

OCCC Meeting Minutes

October 6, 2021

5:15 – 6:45 pm

Via Zoom

Attendance: Jama Acuff, Barbara Allen, Robin Bartko, Hilari Carrol, Mark Donovan, Joanie Elder, Beth Harbison, Sean Hughes, Kaymisha Knight, James LeMon, Sarah McCoy, Debbie Nix, Ana Park, Teron Powell, Roe Rodgers-Bonaccorsy, Laura Torres, Joan Webb Scornaienchi, John Way, Liesele Wood

Meeting called to order at 5:18 PM

Approval of the August and September meeting minutes; August minutes were approved as submitted September were approved as amended. Laura made the motion and Debbie seconded. Minutes are posted on the OCCC page of the county's website one day after the approval.

Announcements:

Roe, HCHD:

- Opioid Prevention campaign launched in partnership with HC Government
- Planning a PSA to promote Youth Suicide Prevention in partnership with HC Government
- CAMS (Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality) funds awarded for a Suicide Prevention Pilot, to train up to 20 clinicians in the CAMS suicide prevention framework. This intervention will be comprised of short-term (12-sessions) intensive mental health support delivered by licensed mental health providers for the youth and adult population, specifically targeting individuals experiencing suicidal ideation and exhibiting self-harming behaviors.
 - Provider training starts 10/8.
- Awarded funding for Mental Health crisis beds, continuing with work with State funder and County Purchasing on contract implementation processes
- Awarded funds for peer support expansion within Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs), continuing with work with State funder and County Purchasing on contract implementation processes
- Planning modifications to the mental health awareness campaign “Let’s Talk About Mental Health”
- Planning modifications to the Youth Suicide Prevention campaign “It’s OK to Ask” to convert to a suicide prevention campaign for across the life span.
- Preparing to launch “Teen Intervene” at Patuxent Valley Middle School and Wilde Lake High School through the School-Based Wellness Centers.
- Launched peer support at the Homewood school
- Long Reach HS reached out for assistance with SUD issues in the school
- 10/16 Sponsoring “Oktso barfest” with Sobar – alcohol prevention and resource sharing event
- Save the date for HC DrugFree's next free and convenient drive-thru medication and sharps collection: **Saturday, October 23, 2021** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Wilde Lake Village Center parking lot.
- RFP out for mental health training at HCDC

Beth H., Sobar's Oktsoabarfest - a zero-alcohol event celebrating Oktoberfest on Saturday, October 16th from noon to 4 pm in Ellicott City – venue change to Saint John's Episcopal Church. The event will feature live music, lawn games, samples of alcohol-free beverages, a mixology bar where guests can experiment and try to create the winning beverage, local food trucks, *Meet and Greet the Ponies* with Safe Haven Equine Rescue, performance by Kangaroo Kids precision jump rope team and more.

Joan WS reminds everyone of HCDrugfree's drug take back day on Saturday October 23rd from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Wilde Lake Village Center. She will provide flyers in multiple formats to be shared.

Sarah McCoy provided Grassroots update; they have a new SBIRT grant targeting youth, 12 year-olds and up. Grassroots is the recipient of a SOR opioid response grant-allowing for treatment for alcohol and benzo withdrawal if client has used stimulants or opioids in the last year. Grassroots can provide short term stabilization including comfort meds for cocaine withdrawal or other stimulants. Grassroots has staffing needs - *critical* need for overnight nursing staff. Sarah mentioned Grassroots does refer to Sheppard Pratt's psychiatric facility and stated that the partial hospitalization program is backed up due to staffing shortages at their facility as well.

Roe talked about the press conference with the County Executive and the \$1.5 million in local grants to Sheppard Pratt, Howard House, and Hilda's Place. Each of these three grants will provide dollars toward services, such as staffing, peer support, purchase of a van, drivers, etc. These organizations are working with HCHD to expand services. Currently treatment levels at a 3.1 and 3.3. Hoping to include 3.5 and 3.7 levels of care. Sheppard Pratt has detox services but does not currently have 3.7 level detox beds.

James Lemon, HCPSS, talked about the expansion of the school based mental health program. The program has gone from being available in four schools to 36 schools to date; they hope to expand to 50 schools countywide. Kami Wagner is the incoming contact for substance use prevention for HCPSS.

Barbara shared that there is a priority coming for funding at the state level for school programs. Reminder that she sent the link to the OCCC second quarter report which includes the OIT team reports. There are some 130+ plus programs across the jurisdiction. This could be used as a means to see if there are programs of interest for Howard County. This report also includes a listing of grants awarded via the OCCC; this is another possible source of ideas. There is a general push (federal and state level) for more community-based program funding and implementation. \$12 million has been received from the Opioid Restitution Fund; from the Pharma Purdue lawsuit. Additionally, there is additional \$155 million funding for substance use disorder and mental health issues including COVID-19. Question: Can part of the \$155 million in grant money fill the gap between alcohol use disorder and substance use disorder treatment? Answer: Options go back to - what is the funding source? How are the dollars allocated? Are there narrow parameters for spending these dollars? There may be an opportunity here to ask for funding from the County for OCCC events and activities, in light of the dollars available and the request from the County for recommendations of where the budget surplus could be spent.

Committee discussions:

Business/Community outreach is a committee in search of a leader.

Communications - Sean commented that one priority is to ask for a dedicated communications person from the current administration. How best to communicate our efforts with county executives' staff? There was a discussion about having a better presence for the OCCC on the

county website and it was recommended that Scott Peterson might be the person to dialogue with about our efforts.

Prevention – Teron commented about the alignment between the OCCC and the county executive's office and asked what is their desire for us? Will there be a first responders event this year? County gives us just enough encouragement to continue, with no direction or staff participation.

Jama read back through all the original OCCC meeting minutes and asked about a document from 2018. This was a document written by a group of moms in Howard County who had loved ones struggling with substance use disorder, in recovery from SUD or had lost a loved one to SUD. They began meeting once monthly and a few in the group decided they needed to do more than just share their experiences. So they got together and scheduled meetings with leadership at the police, fire, health department and others, arranged for speakers with lived experience to do outreach within the county, and pushed for greater communication about programs and resources that existed in HoCo and also pointed out gaps and opportunities they saw, from their perspective. This document and those meetings were one of the reasons the OCCC came into being. This began under a previous administration and was staffed with several folks from the county executives' team, representatives from OEM, Police and Fire.

With obvious frustration growing for the lack of communication from the COEX to the OCCC, a lively discussion ensued. We discussed writing a letter to the County Executive, we discussed asking what the County Executive wants or expects from the OCCC? Should we disband? There was a discussion about the OCCC budget having been eliminated without notice to us. Planning and implementation was already underway for the annual International Opioid Awareness Day (IOAD) event on 8/31. Days before we were informed no funds were available. In discussion, we were allocated funds to cover needed expenses. This is an example of the gap in communications and support for the mission of the OCCC.

Jama discussed a pretrial diversion program at the detention center which kicked off the first week of the month. This program will provide wraparound services.

Question about first responders' day and the OCCC for 10/28? It was determined there will be no event this year.

Debbie suggested we participate again in the HoCo Veteran's day parade, held this year on November 7th at the lakefront. She will put in the request for space, and we will need volunteers that morning. Debbie also announced that due to a work conflict, she could not participate in the GBRICS community engagement committee, but confirmed that Diane Huss was willing to take her place.

Meeting adjourned 6:56 PM