

# Atlantic County Opioid Task Force

## Join Together Atlantic County

July 8, 2021 3:00 – 3:45pm

Zoom Meeting

### Meeting Minutes

**In Attendance:** Sgt. Jennifer Cugini (Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office), Laurie Smith, Bob Zlotnick, (JTAC/APR), Gretchen Halfpenny (APR/OFRT), Ebony Hicks (ACCC Intern), Lindsey Komar (Hope One and AC LEAD), Rachel Campbell (South Jersey AIDS Alliance), Jesse Dariano & Erin McGonigle (All Roads Recovery/JBRC), Joe Bunting (Bunting Family Pharmacy) and Dr. Kifle Mihrete (AC Health Dept.)

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

Minutes from the May meeting were approved via email and are posted on the JTACNJ.org website.

#### **Updates:**

**Grant Updates:** Federal Grants-DFC (Drug Free Communities Grant) – Waiting for year 8 to come out to submit new plan, should be in August, and CARA (opioid prevention) – Ending, but were able to get a no-cost extension to continue to use funding for projects.

Opioid/Athlete prevention grant- State grant – Ending in August, may be continuing with additional money state received relating to COVID package.

**Media/Marketing Committee Update/Billboard/Movie Theater PSA:** Holding off on movie theater ads that we previously discussed prior to COVID because there is no price break. Movies do seem to be picking up so we may look into doing them in the coming months. We will be planning some prevention billboards. We currently have a JTAC billboard on the Black Horse Pike and will be doing one for the Middle School Underage Drinking Prevention Contest winners' artwork as well as one relating to opioids and opioid prevention. Laurie asked Lindsey Komar to look into getting permission to use the Hope One phone number for the movie theater ads as well as the billboard since it would be a local number to help connect people to treatment.

**AC LEAD Program:** Lindsey Komar reported they currently do not have anyone in the program. The last participant just completed a couple of weeks ago, all four participants who have completed the program are doing well. They are planning to outreach to local police departments to explain the program and increase participation.

**Hope One:** Lindsey reported that Hope One is still busy connecting people to treatment and they had 84 calls last month through the main number. Last month they got 122 people into treatment and responded to 19 DMI overdose responses in the last couple weeks. They are planning a resource fair for Friday, August 13<sup>th</sup> in collaboration with AtlantiCare and Atlantic Cape Community College at the college campus in Atlantic City. Lindsey will get the flyer over to Laurie. Gretchen asked Lindsey how many employees Hope One currently has and Lindsey told her 4 full time and two part time employees.

**Narcan Trainings/Deployments:** Hope One – Lindsey and Hope One are available to do training, anyone who is interested should reach out.

South Jersey AIDS Alliance – Rachel Campbell reported that year-to-date they have dispensed 1,190 Narcan kits and have 370 self-reported saves. This is done as part of the Syringe Access Program (SAP). City council is looking to end the Syringe Access Program so they have been advocating to keep the program. It goes for a second city council vote on the 21<sup>st</sup>. If this program closes, Oasis will remain open but will not be able to see the clients they have been since they come in through the SAP. The concern is that they believe this will significantly decrease the number of clients they have. Rachel will send Laurie letters for coalition members that are being sent to the governor's office and city council to allow the program to continue.

**Opioid Fatality Review Teams (OFRT):** Dr. Mihrete reported for the Atlantic City OFRT. In June they reviewed two more cases and are expecting more information from the state medical examiner at their next meeting on July 21<sup>st</sup>. They are hoping to use the data collection to come up with some conclusions and recommendations. Gretchen Halfpenny reported for the Atlantic County OFRT. They have reviewed seven cases so far and have three more scheduled on Monday. They are collecting data and trying to identify some trends, they have a site visit tomorrow. They are continuing to review data and hope to be able to make some recommendations. Gretchen shared a flyer for an Operation Helping Hands training through the attorney general's office. This training is for EMS staff and is being held on July 16<sup>th</sup> at the Canale Training Center in Egg Harbor Township. There are two sessions being offered and another one in August, any first responders are welcomed to attend.

**Permanent Prescription Drop Boxes:** Currently we have 25 in the county and all is going well.

**Deterra/Locking Medicine Cabinets:** We have plenty on hand, if anyone is interested in receiving them, you can contact Brian directly.

**School/Community Resiliency Training:** Next week there will be a three-day school resiliency training. As of right now there are 367 school personnel registered to attend, this is being offered virtually and in-person so there will be some people outside of Atlantic and Cape May counties attending. There will be about 85 people attending in-person at Cape May Regional High School and the rest will be on Zoom. On Friday, there will be a refresher training for the Atlantic County and Cape May County teams that were already formed. One of the largest school districts in the county that did not have a team before will be attending the three-day training.

We were planning an event last year to train community organization resiliency teams but were unable to, due to COVID. We are co-sponsoring a one-day event with the Atlantic County Sheriff's Department and Stockton University in late August. Dr. Lori Desautels, Butler University and Michael McKnight, NJ Dept. of Education will be the speakers for this event. This one-day event will be followed up in the fall with a two-day training for community teams to be trained. Training will be for all Atlantic County community organizations (CIACC agencies, faith-based organizations, youth service organizations, etc.) Cape May County is holding a similar one-day event that Laurie, Sheriff Scheffler and Jaime Costello will be attending.

**Faith Based Outreach:** Our next faith-based meeting will be Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup> from 10 – 11am via Zoom. For this meeting we are inviting the faith-based organizations to attend and share with us the

different programs, events and resources they have available pertaining to substance misuse. We will also discuss JTAC and the different initiatives and resources we have available.

**Ending Stigma Unlocking Resources – 2 Events:** This was a 2-part virtual event that we put together along with AtlantiCare, Seabrook and Atlantic County Dept. of Health Substance Abuse Services. The first session was on June 9<sup>th</sup> and was on the importance of language and how we can remove stigma from addiction. Speakers included Gloria Seel with AtlantiCare, Dr. Ranieri with Seabrook and Chris Macomber with the Hope All Day Recovery Center. **Session 2** was on stigma and opioid prevention, treatment and recovery resources. It opened with a presentation on stigma and addiction by Gloria Seel followed by a round table discussion allowing representatives from the different organizations to discuss the programs and services they have available here in Atlantic County. Both of these events were recorded and are on the main page of the JTAC Website.

**Opioid Resources for Website:** Ebony Hicks, ACCC intern and Brian are working on going through the list of opioid resources and programs in the county. They will take the information from this list and get a brief description of each program and post it on a specific opioid resource tab on the JTAC webpage. We will be contacting JTAC members about their programs to update their organizations information as well.

**Stigma Campaign Fall:** We are looking to do a countywide stigma event in the fall. The workgroup that helped plan and work on the Ending Stigma event discussed this project. Some ideas are to have municipalities sign on to be stigma free, put out yard signs and hold public hearings. Ebony went through a lot of different state and national websites relating to stigma events to get ideas. The workgroup will be meeting to discuss this. If you are interested, please let Laurie know.

#### **New Business:**

**Pain Management and Opioid Epidemic:** We were working with Shore Medical Center and were supposed to be having an event at Greate Bay Country Club back in March 2020, it had to be cancelled due to COVID. The event has been rescheduled for this Wednesday and will be part of a series of events. Laurie shared the flyer for the event and it has previously been sent to JTAC members. Feel free to share the flyer with anyone who may be interested.

**Pharmacy, Veterinarian, Hospice Outreach:** In the coming weeks we will begin our annual outreach to the pharmacies, veterinarians and hospice care providers. Outreach includes us physically visiting them and introducing ourselves and the coalition and speaking with them about properly securing and disposing of medications. We then leave them with rack cards, stickers, and posters that have information about properly securing and disposing of medications for them to distribute to their patients/clients. We also offer them a case of Deterra if interested.

**Announcements:**

JTAC full coalition meeting July 13<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a.m.

National Night Out August 3<sup>rd</sup> – Galloway, Egg Harbor Twp. and Hamilton Twp. aren't doing their big one-night events this year. EHT is doing smaller neighborhood events and Brigantine, Buena Vista Twp and Atlantic City are still doing theirs on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. Hammonton is doing theirs on the Friday night of that week. It is a good opportunity for organizations to table.

4-H Fair August 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> – we won't be able to do this event this year due to staffing but they do have an area for non-profits to set up tables if anyone is interested.

October 6<sup>th</sup> Knock Out Opioid Abuse Day – we will be the coordinators for this event again this year.

**Next Meeting:**

Coalition Retreat September, date TBD. If necessary we can hold a meeting in September or else our next meeting will be November 4, 2021 Location TBD

**Motion to adjourn the meeting:** 1<sup>st</sup> Jesse Dariano, 2<sup>nd</sup> Joe Bunting, Meeting Adjourned