

Summit County Opiate and Addiction Task Force

Key Stakeholders Quarterly Meeting

Hybrid Meeting held both at 37 N High St, Akron, OH 44308 and via Zoom



MEETING NOTES 09/13/2021

- **Introductions & Welcome**

- China Darrington, Opiate & Addiction Task Force Project Coordinator, opened the meeting at 4:00p.m. and welcomed all those in attendance.
- Ms. Darrington reminded everyone that they can text-to-join the Task Force and encouraged everyone to help recruit new members.
- Ms. Darrington also briefly spoke about the Governance group. They plan to have quarterly meetings and are currently working on the logistics of the group including who is a member, who votes, etc. They hope to have this group ready by December.
- It was mentioned that on the Summit County Opiate Addiction Task Force website, there is a meeting calendar that goes through 2021 with Zoom links to all of the meetings for those who wish to attend virtually.

- **Presentation: Victim Assistance Program**

- Leanne Graham, President and CEO of VAP gave a presentation regarding the program and the services of care that they provide. The Victim Assistance Program offers three services of care, including:
 - 24-Hour Crisis Intervention: This is a free service via phone, chat, and in person that is available round the clock. They facilitate group intervention sessions to help address the aftermath of a victimization and/or tragedy, and provide on-scene assistance alongside first responders to alleviate the emotional concerns and questions of victims.
 - Advocacy: The VAP has a team of advocates to educate and inform members of the community about the resources that are available in the area. They also support victims who have to relive their trauma in the court system, and they are located in all 3 municipal courts in Summit County. They keep victims informed with information such as "What was the abusers bail?", "Where is the abuser now?", etc.
 - Summit Victim Assistance Academy: This is an educational service that provides community training with a three-fold focus: education and awareness of services to the community; training for allied professionals and victim advocates; and on-going Victim Assistance Program staff training and wellness.
- The Victim Assistance Program is also part of the Summit County Emergency Operations Plan.

- **ADM Update: Aimee Wade**
 - Ms. Wade gave everyone the update that Kimberly Patton has been promoted as the ADM Board's Associate Director of Clinical Services. ADM also has a new Manager of Evidence Based Practices who will start on September 20, 2021.

- **Data Dashboard: Nick Baechel**
 - Nick provided a very thorough PowerPoint presentation featuring the following areas: overdoses by quarter, deaths by overdose in previous years/months, an update on the effects of the African American community vs the Caucasian community, cause of death by combination of opioids, methamphetamine, and cocaine, fatal overdoses by zip code, Quick Response Teams, detox wait times, residential wait times, opioid doses dispensed per capita, and an ADM Helpline Report.
 - Nick presented data comparing substance abuse in the past to substance abuse currently and what specific substances seem to be in use more often than others. He displayed a map in his PowerPoint that directly revealed the geographic areas where substance abuse is more prevalent. This PowerPoint also showed the trends of use between, males, females, and those of African American race.
 - This Data Dashboard information is used to help target specific areas for campaigns promoting help for those with substance abuse problems.

- **Green Drug Task Force: Bob Bender**
 - This task force staffs major public events.
 - Individuals have been asking for new DeTerra bags.
 - The QRT Team is now active.
 - This Task Force is interested in mental illness & addiction and human trafficking & addiction

- **Subcommittee Reports**
 - **Criminal Justice: Police Chief Jack Davis (Cuyahoga Falls PD)**
 - This subcommittee is meeting regularly. They had been seeing slight decrease in attendance until the Victim Assistance Program joined.
 - They discuss trends in law enforcement
 - In regard to their state funded QRT teams, grants for them have been approved.
 - They are working with Oriana house and the ADM Board to attract more people to their groups including but not limited to probation officers and counselors.
 - They have extra DeTerra bags.
 - **Healthcare: Dr. Garry Thrasher**
 - They want to work with the Summit County jail to work with inmates with substance use disorders.
 - In recent months, they have been seeing a lot of patients have been using stimulants including meth and cocaine. These individuals are coming in more irritable, and they tend to leave against medical advice.

- It is key that staff has a solid understanding of the addictive brain. This helps them understand what is happening with the patient and how they can treat the syndrome.
 - They have been noticing a lot of patients coming in with mental health concerns, and a lot of shared issues across substance use disorders and mental health.
 - They are educating the community on the role detox can play in someone's life, and are applying to have educational credits offered to attendees.
- **Policy and Advocacy: Dr. Andy Davis**
 - Dr. Davis explained he is new to this committee, and they are re-organizing and revitalizing the group.
 - They are looking at current legislation in regard to the federal medicine reimbursement reform. They have discussed a shortage of staff in the healthcare field, and 2 bipartisan bills which can change some aspects of how we care for mental health in our community. State Bill 828 provides coverage for individual who require counseling services under Medicare. House Bill 2767 specifies that peer support specialists may be involved in the treatment of a patient requiring mental health services with the supervision of a physician or other entity under Medicare.
 - On a state level, they are encouraging the signing of House Bill 2767 as this encourages treatment.
 - On a local level, they have received an opioid settlement grant from the Akron Community Foundation for \$25,000.
 - Regarding Harm Reduction, they have concluded that we need to investigate why people are not able to obtain clean needles at pharmacies.
- **Public Awareness: Amy Woodland & Darryl Brake**
 - Ms. Woodland and Mr. Brake gave updates on DeTerra and mentioned there will be a celebration the third week of October.
 - They also discussed a new advertising opportunity with Spectrum Reach.
- **Harm Reduction: Jackie Pollard (Summit County Public Health)**
 - They are looking for ways to expand their strategies.
 - In 2021, they have given out 356,940 syringes which has increased from 2020's 347,722 syringes. We hope this increase is due to the fact that more are using sterile supplies versus an increase in users.
 - Ms. Pollard gave an overview about Project DAWN. Project DAWN is a network of opioid overdose education and naloxone distribution programs. They teach the community about how to see the signs of an overdose. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, they would distribute 2 doses of naloxone to individuals who have needed it. However, with the increase in COVID cases they have had to pause their distribution of naloxone.
 - Ms. Pollard also provided an update on naloxone distribution stating that in August, 2021, 979 kits were distributed around Summit County. As of August, there have been 1,243 known reusals of the product.

- According to Ms. Pollard, Project DAWN's goal is to look at the fatal cases of overdoses and learn and inform strategies. They are a multidisciplinary group looking for trends and recommendations for ways to expand their strategies.
- They have noticed a trend of many people who have overdosed on opioids had been in jail for a drug-related charge.

- **Other Announcements & Events**
 - **Brenda Ryan**
 - Children who have been affected by substance use drugs were given a "Day of Love". This is Ms. Ryan's (I don't know her organization) 2nd event in 2 weeks, and the kids have been really enjoying it. They have a fishing derby on September 26, 2021, and 65 kids have already signed up.
 - **Kendra Anderson: The Light Recovery Center (TLC)**
 - TLC has locations all over Northeast Ohio including Summit County, Stark County and Cuyahoga County.
 - They have instituted the "SOAR" program where an individual can text to get an overdose alert. The user would just type "SOAR" as their message to (440) 762-7627.
 - **Jackie Pollock: Summit County Public Health**
 - Governor DeWine made a statement that August 31 has been declared as Ohio Overdose Awareness Day.
 - The Summit County Council agreed with this decision and implemented the same.

- **Conclusion**

The meeting was concluded at 4:50p.m. The next public quarterly meeting will be held Monday, December 13, 2021, 4-5:30p.m. via ZOOM.