

Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee
Bismarck Listening Session Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 22nd, 2023
4:30 p.m. to 5:50 p.m. CT

Committee Members in Attendance:

- Lt. Governor Tammy Miller, Chair
- Pamela Sagness, Behavioral Health Executive Director, North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services
- Colonel Brandon Solberg, Superintendent, North Dakota Highway Patrol
- Jonathan Holth, Managing Director, Recovery Reinvented
- Mary Korsmo, North Dakota State Association of City and County Health Officials Executive Director, Association of Counties
- Stephanie Dassinger Engebretson, Deputy Director and Attorney at Law, North Dakota League of Cities

Committee Members Absent:

- Aaron Birst, Executive Director, North Dakota Association of Counties

Welcome and Call to Order:

- Lt. Governor Tammy Miller, Chair, called the meeting to order. Committee members introduced themselves.

Public Comment:

- Beth Steckler – advocate and caregiver
 - Recommended the committee be cognizant of individuals with chronic pain when making decision so as not to make it even harder than it already is to obtain treatment for chronic pain. Recommended funds be spent to increase sober living houses that accept medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD). Identified that Sharehouse and Prairie St. Johns do not accept Medicaid. Identified the need for more education about the difference between chronic pain and substance use disorder and more education among prescribers to decrease stigma.
- Missy Henke – Heartview Foundation
 - Provided education on medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD). Provided information about prescribers no longer needing an X-Waiver through the DEA to prescribe buprenorphine and that all prescribers who are registered with the DEA are required to complete 8 hours of opioid use disorder (OUD) related training. Recommended funds be used to increase access to MOUD.
- Kurt Snyder – Heartview Foundation
 - Provided background on Heartview Foundation. Recommendations included using funds to increase individuals entering the workforce through scholarships, expand OTPs, increase sober living environments that accept MOUD, and to provide education and support to family members with a loved one struggling with a substance use disorder.
- Mike Schaefer – Community Medical Services (CMS)
 - Identified that individuals travel a great distance to an Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) due to there only be 4 in the state. Recommended funds be used to increase access to OTPs, increase workforce including prescribers and nurses, expand MOUD prescribing to all communities to increase access, and increase access to MOUD in jails.
- Stephanie Gravning – ND Dept. of Corrections and Rehabilitation
 - Provided information about successes in the ND prisons including starting individuals on Sublocade injections and connecting them with community providers upon release to continue the medication. Identified the need for MOUD in county jails due to individuals having to stop their MOUD if they are placed in a county jail. Recommended funds be used for MOUD in county jails, increase education among community providers to increase access to MOUD, and consider hepatitis C diagnosing and testing in strategies.
- Tom Erhardt – ND Parole and Probation
 - Provided information on the prevalence of opioid use disorder and associated harms among individuals on parole and probation. Recommended funds be used for treatment for individuals in drug court and to specifically support contracting with one provider in each of

the communities. Additional recommendations included expanding treatment to rural areas, purchasing telehealth equipment to expand treatment, support transportation, support access to mental health treatment due to the prevalence of dual-diagnoses, and support harm reduction services including Narcan.

- Natalie Daniel – Unite Us
 - Provided information about Unite Us and how it could be used in North Dakota.
- John Wiegler – Heart River Alcohol and Drug
 - Recommended funds be used for individual to afford treatment who have a high deductible, to support family members of loved ones going through treatment, and to support sober houses. Identified the need for the state to limit rules for sober houses.

Adjournment: Hearing no further comments from the public or from the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee members, Lt. Governor Tammy Miller, Chair, adjourned at 5:50 PM CT.

Meeting Minutes submitted by Amy Lies, Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee Board Administrator