

# Atlantic County Opioid Task Force

## Join Together Atlantic County

July 9, 2020 3:00 – 4:30pm

Zoom Meeting

### Meeting Minutes

**In Attendance:** Chief Bruce DeShields & Sgt. Jen Cugini (Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office), Laurie Smith, Bob Zlotnick, Amber Cutano & Brian Wilson (JTAC/APR), Dorothy Bowker (Retired-EHT Schools/Eagle Academy), 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), Dasha Brown (Volunteers of America) Assemb. John Armato (NJ State Leg), Chief Donna Higbee (Galloway Twp. PD). Joe Bunting (Bunting Family Pharmacy) \* Joe came into meeting and then Zoom continuously shut down his access.

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 and CARA- Federal grants, CARA grant is specific to opioid prevention. Both of these grants have been moved from SAMHSA to the CDC. We already submitted activity plans for the following year, this will not change much in the grants just the department they are from within the ONDCP. Our Federal grant, STOP ACT, for underage drinking is remaining with SAMHSA.

**Narcan Trainings/Deployments:** Jen Pielhau reported the Municipal Alliance grant funding had been frozen since March due to COVID, as a result she is unable to do Narcan training at this time. There are groups across the state doing virtual Narcan trainings, Urban Treatment does the trainings for the southern region. Once the Municipal Alliance funding is available she will not be able to provide funding under that grant but the county will be able to provide it through other funding she is waiting on the details. It will most likely be the same setup just a different funding source. Municipal Alliances are waiting for their new fiscal allocations, there will be reduction in their programs due to budget cuts.

Scott Gras reported Hope One has been doing a lot of Narcan trainings, 35 were done last night and a few hundred people were trained over the past few weeks. They are partnering with the sober living houses to train people and if anyone needs training just reach out to Hope One.

**AC LEAD Program:** Chief DeShields reported the program is continuing they had their second graduate complete the program and a few other individuals are completing applications for the program. The program did slow down due to COVID but they are up and running. The recovery court is still virtual they do not have a date to reopen yet.

**Hope One:** Scott Gras reported they have continued operations, they were at first working from home remotely and still linking people to treatment. In June, they started back at the office and are out in the

community 3 days a week Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and two nights Tuesday and Thursdays 5-8pm.

**Overdose Rates:** Capt. DeFebbo was unable to attend today but he shared with Laurie the latest overdose rates and she shared them on the screen. Naloxone administrations over the past few months were February 45 with 1 fatality, March 28 with 3 fatalities, April 34 with 2 fatalities, May 43 with 9 fatalities. Numbers were going down and then spiked again in May. Laurie emailed an article before the meeting about the increase of opioid overdoses and deaths across the country during the pandemic.

Dylan Wulderk shared nationally, statewide and in the county, patients do not want to be transported to the hospital due to COVID. This is true for all health issues not just ones that are substance use related.

**Opioid Overdose Recovery Program (OORP) at AtlantiCare:** Dylan said they are still continuing services, they have internally created a document for EMS to give patients who are refusing to be transported to the hospital. The document explains the OORP services, the program usually meets with patients once they come into the emergency room so if they refuse medical transportation then the handout may help link them to the OORP resources.

**Marchman Act:** In Florida family members can have someone court ordered to treatment. Laurie said several months ago Bob Zlotnick sent her information of a similar program in Colorado. She will find that information and email it to the group.

**Brochure for Narcan Reversals:** The brochure was finalized however the state had issues with the “tone” of the card. After further review, editing and discussion with the state, another draft was sent and they now have stated other issues with the card. We are waiting to hear back from them and have requested a meeting with them. Laurie shared the latest draft of the card on the screen, everyone thought it looked fine. Chief DeShields will reach out to members of the group to meet with state officials if necessary. The brochure is not for health fairs it is only for those who refuse medical treatment after an overdose.

Jesse Dariano from John Brooks Recovery Center reported that data has shown that straight forward language is better. Assemb. John Armato asked Chief DeShields to contact his office with the information. It was also noted that the Attorney General’s office mandated all police departments share information with people who refuse medical treatment and this brochure covers that mandate. Previously police departments were disseminating our resource guide listing treatment agencies but this card for Narcan reversals is better suited for the audience and gives just one phone number for people to call for help. Dylan said if the group wanted to see the information they have now given to EMS for those who refuse medical treatment let him know and he can email it to the group.

**Opioid Town Hall:** The in-person event with Shore Medical Center was cancelled in March due to COVID and the state shut down. Grantors know we may not be able to complete all of our projects but that we will host an event as soon as possible. Laurie plans on hosting two opioid town halls in the coming year, one to make up the canceled event in March and then hopefully another one can be held in-person in 2021. For this Fall in either September or October we could put something together either a virtual town hall meeting through Zoom or doing a town hall on the Harry Hurley radio show. A marijuana prevention town hall is taking place in August and Laurie will reach out to the members as something is planned for the Fall regarding opioid prevention. The event would be an overview of opioids in Atlantic County and Laurie will reach out to possible partners to set up the event.

**Prescription Drop Boxes, Deterra and Locking Medicine Cabinets:** Several police departments have suspended their drop boxes due to COVID, we encourage the public to call their department's non-emergency number to check to see if the box is open. Deterra is still being distributed, 2800 bags have been given out over the past couple of months this is due in large part to 2500 bags given to local pharmacies. Locking medicine cabinets are still being distributed through a contactless pick up on our office porch. Distribution did slow down a little over the past few months due to COVID but there are still people picking them up.

Chief Higbee shared the permanent disposal box in Galloway Police Department at 300 E Jimmie Leeds Rd is still operational. They have not stopped taking medication even during COVID.

**Parent Presentations:** We are scheduling 2- 15 Minute Child Break presentations done by the Partnership for a Drug Free NJ. The presentation is about an hour and it discusses how to talk to your children about substance use. The presentations may be done July 30<sup>th</sup> and August 5<sup>th</sup>, Laurie will share a flier once those plans are finalized. We also have 3 presentations each year with the Greater Egg Harbor Regional School District which consist of the three high schools, Oakcrest, Cedar Creek and Absegami. A presentation is done in all three schools on a different day, these are being planned virtually. We will be participating and are creating a presentation on resources and teaching refusal skills to youth.

**Youth Summit:** The virtual presentations are completed and were not sent the end of the school year. The project was put on hold due to the consultant working on another project for APR. Virtual summit workshops will be shared with the schools in the Fall. The schools will be able to utilize the workshops as a half-day youth conference or as individual presentations in health or gym class.

### **New Business:**

**Pharmacy/Veterinarian/Hospice Outreach:** Pharmacy outreach has begun, Brian has been visiting them in person to discuss with them proper drug disposal and given them materials for their customers. Materials include rack cards, magnets, stickers, posters and if interested a case of Deterra. Many of the pharmacies have taken a case of Deterra including larger pharmacies such as Walmart, Shoprite and CVS, he has visited 39 pharmacies so far and 25 have taken Deterra bags. There are 55 pharmacies total throughout Atlantic County. After the pharmacy outreach has been completed he will begin to reach out to the veterinarians and hospice organizations. The hospice outreach has gone a step further over the past years, we do not have to contact all of them in-person, when they run out of materials most of them are now contacting Brian throughout the year for supplies. We hope in the future the pharmacies will begin doing the same thing.

As part of the pharmacy outreach Brian is talking to them about placing permanent prescription drop boxes in their pharmacy. Two have shown interest but they are leery of the cost of disposal. Brian is unsure of the cost and will find out that information.

Walgreens in Egg Harbor Twp. at Ocean Heights Ave and Zion Rd does take liquids whereas most drop boxes especially the ones in the police departments do not take liquids. Brian will post this information on our JTAC website.

**School Resiliency Trainings:** These trainings are listed under our regional coalition grants opioid logic model. It is linked to opioids due to the trauma that may be experienced by youth in a family with someone suffering from an opioid use disorder but it may also be trauma caused by domestic violence, alcohol use and other issues. There are two 3-day trainings scheduled for July 13-15 and July 20-22. The July 13<sup>th</sup> trainings has 224 registrations so far and the July 20<sup>th</sup> trainings has 175 current registrations, these are not just Atlantic County some registrations are from other parts of the state and country/world. We currently have 18 school districts with teams and they are adding educators to their team with the additional trainings. There will also be a workshop for PreK-Elementary educators on July 16. We held two virtual parent resiliency trainings and had over 400 parents in attendance. With hosting the events virtually, it removes the transportation and stigma barriers, also due to COVID more people were unemployed and able to participate.

**Opiate Athlete Event/Glory Days Magazine:** We previously held a workshop at Mays Landing Country Club and had athletic directors, coaches, and student athletes in attendance from Mainland High School. We also created a toolkit with the New Jersey Prevention Network for anyone working with or parenting a youth athlete. We have provided copies to the schools and public and have the toolkit available on our website. We also provide technical assistance as needed to the schools, and have reached out to the Galloway and Egg Harbor Twp. recreational departments to present to their coaches' meetings for their youth athletic clubs. Those were cancelled in the Spring due to COVID. We are going to begin placing opiates and athlete prevention advertisements and banner ads in the local Glory Days online sports magazine.

We will be hosting a virtual presentation for youth athletes, parents and those working with athletes. Sgt. Cugini reached out to us to participate in opiate prevention among athletes. As a former Division I athlete and sergeant with the prosecutor's office, Sgt. Cugini introduced herself and discussed her passion to help prevent opiate use among athletes in Atlantic County. Chief DeShields discussed Sgt. Cugini's experience of having a sports injury while playing her last game and that athletes need to have a plan for when they finish sports whether it is in high school or college. Sgt. Cugini expressed the difficulty of needing surgery after the season ended and having her parents support to help her through the surgery and getting her career started once she was done college. A presentation will be put together and held live if possible with a recording of the presentation to then be placed on our YouTube channel for future use. The event may be held as early as August but we are contacting athletic directors and coaches to discuss timing for Fall sports.

Laurie asked the group for ideas of the content and audience for the Glory Days ads. We can change the ads as often as we would like to update them. Dorothy suggested reaching out to the athletic directors to get their opinions. She also stated it is a good idea to work with the community recreational programs since most middle schools do not have athletics and the youth play on town teams. Chief Higbee commended Sgt. Cugini for her information and that teenagers will benefit from her message. We will begin with the August edition of Glory Days Magazine and start with an ad regarding the importance of medication disposal. If anyone would like to join a workgroup to help create advertisements and plan the athlete workshop please let Laurie know. Laurie asked if anyone knew of when sports would be starting and Dorothy stated EHT is beginning now their practices for Fall sports. The focus of a newspaper article could be about Sgt. Cugini and her story leading up to the workshop.

## **Announcements:**

Marijuana Radio Town Hall Meeting: August 11<sup>th</sup> 9:00-10:00am. Laurie will email information to the group.

Seabrook- Sean Kolins reported they are open, meeting in-person and fully operational.

Assemb. Armato reported that discharge papers for surgeries from AtlantiCare does include information on medication disposal.

A new type of Narcan is in trials that will be stronger than what is currently available to address issues of multiple doses being used for someone who has overdosed on Fentanyl. Assemb. Armato will let us know if he receives any further information.

The brokering bill sponsored but Assemb. Armato has gone through the Assembly and is now with the NJ Senate. He explained patient brokering is when a treatment facility would send a person to a known drug area to entice people with the disease of addiction to enter a treatment facility. The treatment facility would then be linked to the patient's insurance. The treatment facility did not care if the person remained in treatment and the person (broker) who "recruited" the person into treatment would receive payment by the treatment agency.

Assemb. Armato has also sponsored a bill to give Narcan with any opiate prescription. The previous mandate from the Attorney General's office was temporary.

**JTAC Meth Presentation/Meeting:** JTAC meeting is Tuesday July 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. the first half hour will be a presentation on methamphetamines. Temerity Berry from Cape Assist and Lt. Joe Landis from the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office will be presenting.

**JTAC Retreat:** This event was planned in-person for our August meeting but with COVID it will need to be held virtually. We are looking into planning the virtual event in place of our September full coalition meeting.

## **Next Meeting:**

TBD- Scheduled for September 3<sup>rd</sup> which is Labor Day weekend and with the JTAC retreat this meeting may not occur.

**Motion to adjourn the meeting:** Bruce DeShields 1<sup>st</sup>, John Armato 2<sup>nd</sup>, Meeting Adjourned