



State of New Jersey

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
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Governor

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Lt. Governor

NEIL VAN ESS
Acting Chairman

CELINA LEVY
Executive Director

MINUTES

Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

June 20, 2023

Attendance: Neil Van Ess (Chairman), Celina Levy (Executive Director), John Armato (Public Member), Gregg Benson (Public Member), Eileen Fishman (Public Member), Moira Nelson (Public Member), Gisele Pemberton (Public Member), Donna Westhoven (AOC), Michelle Graham-Lyons (DCA), Adam Cortes (DOC), Annette Riordan (DHS), Rebecca Glinn (DOL), Craig Sashihara (LPS), Chuck Robbins (DMAVA), Allison Samay (NJ President's Council)

Call to Order

The three hundred and seventy second regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Acting Chairman Neil Van Ess.

Open Public Meetings Act Statement

Mr. Van Ess announced that notice of this meeting was provided in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21). In addition, Mr. Van Ess stated that public comments were to be provided electronically, through the GCADA website contact portal between the hours of 10am and 1pm on the day of the meeting.

Roll Call

Katelyn Assenheimer called the roll. Members present and absent were noted for the record.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Van Ess welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Council members for attaining quorum to vote on the County Plan resolutions last month.

Approval of Minutes

After a brief discussion, the minutes for May were approved. (Y-13; N-0; ABS-1)

Presentation: “Public Health Data to Action: Overdose Prevention in New Jersey”

Michele Calvo, MPH, Director of Opioid Response and Policy at the NJ Department of Health gave an overview of the work the DOH has been doing to decrease drug-related overdose deaths and injuries in New Jersey.

DOH promotes standards of care with EMS by expanding the “Five Minutes to Help” training. This training reached nearly 1,000 health professionals and was created to standardize the emergency treatment of an overdose patient using naloxone. This training also educates providers on proper communication with individuals and to provide recovery resources available in the area. EMTs and Paramedics are also authorized to administer Naloxone to individuals experiencing opioid overdose.

Harm Reduction Centers (HRCs) are community-based programs that provide safe, trauma-informed, non-stigmatizing space for those who use drugs to access sterile syringes, education on safer use, overdose prevention and safe disposal of used equipment. There are currently seven HRCs in NJ and the DOH is working to expand to all 21 counties.

Overdose Fatality Review Teams (OFRT) are multidisciplinary/multispecialty teams that review overdose death within their jurisdiction. Cases are reviewed to identify missed opportunities to improve prevention effort or areas for change. Through the work of the OFRTs professionals noticed spikes in overdoses in certain areas and provide outreach such as education, naloxone and treatment linkages.

Executive Director’s Report

Executive Director Celina Levy thanked DOH for their presentation and shared that both she and Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro have had conversations about how GCADA and the Alliance Program can support their efforts to expand harm reduction efforts across the state.

The Master Plan Subcommittee met on May 26th and made progress on developing an outline of work. The next meeting will be held in July.

Ms. Levy and Ms. Alfaro have an upcoming meeting with the Governor’s office and updates will be provided as the process moves forward.

Director of Prevention and Planning, Sara Thode shared with the Council that the provisional DEDR Grant FY24 Letters of Agreement and the DMHAS Youth Leadership Grant Term Two Letters of Agreement had been sent out to the Counties. The FY24 DEDR grant term begins on July 1st and the DMHAS Youth Leadership Grant Term Two term begins on September 1st. Ms. Thode also shared that the Rutgers School of Social Work for Prevention Science and the Northeast and Caribbean Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) held a webinar on June 13th on how to maximize the impact of a prevention plan and will hold another webinar on July 19th on the how to design a successful social media campaign.

The planning for the Phase 2 Municipal Alliance Grant System (MAGS) documents, i.e. quarterly reports, etc. is underway. The Municipal Alliance Grant System is expected to go live at the end of September for the planning process of the FY25 County and Municipal Alliance Plans.

Adjournment

Mr. Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:25.