December, they have started to see an increase and they went through a liner and a half shortly afterwards.

JTAC ordered 3000 Deterra disposal bags over the summer and had some leftover so there is plenty available. We also recently ordered an additional 500 locking medicine cabinets that are being labeled, so there are about 600 in total with 100 available for immediate pick up.

School Resiliency Training: We held some presentations for parents in November/December. We have a training by Dr. Lori Desautels, Butler University scheduled for the end of January but Laurie was unsure if it would be held or not. Laurie sent a survey out to the schools this week to get feedback on how the

resiliency teams were coping with COVID and to see if they were still able to do the different brain strategies. She has received about 25 responses so far. We are continuing to provide technical assistance to the schools.

Faith Based Outreach: Brian reported that the first JTAC faith-based meeting was held in November and the hope is to get our faith-based sector back up and running. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 20th via Zoom. Jen Pielhau will be doing a Narcan training as well as an overview of the municipal alliances in the county. We did connect with Recovery Centers of America because they have a special faith-based group and invited them to our meeting as well.

Involuntary Transport/Commitment Laws: We have several interns starting in the next couple of months and we will have them do some research and look into what other states are doing and what legislation is out there relating to involuntary transport and commitment laws. Assemblyman Armato and Dr. Bob Zlotnick have discussed this but the assemblyman thinks this is going to be a big lift because there is a lot of resistance. Assemblyman Armato said that the more information he can get to back this being done successfully in other states will help make a case to get this moving in New Jersey.

Physician Outreach: Amber reported that we mailed a packet to about 200 doctor's offices in Atlantic County. The mailing included a JTAC brochure, JTAC's Treatment Resource Guide, an opioid prescriber guide from the Partnership for a Drug Free NJ, CRAFFT survey questions regarding underage drinking, tobacco and marijuana use, medication disposal and security information (Deterra and locking medicine cabinet posters) and information regarding the Atlantic County Quit Center (tobacco).

Overdose Fatality Review Teams: Jen Pielhau informed the group that they are just waiting on the Board of County Commissioners to approve the contract on what they will be doing. Atlantic City started their group but the county group has to go through different channels to get approved. Jen is hoping that by the end of January they will have more information to share. Laurie asked if the review of the overdose would be based on where the overdose occurred or where the decedent lived. Jen said she doesn't think that is going to matter and that it will probably be up to the committee to decide which cases they are going to look into. She thinks it will be more about what information can be gathered for the decedent. Not all overdose death cases are going to be able to be reviewed. The estimate is that they will be able to review 3 to 4 cases each meeting. There will most likely be flexibility so that the most information can be obtained in the timeframe they are allowed. Atlantic City and the county will remain in close contact to assure that they aren't reviewing the same cases.

New Business:

Company newsletters – Brian put together a brief informational piece that companies can distribute to their staff about proper drug disposal, securing medications and free Deterra. He reached out to some bigger companies like ACUA, Local 54 and Atlantic County Chamber of Commerce. Shore Local shared the information as well. We are going to continue to do this outreach in the coming months and would like to be able to reach casino employees. If anyone has any contacts in the casinos or any other businesses that they think would like to share this, please contact Brian. Jen Pielhau let Laurie know that she has some contacts from doing the Narcan trainings in the casinos. These contacts may be helpful so she will reach out to Laurie.

Police/Parent Resiliency/Trauma training – We held a community resiliency event back in December and invited all community members to attend. We did not have any police attend the training but Connie Price from the Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) was in attendance. Through Connie, we connected with Judge Maven and the JJC’s vicinage partnership which includes police officers. The vicinage partnership holds a forum each year and they would like for the event to focus on ACE’s, resiliency and trauma this year. Laurie attended a meeting about planning the event in December and a second meeting is being held this Monday at 9 a.m. to go over more details and ideas for this event. This event will be a parent training as well as a specific training for law enforcement and juvenile justice officers.

Stigma event – Brian and Laurie have been reaching out to some of the other coalitions and met with Mark from the Burlington County coalition because they held a virtual town hall stigma event. Their town hall included 4-5 speakers and a Q & A with the speakers afterwards. Since stigma has been one of our focus areas the last couple years, we are thinking this type of event might be a great idea to do in the spring.

Opioid Resource Fair - In 2017, we held a community event at the Atlantic County library where we shared the different resources that are available in the county relating to opioid prevention/treatment/recovery. Since we most likely won’t be able to hold our opioid town hall event in the spring and because the amount of resources has increased so much in the last year, we are hoping to hold a virtual resource event instead. The event may be able to be combined with the stigma event and done as a two-part series. Laurie asked for feedback on both events and Jen shared that the municipal alliance has some funding for a stigma event and thinks that it would be a good idea. She would like to partner with us for these events. Laurie would like to do these events in the spring and then hopefully look into possible doing the in-person town hall in the fall if restrictions have been lifted.

Spanish Translation Materials/Distribution – We are in the process of having most of our materials (JTAC brochure, rack cards, posters, etc.) translated into Spanish. After we receive the translated materials, we will be distributing them through Hispanic organizations. One of the interns is bilingual so she is going to help with this project. The cost was much lower than expected so if anyone is considering doing this and would like more information, reach out to Brian.

Marketing/Media Committee-Opioid prevention radio PSA’s, movie theater ads – We have been doing a lot of marketing recently and used to have a committee for this area so we are looking to start that back up again. This committee will help create ads and come up with different marketing ideas for the year. We were in the process of doing movie theater ads last year but due to a change in ownership and then COVID, we delayed them. We are hoping to possible sign contracts and have them done in the fall. Please let Laurie know if you are interested in joining this committee.

Ordinance Packet – We do this mailing yearly in January/February but due to COVID we didn’t send it out last year. We are in the process of getting this together for this year and sending it out sometime in February. One of the ordinances requires that locking medicine cabinets be installed in new construction homes and when bathroom renovations are done. There are about 12-13 ordinances included and a sample packet will be sent to everyone to look over. This packet will go to all city councils, mayors, police chiefs and municipal alliance coordinators. Assemb. Armato asked Laurie to send him some talking points on the mandatory lockboxes in new construction homes so that his office can look into possible legislation.

National Rx Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit- This summit is being held virtually April 5-8 and funding is available for staff and coalition members to attend. Last year attendees were given access to the event until the end of the year. Laurie is unsure if that will be the case this year or if it will only be accessible for the scheduled week. Laurie put the link for the conference in the chat box, if anyone is interested, please let her know.

2021 Interventions – Laurie shared the interventions for 2020 and went over what we could/couldn't do. Due to COVID, we were unable to do some of our 2020 interventions mostly due to shifting demands but most interventions were still able to be completed and some just had to be changed slightly. Laurie will be adjusting this list for 2021 and will send out changes to everyone and the updated list will be posted on our website.

Announcements:

Assemb. Armato's bill A-2280 which is the brokering bill will be voted on Monday. There is a companion bill in the Senate and if both pass they will go to the Governor's desk. Once this bill is signed, Assemb. Armato would like to get together with Chief DeShields to start identifying and holding accountable "bad actors" in the county. He has been made aware of some organizations that are recruiting patients but wants to wait until the bill is enacted to meet up and discuss this so they are able to be held accountable. Assemb. Armato believes that the bill relating to co-prescribing Narcan with opioids is still with the health committee but he was unsure because his office has been so busy with COVID related issues. He told Laurie that he will look into it and let her know since it does seem to be slowing down slightly and he is hopeful they may be able to start focusing on other things. Laurie let him know that if there is any legislation related to substance use, he can always let her know and she would share it with other coalitions throughout the state. If you have any questions or legislation ideas, please do not hesitate to reach out to his office.

Marijuana legislation was voted on 3 to 1 but it doesn't seem like people were clear on what they were actually voting on. The vote was for legalization but there were no limitations/restrictions on things such as use, sale, growth, etc. These limitations/restrictions have been left up to legislators to decide on and it has been a big undertaking. Personal use is 6 ounces (which could fill a shoe box or roll over 300 joints) and this amount can be bought daily and considered personal use. The only limitation that was set was cost. Hallucinogenic mushrooms were actually added to the original bill but were pulled out and now listed as a separate bill. JTAC is working with NJPN on the state level to address the prevention concerns relating to the marijuana legalization. Laurie mentioned that any municipalities that had previously banned the sale of marijuana will have to go back within 180 days and re-do their ordinance.

JTAC Meeting: JTAC full coalition meeting is Tuesday, January 12th, 11:00am

Jewish Family Services (JFS) Program – JFS has a new program called Pathways to Recovery and it is for anyone who has been impacted by opioid use who is an Atlantic County resident, 18 years of age or older and are unemployed or underemployed. The program will help with employment services by offering case management services along with compensation for training. They can also provide compensation to the employment agency to pay the persons salary. Chris Barone is the contact person for this program and he will be briefly speaking about it at the JTAC meeting. Laurie just learned about this program at the last Children's Inter-Agency Coordinating Council (CIACC) meeting and will forward any further information she receives about it to the group.

Volunteers of America (VOA) – Dasha Brown was unable to make the meeting but Laurie shared a flier about VOA extending their Safe Return program into Cape May County.

Atlantic County COVID Vaccination Site – Jen Pielhau reported that the vaccination site began at Atlantic Cape Community College on Tuesday for people who are in the first category. It will run Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for the next two, possibly three weeks. This is a temporary site that will be used until the state comes in and sets up the mega site in Atlantic City. Jen said it appeared to be very well organized and they received positive feedback. Crowds and lines were very minimal due to the spacing out of appointments and people arriving for their appointments on time.

Seabrook –Sean Kolins reported Seabrook has been acquired by Summit BHC, based out of Tennessee. Seabrook’s name will remain the same along with its 46-year rich history of providing substance use disorder treatment throughout NJ and surrounding areas. There are many new exciting things to come that will enhance the patient and family experience.

Bob scheduled Joe Bunting, Bunting Family Pharmacy to be on his radio show next Tuesday and Ken Litwak will be talking about his new certification. Ken will speak first and then Joe will follow at around 9:15 – 9:20 to discuss the drop box. Chief DeShields asked if Bob had any feedback from the opioid radio town hall and he said it was well received. He said there are ways to track the number of plays of the recording but he didn’t have that information. Bob said next time we do that type of event he will make sure to get that information.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, March 4th at 3:00pm, virtual. Once we can meet in-person again it will be back at the Atlantic County Prosecutor’s Office.

Motion to adjourn the meeting: Bruce DeShields 1st, John Armato 2nd, Meeting Adjourned