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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES  
PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAM

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**NH PDMP ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

June 19, 2023  
DHHS Offices – Rooms 311/312  
29 Hazen Drive, Concord NH  
3:00 – 5:00 pm

**Council Members in Attendance:**

Chairman David Strang, MD, NH Medical Society  
Tonya Carlton, RPH, NH Hospital Association  
Tad Dionne, NH Police Chiefs' Association  
Sarah Garland, DVM, NH Veterinary Medical Association  
Joseph Harding, NH Department of Health and Human Services  
Nicole Harrington, RPH, Commissioner, NH Board of Pharmacy (BOP)  
Matthew Kitsis, RN, NH Board of Nursing (BON)  
Gary Merchant, NH House of Representatives  
Tom Ploszaj, NH House of Representatives  
Karen Prazar, NH NP Association  
Susan Prentiss, NH Senate (via Teams)  
Claire Timbas, NH Board of Veterinary Medicine  
Michael Viggiano, RPH, NH State Pharmacy Associations  
Kelly Whelan, MD, NH Dental Society  
Thomas Worboys, NH Attorney General's Office

**Council Members Absent:**

Jay Patel, DDS, NH Board of Dental Examiners  
VACANT, Governor's Commission on Alcohol & Other Drugs  
VACANT, Governor's Commission on Alcohol & Other Drugs (public)  
VACANT, NH Board of Medicine (BOM)

**Staff in Attendance:**

Michael Holt, DHHS Administrator  
Shawn Jackson, Interim PDMP Administrator (via Teams)  
Joanie Foss, Administrative Assistant, NH PDMP  
Mark Cioffi, Program Analyst, NH PDMP  
Leslie Pond, Auditor, NH PDMP

**Others in Attendance:**

Kathy Bizarro-Thunberg, NH Hospital Association

**I. Welcome – Introductions**

**II. Review/Acceptance of March 20, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

N. Harrington made a motion to accept the March 20, 2023 meeting minutes. T. Carlton seconded. The Council voted unanimously to accept these minutes.

**III. Old Business**

**1) Membership Update (M. Holt, Chair Strang)**

Chair Strang announced Sen. Susan Prentiss had been appointed as the new Senate Representative to the Advisory Council (A.C.). He mentioned that there were still three vacancies on the A.C. The Board of Medicine still has to name a representative, as does the Governor’s Commission on Alcohol & Other Drugs which now has two vacant positions. Chair Strang stated that he had reached out to OPLC Director Lindsey Courtney asking for assistance in naming a Board of Medicine representative, but had not heard back. M. Holt stated that the PDMP had also reached out to the Board of Medicine again since the last PDMP Advisory Council meeting with no response.

Chair Strang noted that quorum for today’s meeting was nine, so there was a quorum present.

**2) DHHS Update**

**a. PDMP Program Administrator Vacancy (M. Holt)**

M. Holt explained that, as reported at the last meeting, Shawn Jackson, the previous Administrator, was promoted internally to a section chief position within the Division. The position had been vacant for about three months, but had been recently posted. Chair Strang offered the Council’s assistance in the hiring process of the new Administrator. M. Holt thanked the Chair, stating that he would bring that offer back to management, but anticipated that the offer would be declined.

**b. PDMP Rules (M. Holt)**

M. Holt stated that they did not have any draft rules to present at this time. He hoped to have something ready for the September meeting. He stated that some of the rulemaking issues have to deal with referrals to the regulatory boards and the PDMP has asked for participation from them. It is hoped that once draft rules are available, the feedback from the boards will be more forthcoming.

**c. E-prescribing (M. Cioffi)**

Chair Strang stated that at the March meeting Rep. Merchant asked if there was a way for the PDMP to generate a report that can be shared with the licensing boards informing them where they stand and if they are in compliance with CMS required levels of e-prescribing of controlled substances. In follow-up to that question M. Cioffi came up with a series of graphs which show the compliance percentages from January through May of 2023. Data shows that 96% of all filled prescriptions had a transmission type entered into the field. M. Cioffi then displayed a graph showing 91% of all prescriptions were transmitted electronically by prescribers for the first five months of 2023. There are four prescriber types that are above the statewide average and four types that are below it. It was suggested that some of the issues generating the low percentages may be because of how small some of these prescriber groups are, as well as what types of

prescribing software they have. Dentists were among the provider group with a low percentage. K. Whelan stated that dental providers have some issues with utilizing e-prescribing. Various suggestions were given on how to congratulate/convey this information to the licensing boards including: sending out letters congratulating those boards whose licensees reached/exceeded the average and encourage other boards to urge their licensees to do better. Other ideas discussed included sending a memo to all boards showing the status of e-prescribing, including all of the data, that they could then share with their licensees, or creating a letter to send to all entities along with the data. Chair Strang asked for a consensus from the Council on the options discussed. The consensus was to send out a neutral letter with all the data to all licensing boards. M. Holt suggested that any letters/data to licensees go out from their boards as it might be more impactful to those providers than if the NH PDMP sent it out. M. Holt also suggested waiting at least another month so there would be a full six months of data to show as there is value in showing e-prescribing rates before the law changed and after. M. Holt reminded the Council that the ASAP 4.2b update was being launched on July 1, with compliance due by October 1, after which the data presented would look very different since the transmission type will be a required field. Chair Strang suggested waiting until the end of June and have M. Cioffi update the graphs to include data from January 1 through June 30 of 2023. He suggested that M. Holt draft a letter for the Chair to sign on behalf of the Council. Rep. Merchant made a motion to update the data and send an informative letter to the individual Boards signed by the Chair. M. Viggiano seconded. All were in favor.

**d. Stimulant Prescribing (M. Cioffi, D. Strang)**

Chair Strang stated at the March meeting, the PDMP had been successful in terms of reducing inappropriate prescribing of opiates. With that being said, the prescriptions for stimulants have increased over the past several years. M. Cioffi stated that stimulant prescriptions have increased by 11% during the time period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022. Chair Strang stated that he has reached out to Michael Padmore, Advocacy Director at the NH Medical Society, and the issue of the increase in stimulant prescriptions has been an ongoing discussion at their Board meetings. He stated that since the discussion about stimulant prescribing and the later agenda item on the federal grant letter of support are related, he chose to combine the two agenda items. M. Holt explained that the PDMP is currently applying for new grant funding. Part of the application process requires letters of support. The PDMP had requested a letter of support from the Council for the OD2A grant which, due to time constraints, was signed by Chair Strang without being brought before the Council. The PDMP is now requesting a letter of support from the Council for the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) grant. The letter was provided to the A.C. members in their meeting packet as Chair Strang felt it would be appropriate to bring the letter before the Council first. Rep. Merchant stated that in the letter it states “NH has seen a dramatic reduction in opiate-related deaths due to prescription overdose.” He made a motion to remove the word “dramatic.” After much discussion M. Holt suggested that Rep. Merchant amend his motion and remove the entire line from the letter as he did not think it would affect the strength of the grant application. Rep. Merchant amended his motion to remove the line. J. Harding

seconded. All were in favor of approving the amended letter for signature by Chair Strang.

M. Holt stated that the topic of stimulants is related to these federal grant applications. He explained that the CDC in their OD2A notice of financial award has placed a new emphasis on the rise of stimulant prescriptions across the country and have asked states in their responses to focus their activities on stimulants. One of the areas that was included by the PDMP as a strategy for the grant proposal has been to partner with the Council to explore the possibility of a legislative change regarding mandatory use of the PDMP prior to the prescribing of a stimulant medication. This is a two year grant opportunity so there would be two legislative sessions to try and get such a law passed. M. Cioffi presented a data slide showing prescribers by specialty and what stimulants they are prescribing. M. Holt stated that before proposing actual legislation, the Council would need to come up with a proposal. Rep. Ploszaj stated that as a member of the Legislature, he would first want to know how this rise in stimulant prescribing is affecting our society. Chair Strang stated that as this is a nationwide problem, he would like to get some information from other states as to what they have done in response to the increase in stimulant prescribing. He stated the Council should obtain more data before it makes any recommendations and he would reach out to Jim Giglio and Pat Knue from the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC), The National Alliance for Model State Drug Laws (NAMSDL), as well as the Nevada PDMP.

After further discussion it was suggested that each Council member think about this topic between now and the next meeting and bring back their seat-specific ideas on this issue. Amongst others, Chair Strang asked Nicci Harrington, rep. from the NH Board of Pharmacy to see if stimulants has come up as a topic of concern. He asked Chief Dionne if he could bring back some data as to what they are seeing on the streets.

### 3) Legislative Update

- a. [SB 34](#), relative to the Controlled Drug Prescription Health and Safety Program (M. Holt)  
M. Holt reported that SB 34 has passed both the House and Senate. Not yet signed by the Governor.
- b. [HB 136](#), relative to the Department of Health and Human Services collaborating and holding a roll call vote on the final proposal of rules with the Advisory Council prior to departmental rulemaking (Rep. Merchant)  
Rep. Merchant reported that HB 136 has passed both the House and Senate. It is on its way to the Governor for signature.
- c. [HB 325](#), relative to the Controlled Drug Prescription Health and Safety Program Advisory Council members (clarifying term limits, Rep. Merchant)  
Rep. Merchant reported that HB 325 has been signed by the Governor.

## IV. New Business

**1) Federal Grant Applications for PDMP Funding (M. Holt)**  
Previously addressed under agenda item 2.d. of Old Business

**2) Next Steps for the PDMP (All)**

J. Harding suggested looking into all types of controlled drugs that are prescribed, whether they're opioids or stimulants, and the relationship between those that are prescribed and those that are used illicitly.

**V. Next Meeting Date:**

September 18, 2023; 3:00-5:00 pm

The meeting was adjourned at 5:13 p.m.