

Substance Use Recovery Services Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

June 12, 2023, 9:00-11:00 PDT

Meeting Recording: [Substance Abuse Recovery Services Advisory Committee - TVW](#)

HCA Executive & Administrative Support

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jason McGill, Executive Co-Sponsor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tony Walton, 5476 Project Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Zayas, Admin Assistant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Michelle Martinez, Administrator	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brianna Peterson, Plan Writer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sandy Sander, Admin Assistant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Blake Ellison, Meeting Facilitator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rachel Downs, Admin Assistant		

Committee Members (28)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Michael Langer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amber Daniel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Donnell Tanksley
<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber Leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brandie Flood	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malika Lamont
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sen. Manka Dhingra	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Stormy Howell	<input type="checkbox"/>	Addy Adwell
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sen. John Braun	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chad Enright	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kevin Ballard
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rep. Lauren Davis	<input type="checkbox"/>	John Hayden	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hunter McKim
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rep. Dan Griffey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sarah Melfi-Klein	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Youth in Recovery - TBD</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caleb Banta-Green	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sherri Candelario		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Don Julian Saucier	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	James Tillett		Alternates / Optional Attendees:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chenell Wolfe	<input type="checkbox"/>	Christine Lynch	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rep. Jamila Taylor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Alexie Orr	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sarah Gillard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rep. Gina Mosbrucker

Meeting Attachments

- [Meeting Agenda](#)
- [SURSAC recommendations x 2023 legislation](#)
- [In-person meeting: Driving & Parking Instructions](#)

Public Comment

- No public comment at the beginning of the meeting.

Panel Discussion #1 – Harm Reduction, Overdose Prevention, and Community Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Services

The panel consisted of presenters Barbara Gerrior, Cole Meckle, and Mandy Resendiz. They shared:

- **Barbara Gerrior, RNP staff:** She reported that they have seen a lot of good work being done within the RNP program in Clark, County with law enforcement, outreach, and community supports. This has been more of a challenge in Skamania and Klickitat as neither county has treatment services. Getting individuals in for assessments includes transporting individuals out of county and this includes treatment services and community supports. Secondly, a challenge has been earning law enforcement buy-in within these counties. They have their Policy Coordinating Groups working hard to get individual and organizational buy-in from law enforcement and community partners. They started doing pop-up recovery cafes where they could help individuals get connected to various types of supports and this has also allowed them to receive feedback from community partners. Goldendale will be implementing and creating their own 501C(3) Recovery Café in the area. The local RNP program has also hired bilingual staff to help assist with the bilingual communities to ensure services for more types of communities.
- **Cole Meckle, Syringe Service Provider:** Community safety is very close to syringe service programs (SSP) and harm reduction as a principle and practice. He reported that Lewis County offers medication assisted treatment (MAT) services and SSPs and they are fortunate to do so as not a lot of communities have both. He emphasized the point that community safety includes the overall safety of those that are using substances. These programs improve community safety and public health, and public safety are benefitted from them, especially with the rise of fentanyl. Especially, as individuals are using the services to access Naloxone and Narcan.
- **Mandy Resendiz, Homeless Community Outreach:** She emphasized the importance that Narcan and Naloxone are not able to work on fentanyl overdoses by themselves. Also, that we need to build trust and rapport with individuals who are using so that reduction of stigma and increase of collaboration can happen, especially for those struggling with substance use and homelessness. In the Clark County area, programs Safe Parks, Safe homes, MAT, and housing-first project-based models have been instrumental in leveraging resources for all clientele.

Questions re: Harm Reduction, Overdose Prevention, and Community Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Services Presentation

Q: For Barbara, have you been able to connect clients to telehealth assessments?

A: They are just beginning that process. Lifeline Connections and Rainier Springs will be assisting with this. They will also send a clinician to Goldendale once weekly to do assessments.

Q: There are currently no providers in Skamania or Klickitat County?

A: The only providers in the area have already begun moving out of county. Currently, they are having to transport people out-of-county for mental health and substance use disorder assessments. A lot of money is being spent on transportation and the problem is exacerbated by the lack of housing options and recovery supports.

Q: Does anyone have a plan to reach out to rural healthcare providers about medications to help with substance use disorder?

A: There are no emergency providers, and this is coupled with the issue and cost of transportation to make this feasible. They are even taking certain individuals to The Dalles in Oregon.

Q: Can you say more about what steps are being taken regarding fentanyl overdoses?

A: They are meeting people where they are and encouraging treatment while passing out Narcan kits and teaching people about overdose reversal. Encouraging individuals to get into services and meeting them where they are at, especially with SSPs and MAT services is crucial to addressing this issue.

Comments RE: Harm Reduction, Overdose Prevention, and Community Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Services Presentation

- It was reiterated that fentanyl is an opioid but is much more powerful than most, such as heroin or OxyContin, often taking multiple doses of Narcan for a successful overdose reversal.
- It was reiterated that there is also a trauma that needs to be acknowledged that individuals go through when they are recovering from overdose.

Panel Discussion #2 – People with Lived/Living Experience of Use & Addiction

The panel consisted of presenters DeAunte Damper, Roxy Phillips, James Tillett, and Don Julian Saucier. They shared:

- **DeAunte Damper, Lived Experience in Urban Community:** It has been a life-changing experience to be able to utilize lived experience to help those with substance use disorder. By meeting community members where they are at, they can achieve great things. These community members have been community organizers that have gone on to lead candidate forums, have done outreach to other communities at recovery houses and spoke to youth, and most importantly are just like everyone else. There has been certain struggles at the policy level, such as with SB 5536. With this new policy of accountability, it comes with individuals of color being incarcerated and losing equitable access to care. Currently VOCAL-WA is partnering with Lavender Rights Project in creating a housing curriculum to give individuals access to care. The SURSAC Meeting has also been considered a community compass to lead in communities and we should continue to invest in community members and community partners doing the work so they can continue to be a compass to guide others.
- **Roxy Phillips, Lived Experience in Tribal Community:** There was emphasis that education, and getting access to education to the community, has helped to understand and change stigma for individuals with lived/living experience with substance use. Within the last year, the community in Yakima has been coming together and focusing on educating children and young people about substance use. Properly educating them is how communities can help fight against stigma.

- **James Tillett, Lived Experience in Un-Housed Community:** When it comes to public safety and lived experience with homelessness, those experiencing it need to also be at the table to inform others about their experience. They are not protected from the elements or individuals with bad intentions. Drugs use is much cheaper and accessible for individuals that want them. There is a large population of individuals struggling with substances in his region and law enforcement have been using programs as a mask to target these populations, which hinders their ability to achieve success at recovery. Harm reduction and giving people second and third chances at life are important to creating change.
- **Don Julian Saucier, Lived Experience in LGBTQIA+ Community:** Coming out happened at a time when AIDS/HIV was very prevalent. There are too many areas within the community where an individual who is a person of color, gay, and a former drug user does not feel safe. These are communities that need to be supported, especially as there are a lot of misguided opinions and misconceptions assuming that these are a personal choice. To cope with that struggle and pressure, some individuals turn to using substances. The stigma that goes on within a community has a large effect on those who are using and that gets overlooked.

Questions re: People with Lived/Living Experience of Use & Addiction

Q: I would like to know what you believe about 5536?

A: Community is not informed. It's going to impact those in the POC community. Seattle communities may be safe, but those in rural spaces may not be as safe. We need to keep investing in those relationships.

Q: It takes a community to start a garden. How do the leaders take a stand?

A: I keep coming to these meetings because hearing all of you speak grounds me. The people who were not in favor of the Blake bills it were local government officials, mayors, LE, and such. People are not willing to learn. I do not know how to make this change. Perhaps 1:1 meeting? We need to build those relationships. We need to come together as a community. Write down your encounters. Success stories. Broadcast those stories. We need to change the public narrative.

Q: How do we begin to do the work of making places where change is happening, safer and more welcoming and accessible to have these productive discussions?

A: At VOCAL-WA, with CO-LEAD, they operate the Civic Hotel where community and civic engagement meetings on the first and third Wednesdays of the month are held. All community members and legislators are welcome to come because it is a safe environment where everyone is welcomed. Communities need to be able to hold these types of panel discussions about community impacts, reentry services, and other things that impact people and communities. Being a part of the community compass that promotes this type of proactive feedback and dialogue is important.

Comments RE: People with Lived/Living Experience of Use & Addiction

- The war on drugs has caused harm to those in my community. Rehabilitation is supposed to help with trauma and drug use. In the 80's and 90's they criminalized those who needed help. We need to stop criminalizing those in need. All that to say, how will interactions with law enforcement be different this time?

- We have state representatives and senators for a reason. These individuals in power need to take these types of conversations back to their colleagues with influence and power to police the police and not their interests. It is an extreme bias to see officers jumping and cheering for the demise of another human being.
 - RESPONSE: I was an advocate that accidentally became a law maker. Your personal experiences cannot be refuted. No one knew that we had made progress. It takes time. Most of my colleagues have never heard of RNP. There is magic in this work. We just need to keep educating. Two years was not enough for this work.
- A point was made that it was impactful to be able to hear from, and meet with, local legislatures. These types of meetings used to be very negative for this individual, but after having a very personal conversation, they learned a lot and outlooks were changed. People need to think about the fear of letting go and fear of misunderstanding in order to not only change their mind but to also change their community.
- This has been one of the best, most productive SURSAC meetings, because we have been able to hear from individuals with lived experience and to bring more inclusivity to this space, especially being able to center community members that are continuing to strive to bring peace to their communities and spaces.

Public Comment

- An individual shared that they have learned a lot from the SURSAC meetings. They wanted to comment that they are concerned the SURSAC Committee does not have an opportunity for those with lived experience who've watched loved ones go through addiction that did not make it through the other side. They would like to have the voice of the grieving as they are highly focused and motivated. They would like to be a representative on the SURSAC for this and this voice needs to be heard.
- An individual shared that they felt called to speak from their experience as it relates to law enforcement. They are now able to have a more balanced perspective and when they come in contact with law enforcement, as they work with them to address the needs of those struggling with co-occurring disorders. They feel called to share that there are good people all over, especially the law enforcement they get to work with in Spokane who send over numerous referrals to their program.

Upcoming Agenda: July 10, 2023

- There will be continuing in-person options for hybrid meetings.
- In July, they will hear from crisis response and criminal legal system panels, in addition to looking at RNP quarterly reports.
- SURSAC will not be having an August 2023 meeting.

Next Steps

1. Michelle will provide a July Agenda draft within the next two weeks.