

Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 17, 2023

12:35 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. CT

Committee members in attendance:

- Lt. Governor Tammy Miller, Committee Chair
- Pamela Sagness, Executive Director, Behavioral Health Division, North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services
- Colonel Brandon Solberg, Superintendent, North Dakota Highway Patrol
- Jonathan Holth, Managing Director, Recovery Reinvented
- Aaron Birst, Executive Director, North Dakota Association of Counties
- 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: None

Welcome and call to order:

Lt. Governor Tammy Miller, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Roll call

Roll call was completed with all committee members in attendance.

Meeting agenda review

Coln. Brandon Solberg moved to approve the agenda. Mary Korsmo seconded the motion. 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

Meeting meetings review

August 28, 2023 meeting minutes reviewed. Stephanie Dassinger Engebretson moved to approve. Jonathon Holth seconded the motion. 6 in favor 0 opposed.

September 26, 2023 Dickinson Listening Session minutes reviewed. Mary Korsmo moved to approve. Stephanie Dassinger Engebretson seconded the motion. 6 in favor 0 opposed.

Opioid settlement updates

Elin Alm from the Attorney General's office was present. There have been no new settlement payments and several settlements are still in the process of getting processed and finalized.

Updates from the Behavioral Health Division

Amy Lies, Opioid Addiction Administrator, Behavioral Health Division, DHHS and Committee Administrator provided information from the Behavioral Health Division including the following:

1. Update on plans for the 15% subdivision allocation
2. Update on the State Opioid Response (SOR) grant
3. Priority recommendations from BHD
 - a. Stephanie Dassinger Engebretson made a motion to utilize settlement funds for tribal activities that SOR funds could not support and to fund the purchasing of opioid overdose reversal medication. Mary Korsmo seconded the motion. 6 in favor 0 opposed.

Grant process

Amy Lies, Opioid Addiction Administrator, Behavioral Health Division, DHHS and Committee Administrator provided information from the Behavioral Health Division about a grant process for the opioid settlement funds. BHD will utilize recommendations and priorities received from the committee to open a grant.

Public Comment

Mark Hardy from Community Medical Services (CMS) shared. He supports using funds to increase access to treatment and stated that what BHD has recommended is what they are seeing as needs. He brought awareness to the difficulties of starting Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) due to federal regulations. Through conversations with the committee members and Mark it was identified that medication units could be a solution in rural areas but

there is a need for funding, especially start up funding. There is opportunity for innovative and creative solutions for medication dosing in rural areas.

Todd from North Dakota Commission on Legal Counsel for Indigents shared. He supports increasing access to treatment for individuals who are incarcerated. He inquired about any concerns with Narcan expiring and it was clarified that small batches of Narcan are ordered at once to ensure it is distributed in a timely manner.

Dr. Lisa Peterson from Management Training Corporation (MTC) shared. She advocated for services in the jail and shared that MTC would be interested in working with jails. She identified that it is challenging, financially, to start as a treatment provider due to having to hire a Licensed Addiction Counselor prior to becoming licensed and cannot bill insurances until becoming licensed. Due to providing services in Rolla, a rural location, it was asked how services could be successful in rural areas. Lisa shared that costs are able to remain low due to collaborating with DOCR for office space.

Committee priority recommendations and discussion

Coln. Brandon Solberg: recommended priorities include treatment in jails, services in rural areas including both substance use and mental health, workforce, and invest the funds

Mary Korsmo: recommended priorities include treatment in jails, services in rural areas including both substance use and mental health

Stephanie Dassinger Engebretson: recommended priorities include treatment in jails and services in rural areas. Overall, support the recommendations from BHD

Aaron Birst: recommended priorities include treatment in jails. Overall, support the recommendations from BHD

Jonathon: recommended priorities include increasing access to treatment for anyone that has barriers to access, supporting harm reduction, community and coalition work, prevention work in schools, and supporting efforts that will be sustainable

Pam: recommended priorities include workforce, treatment in jails, and services in rural areas

Lt. Governor Miller: recommended priorities include treatment in jails, services in rural areas, workforce, prevention for youth, and to use innovation and technology

Discuss next steps, next meeting agenda, and next meeting date

The next meeting will be held in January to allow for the grant to be announced and applications to be received and reviewed by BHD. At the next meeting, any updates from the State Investment Board will be provided

Adjournment: Having completed the agenda items and hearing no further comments from Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee members, Lt. Governor Tammy Miller, Chair, adjourned at 2:15 PM CT.

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