**Top Recommendations from 1st round of Opioid Abatement Grant Review**

**Recommendation #1: Utilize Grantmaking Best Practices**

First and foremost, the Opioid Abatement Commission is a grantmaking body. The Commission should consult grantmaking best practices to move resources as efficiently and transparently as possible.

**Recommendation #2: Make Informed Decisions**

To make informed decisions, the Commission should be aware of several key factors, including:

* HHS procurement processes, timelines, and logistics
* Current statewide funding for SUD/OUD services across the continuum of care (Block Grants, COVID relief, State Opioid Response (SOR), Gov Commission/Alcohol Fund, Federal Relief Funds, other sources, etc.)
* Clarity on critical event horizons such as federal funding reductions (State Opioid Response – SOR)

**Recommendation #3: Prioritize Grant Reporting & Monitoring**

Telling the story of how these dollars have been impactful is important. Grant agreements will include clear reporting and monitoring parameters. The Commission should work with DHHS to review the reporting parameters, and develop a process for compiling summary information that can be shared publicly.

**Recommendation #4: Handle Reimbursement Separately**

A separate solicitation process should be established for the identified reimbursement categories (1, 2, and 5) to allow the state and political subdivisions to apply. Political subdivisions that submitted for reimbursement were not competitive in the open process and require a targeted application process to evaluate comparable programs simultaneously.

**Recommendation #5: Avoid Service Disruptions and Unnecessary Funding Reductions**

To prevent service disruptions and unnecessary funding reductions, the Commission should consider prior year funding allocations when determining upcoming funding amounts. Current statute and administrative rules did not anticipate large one-time lump sum payments from lawsuits and were intended to be distributed over several years.

**Recommendation #6: Incorporate Budget Justification**

Applicants should provide a narrative explanation of their budget requests through a Budget Justification. If applicants are recipients of the 15% distribution, they should provide a concise summary of how they have utilized the funds to date or how they plan to utilize them.

**Recommendation #7: Streamline Application Length**

To maximize efficiency and streamline grant review, the total number of narrative pages should be limited to no more than 5.

**Recommendation #8: Utilize Simple Scoring Rubrics**

The Commission should collaborate with HHS to develop relevant and straightforward scoring rubrics. Scoring rubrics ensure transparency and accountability in the grant review process.