

August 27th, 2021
9:30am-11:00am
Executive Council Chambers

Members Present:

Steve Ahnen, *NH Hospital Association*
Mark Armaganian *representing the NH Liquor Commission, Division of Enforcement*
Senator Kevin Avar, *NH State Senate*
Alex Casale *representing the Department of Justice*
Russ Conte, *Suicide Prevention Council*
William Conway *representing the Department of Corrections*
Jen Doris *representing the Department of Education*
Eddie Edwards *representing the Department of Safety*
Representative Jess Edwards, *NH House of Representatives*
Erik Fessenden *representing the NH National Guard*
John Formella, *Attorney General, Department of Justice*
Traci Fowler, *NH Charitable Foundation*
Katja Fox *representing the Department of Health and Human Services*
Representative William Hatch, *NH House of Representatives*
Keith Howard, *Recovery Representative*
Joseph Johnsick, *Non-Professional Public Representative*
Timothy Lena, *Prevention Task Force*
Chuck Lloyd, *Community College System of NH*
Dave Mara, *Governor's Advisor on Addiction & Behavioral Health*
Jeffrey Nelson, *Non-Professional Public Representative*
Chris Nicolopoulos, *New Hampshire Insurance Department*
Jim Potter *representing the NH Medical Society*
Jaime Powers, *Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services*
Joseph Ribsam, *NH Department of Health & Human Services*
Kathie Saari, *Faith Community Representative*
Stephanie Savard, *Treatment Professional*
Kate Thomson, *NH Nurses Association*
Patrick Tufts, *Chair, Granite United Way*

1. **Welcome, Opening Remarks** – Patrick Tufts, the Chair, began the meeting and welcomed new members. He asked for the Commission members to provide brief introductions. After introductions the Chair asked for approval of the April 23rd meeting minutes. Chuck Llyod made the recommendation to approve the April minutes and Steve Ahnen seconded the motion. Commissioner Hanks abstained from voting. The motion was granted by the voting members. Following the minutes vote the Chair moved on to open the floor for members of the public.

2. **Public Comment** – The Chair asked for comment from present members of the public. Seeing no comments, the Chair introduced Katja Fox, Director of the Division for Behavioral Health, to provide the update from the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human services.

2. **DHHS Commissioner's Update** – Katja Fox, shared that summer is not a time off for the bureau and they have been diligently working to integrate substance use and behavioral health resources into a system of care. The new 988 number for suicide prevention is going to be folded into the mobile response unit so that the community won't be confused by the multiple state numbers. Director Fox shared that there is steady numbers of people being served by the Doorways and they will be releasing an RFP for marketing of the Doorways. This campaign will be used to ramp up the exposure of the Doorways and get more people access to treatment services. Fox shared they received funding for critical timed interventions that focuses on transition from treatment back into the community to reduce reemissions and give individuals access to coordination for nine months. This will pay for supports like transportation, housing, and other reintegration services.

The Chair asked for questions for Director Fox. Representative Hatch shared concerns from constituents that there seems to be a lack of people being referred to twelve step programs from the Doorways. Fox thanked the Representative for his feedback and shared that they would welcome this conversation and would like to be connected with the AA groups. Representative Edwards queried if there was an intentional distance because AA references religion. Fox shared that was not an intention. Jim Potter from the Medical Society shared he would welcome those individuals to be a part of the work that they are doing to integrate AA programs. The Chair then introduced the next agenda item.

4. **Executive Director's Update** – Jaime Powers, Executive Director of the Governor's Commission on Alcohol and Other Drugs and the Bureau Director for the Division of Behavioral Health introduced a division team member to provide an update on contracts. They shared the goal is to be able to bring in a full 10 million dollars this year and provided a full review of the Dashboard. Representative Jess Edwards asked if the funding given to the City of Dover was available to all the towns and cities in the state. Jaime Powers shared that it was based off a recommendation from the Prevention Task Force. Tim Lena shared that it was for coalition building in that area. The Chair shared that he and the Director would be reaching out in the future to all members to review the funding recommendations and the Dashboard to give a foundational understanding of the process. The Chair then asked for questions and Representative Avard asked if Rise Recovery would be able to apply for funding. The Chair recommended that they attend a Recovery Task Force meeting with Keith Howard as a first step.

Next Powers shared the contracts under development. Director Powers will share the link to the BDAS position listed for the contract's unit. Director Powers also introduced the Take a Break Campaign that encourages young adults to look at their relationship with alcohol. This campaign is a harm reduction campaign as much as a prevention campaign. The State Opioid Response funding will cover fentanyl test strips for providers moving forward the Director shared. Director Powers shared the next year of State Opioid Response funding has been released and the Bureau are working furiously to amend contracts. Commissioner Hanks asked if the Bureau is involved in the lessons learned from COVID and the impact it had on recovery housing. Powers shared that they meet monthly with service providers to stay up to date on their needs. With no further questions the Chair moved the meeting to the next agenda item.

5. **Strategic Planning Update** – Amy Daniels, Senior Consultant, from the Community Health Institute and the Center for Excellence began by speaking about the last strategic plan. Daniels shared members should expect a request to provide information for the last year of the former strategic plan. The evaluation of the former strategic plan will be available to members of the public when completed and will help with building the new strategic plan. The Center received more than 2000 responses from non-SUD-professional members of the public across the state and there are plans to have a public forum to gather more public input on the Commission's strategic plan. Daniels shared they provided a virtual forum for the Treatment Task Force that was successful. There will be other focus groups to capture information from people who are often not included in these studies because

of lack of accessibility. Daniels shared that the Center for Excellence will also be scheduling 1-on-1 interviews to capture what Commission members feel about the process and purpose of the Commission and its effectiveness. There will also be opportunity to make recommendations from the Commission members for the strategic plan. Once all the data is collected the draft for the new 3-year strategic plan will be available early in the new year. The Chair shared that it will require help from the Commission to gather this important information. This information allows the Commission to create an action plan that is written for lay people to understand this work and how the Commission measures its success. With no questions on the strategic planning process the Chair moved on to the next agenda item.

- 6. Task Force Updates** – The Chair asked each of the task forces to provide an update.
- Prevention – Tim Lena shared that prevention was not able to meet that month.
 - Treatment – There were no representatives for treatment.
 - Recovery – Keith Howard shared they met to look for evidence-based stimulants recovery supports. 130 people are coming to stimulants themed recovery meetings, up from about 3 people previously. Eddie Edwards asked if there is data collected on the difference between virtual meetings vs. in person meetings attendance. Mr. Howard answered that it is difficult to tell how someone is doing in virtual meetings and there were drops in attendance in all pathways of recovery currently. Mr. Howard shared there isn't data but that it could be studied in the future. The Chair shared there could be an opportunity to capture the data on the number of agencies that have closed.
 - Joint Military – Sgt. Frost shared that the focus last spring was to develop objectives for the group that were reactive and proactive. They had 4 funded initiatives that are being evaluated to prove their value and effectiveness. Senator Edwards asked if they are anticipating a surge in PTSD. Sgt. Frost shared his personal experience and advocated for a treatment professional to share a more in-depth update.
 - Healthcare – Jim Potter shared that they are reviewing their strategies and hope to have an update in the next month.
 - Perinatal Exposure – There was no update to share.
 - Data – Steve Ahnen shared that there was no update to provide.
 - Opioid – There was no update to share.

With no further updates the Chair moved on to the next agenda item.

- 7. Stimulants Workgroup** – Patrick Tufts, the Chair, gave an update on the workgroup founded after the Governor's request to be proactive about Stimulant Use in New Hampshire. The group has met twice since that request. The Chair shared the first step was receiving a presentation from JSI in finding a common language around stimulant use disorders. The workgroup is using a four pillars approach that prioritizes Safety, Prevention, Treatment and Recovery with enforcement included as well. The first phase of the workgroup is to do an analysis of existing programs that support people with stimulant use disorders in New Hampshire. The next step will be for the group to look at the gaps in services for people with Stimulant Use Disorders. The final phase will be a written plan on recommendations for steps to prevent a surge in use and ways to properly support people with stimulant use disorders. Dave Mara shared that the role of law enforcement has dramatically changed to meet this need. Mara shared instead of enforcing laws most of law enforcements work is meeting the needs of people in crisis. The Chair then asked for questions from the Commission. With no questions the Chair moved on to other business and asked for questions from the Public.
- 8. Other Business** – Diane Castrucci from New Hampshire Alcohol and Drug Counselors Association shared there was a Symposium on Polysubstance Use and that she will send the link for the training. A representative from the Concord Monitor asked what is causing the rise in stimulant use. Dave

Mara answered that there is a market opportunity because it's cheaper to produce and easier to manufacture and distribute than opioids. With no further questions the chair adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting
October 29th, 2021
9:30-11:30