

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Name of Governmental Body: State Council on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse		Attending: Members Present: Roger Frings, Kevin Florek, Thai Vue, Autumn Lacy, Jessica Geschke, Brian Dean, Julie Willems Van Dijk, Terry Schemenauer, Sue Shemanski, Rep. Jill Billings, Natalie Aicher (for Senator Patrick Testin), Sen. Janet Bewley, Jan Grebel, Sandy Hardie, Tina Virgil Members Excused: Michael Knetzger, Subhadeep Barman, Christine Ullstrup, Tina Mary Ann Gerrard, John Weitekamp Ex Officio Members Present: Delora Newton, Carl Hampton, Kenyon Kies, Fil Clissa, Mark Wegner, Colleen Rinken Ex Officio Members Excused: Ann DeGarmo, Timothy Weir, Jennifer Wickman, Andrew Putney Guests: Abra Vigna, Amy Anderson, Harold Gates, Raeanna Johnson, Saima Chauhan, Chris Wardlow, Denise Johnson, Lynn Harrigan, David Morstad, Rick Immler, James Ahern, Shamane Mills, David Macmaster Department of Health Services Staff: Mike Derr, Joyce Allen, Teresa Steinmetz, Ryan Stachoviak, Andrea Jacobson, Allison Weber, Gary Roth, Amanda Lake Cismesia, Sarah Coyle, Tabitha Beckwith, Beth Collier, Kenneth Ginlack, Lori Wiebold, Rebecca Main, Mai Zong Vue, Raina Haralampopoulos, Madeline Johnson, Michelle Lund, Kate Rifken, Paul Krupski, Tim Connor, Peggy Christenson (closed caption), Maria Kielma and Nicole Keeler (ASL interpreters)
Date: 8/7/2020	Time Started: 9:33 a.m. Time Ended: 12:25 p.m.	
Location: Online via Zoom		Presiding Officer: Roger Frings

Minutes

Call to Order: Roger Frings called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

Introductions: Members introduced themselves, via the Zoom videoconference.

Announcements: Chairperson Roger Frings welcomed everyone to this Zoom meeting and expressed appreciation for everyone’s patience. He gave out reminders on using the mute and chat functions, and confirmed that the meeting is not being recorded. A formal roll call was waived, as participants could be identified on the Zoom screen.

Approval of June 5, 2020 meeting minutes: Tina Virgil moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Kevin Florek. Motion carried unanimously, subject to minutes reflecting that Mark Wegner participated at that meeting.

Public input: David Morstad described the Governor’s Committee on People with Disabilities, including the membership seats. SCAODA has a membership seat, which has been vacant for the last five or more years. He requested that the Council select a member to sit on that Committee. The next Committee meeting is Aug. 19th; he will have a meeting notice sent out. Roger asked any interested Council member to contact Mike Derr or him. Sen. Bewley suggested that someone from the WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities sit on that Committee.

Provider updates on services & challenges during Covid-19: Thai Vue again shared the many difficulties that the Covid-19 pandemic has caused the Hmong and other underserved populations. A major problem is that there is so much information being shared in social media, it's hard to know what to believe and what is credible, and what are credible information sources.

Rep. Billings noted that the recent 'take back drugs' programs were not as successful due to the pandemic. She is seeing and hearing concerns throughout the La Crosse area that drug use and opioid overdose rates have increased as a result of Covid-19 and stressors of isolation. This includes increases in emergency room visits. She mentioned that homeless persons often stay in the city parks. Sandy Hardie concurred that drug overdose cases are increasing.

Kevin Florek stated that suicide rates are up in Dane County, along with alcohol abuse rates and other drug overdose rates since the pandemic started. He referenced statistics suggesting that alcohol use has increased 30% nationally. He noted that Tellurian is receiving fewer calls for services. He thinks people are afraid to seek help because of Covid-19 risks. NAMI and Dane County has informed him that they have not received lots of calls even despite the need for SUD and mental health resources with the increase of use and stressors due to the pandemic.

Sen. Bewley mentioned that the homeless population is increasing, and they are among those suffering greatly due to the pandemic. Local hospitals and clinics have reported that homeless persons are living or situated outside their facilities, seeking services. She worries that when the weather gets cold, many of them could die. She is skeptical that additional federal funds will be provided through a second relief bill to address homelessness and their SUD needs. Communities such as Ashland have run out of money to provide additional services; staff are exhausted. Kevin Florek agreed that localities like Dane County are out of money.

Fil Clissa referenced an increase in number of evictions and unemployment since the pandemic began. The *Tiny House Community* program in Madison has recently started to address homelessness, but is a more long-term solution than addressing immediate needs. Colleen Rinken noted that DVA has seen major declines in number of veterans seeking services. She concurred that many veterans are choosing to stay on the street; they are afraid of contracting the Covid virus at service locations with high numbers of people.

Terry Schemenauer mentioned that many rural areas in northern Wisconsin do not have high-speed internet, preventing consumers from receiving telehealth services via Zoom and other platforms. Also, along with homelessness, thefts and burglaries are also rising at an alarming rate. Lynn Harrigan noted that at recent WI Council on Mental Health meetings have included discussions on the upcoming school year and health and safety fears expressed by many parents.

Behavioral Health Gaps Analysis Presentation: Abra Vigna of UW Population Health Institute and director of this project, and Tim Connor of DHS introduced the draft final report from the Behavioral Health System Gaps Analysis. Connor noted that block grant needs assessments are usually quantitative, based on state and federal data. This analysis is unique in that it provides qualitative data in the form of stakeholder perspectives, and from that, recommendations for addressing the identified system gaps. Vigna mentioned readers to be aware of biases in the data based on the specific perspectives of the stakeholders who report their observations and beliefs.

Vigna's presentation included the following highlights:

- A strong message throughout the analysis was the desire to integrate the mental health and substance use disorder systems. Also, intersections of marginality (e.g., a person of color who is also bisexual) apparently heighten health risks and lack of access to system resources. Conditions that contribute to workforce shortages and gaps in both systems include salary and reimbursement rates.

- Recommendations for developing the workforce center on expanding provider diversity, greater number of medication assisted treatment (MAT) providers in northern and northwestern Wisconsin, and improving reimbursement rates that agencies receive from insurance and Medicaid for services provided. There is still a stigma associated with consumers receiving MAT services and Narcan; that stigma needs to be addressed.
- Transportation remains a major barrier for consumers to access services in rural areas of Wisconsin. Also, many consumers must take time off from work to access services, when they can't afford such time off. Amy Anderson reference the WI Statewide Health Information Network (WISHEN) as one resource for better coordinating provision of services as this Network connects electronic health records.
- Among ways to increase access to services include reducing the use of law enforcement for crisis service. Some participants reported a fear by consumers of selective apprehension based on race or status or other biases, thus discouraging consumers from reaching out to services. Amy Anderson communicated that both systems need to partner better with law enforcement and use them more, not less. Law enforcement is a key party to promoting greater access to crisis and other services. For the reduction of law enforcement involvement in the area of mental health and substance use disorders there first needs to be an increase in availability of service providers, community supports, crises management, funding and recovery resources. Saima Chauhan and Amy Anderson named two recent Madison and Dane Co. mental health and addiction initiatives that will help provide greater access to mental health and inpatient psychiatric services. Harold Gates suggested that agencies considering implementing Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) standards as a way to more effectively reach out to underserved populations. He will share the document Roadmap for using CLAS standards to attendees through Mike Derr; he recommended this resource to be used for DHS strategic planning for the SABG Plan.
- Sandy Hardie noted that her provider agency has had difficulty hooking consumers up to crisis services. There is nowhere to go for persons who are unstable but are not "bad enough" to obtain mental health services. We're setting clients up to fail. Abra Vigna stated that there is also an economic cost to society for this gap.
- David Macmaster noted that tobacco use disorder gaps were not addressed in the draft final report; such gaps should have been included. Tim Connor stated that with a stakeholder perspective, a report coverage and input isn't necessarily accurate or complete. Abra Vigna also noted that there are biases built into the study, such as lack of prompts to interviewees. Both agreed that tobacco gaps could be addressed in follow-up and future analyses, and that the Gaps Analysis Report should not be considered the only source of information used to set block grant priorities.
- Recommendations for addressing identified gaps focus around additional funding and reimbursement rates, developing the SUD and mental health workforce, promoting and increasing diversity within the workforce through career pathways and less expensive professional development opportunities, developing services that better match cultural backgrounds and needs of consumers, and additional number and variety of behavioral health resources.
- Thai Vue read a statement asking the Council to recognize the limited DHS and other services provided to the Hmong population, and expressing concerns about the method of the Gaps Analysis in such a manner not likely to reach Hmong stakeholders for their input. He encouraged Abra and Tim and other study directors to reach out to him in the future for assistance with developing a methodology that would successfully obtain input from the Hmong population across Wisconsin. Sen. Bewley added that Council members and DHS can't be afraid to reach out to the Hmong population, due to any fear of humiliation in not knowing the performed manner to reach out or communicate. Denise Johnson stated that Gaps Analysis

needed to look more closely at the gaps and needs of underserved populations like the Hmong, deaf, blind and hard of hearing, and others. Persons in high positions need to work more directly with those populations.

- Rick Immler complimented DHS for its decision to reach out to UW to conceive and conduct this study and generate important feedback. Abra Vigna noted that she will share a copy of her PowerPoint slides with meeting attendees through Mike Derr.

Bureau of Prevention, Treatment and Recovery Update: Joyce Allen gave a quick farewell to Council members, as today is her final day as the Bureau director as she is retiring. She greatly enjoyed working with the Council over the years and greatly respect members' leadership and desire to improve SUD services statewide. Mike Derr briefly noted that the Bureau is finalizing the SABG application for FFY 2021 funds, which will be submitted to SAMHSA by Sept. 1st. In response to Thai Vue's question, Derr noted that services for underserved population remains a priority for this second year of the 2020-21 Two Year SABG Plan. Allison Weber briefly described the Small Talks Campaign, a prevention initiative that began last spring. Rep. Billings asked why counties have not received a larger amount of SABG Community Aids funds over the past many years. Joyce Allen referenced state statutes and the federal formula that dictates the amounts that states and localities can receive. Mike Derr offered to share the state statute and formula with those who request that information. Amanda Lake Cismesia gave a brief report on the status of the rewriting of Administrative rule DHS 75, which is currently posted for public input on the economic impacts of the proposed new rule.

Report from Wisconsin Council on Mental Health: Rick Immler, chair of the Council, gave a quick overview on the most recent Council meetings and activities.

Agenda Items for Sept. 11th Meeting: Roger Frings, Mike Derr and Council members mentioned the following items: Further updates on the impact of Covid-19; SCAODA officer elections; recovery housing presentations by Christine Ullstrup and Michelle Devine Giese; review of standing committees' 2019-20 Work Plan Progress Reports; update on the 2021 SABG Application; and follow-up discussion on the Behavioral Health Gaps Analysis Report and presentation.

Meeting Adjournment: Thai Vue moved to adjourn, Rep. Billings seconded the motion. All in favor. None opposed. Meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Prepared by: Mike Derr on 8/7/2020.

Council reviewed and approved these minutes at its 9.11.20 meeting: