CECIL COUNTY DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 14, 2017

Meeting Location: Cecil County Health Department

Members In Attendance: Scott Adams, John Bennett, Sean Cannon, Ken Collins, Joe Fisona, Howard Isenberg, Dr. Paul Katz, Michael Massuli, Dr. Alan McCarthy, Bob Meffley, Dr. James Ziccardi.


Call to Order: John Bennett called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

COUNCIL BUSINESS:

Chairperson’s Report, John Bennett:
• Recognized that, due to high number of overdose incidents, the past year had been a difficult one for Cecil County.
• Wished everyone a happy holiday, and a healthy new year.

Board of Health Report – Laurie Humphries reported for Stephanie Garrity:
• Reported that on October 24, 2017, Stephanie and Ken provided information to the Board of Health on the Opioid Overdose Command Center (OOC), Fentanyl, Recovery and the National Drug Take Back Day.
  o As part of the Governor’s declaration of a State of Emergency for the Opioid Overdose Crisis, Cecil County received $123,327 for use in FY18 to address the opioid crisis. Cecil’s Opioid Intervention Team (OIT) met three times (4/20/17, 5/17/17 and 8/1/17) to review resources available and set priorities for use of the funding based on OOC goals which are prevention, early intervention, recovery support and data collection. Prevention was determined to be Cecil County’s number one priority. Funding was allocated to two projects: (1) enhanced Rewrite Your Script website and dissemination of public awareness for opioid misuse prevention, and (2) increase youth knowledge of opioid risk through combined school and community events.
  o Ken shared information with the Board concerning the way fentanyl has changed the landscape of the overdose crisis in Cecil County, reporting that 75% of the confirmed overdose cases to date in 2017 involved fentanyl. Emphasized was the need to
continue to educate and reach out to users, promoting overdose recognition and response (Narcan training), as well as encouraging and embracing treatment. Recovery stories were shared in recognition “that people can and do get better” and reinforcing the value of our efforts to instill hope and save lives. Ken also shared with the Board activities and initiatives involving the Peer Recovery Support Specialists.

- Discussed National Drug Take Back Day scheduled for Saturday, October 28, 2017, including the Cecil County Drug Free Communities Coalition Health Fair and Restore Church Trunk-or-Treat event at Elkton High School with a scheduled visit of the acting director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. Reported on the value of take back events, and the locations for all six permanent drug disposal boxes.

**County Executive Report – Dr. Alan McCarthy:**

- Cecil County filed a lawsuit against opioid manufacturers to help the community obtain compensation for damages caused, to deter deceptive practices by drug distributors and manufacturers, and to reduce the influx of these powerful drugs.
- Reported that as of today [during calendar year 2017], 64 individuals have died from overdose; 90% of those deaths were heroin related. During calendar year 2016, 32 individuals had died from overdose. There have been 530 emergency calls placed. Cecil County spends $1,200 to send a rescue vehicle to help an overdose victim. It costs $2500-$5000 to pick up and transport a victim to the hospital for treatment and detox. Too often, the overdose victim is sent back into the same environment. Dr. McCarthy emphasized the need for more services to support victims.
- Reported that he has attended nine events in Cecil County since the last DAAC meeting, including:
  - The “Youth Leadership Summit” at NorthBay. Impressed by the students’ efforts to address youth substance use in their communities.
  - The “Evening of Hope” event at Cecil College in November. A well-attended event which featured a group of speakers who shared their stories of addiction and recovery. Also present were various agencies providing resource information.
  - A committee meeting on oversight and government reform which discussed federal funding for addressing substance use disorders. Reported that most of the federal funding is used to contain or control drugs, and less than 5% of the money is spent on education and prevention. Dr. McCarthy emphasized that prevention is an important piece. In support of prevention, the County Executive collaborated with Cecil County Public Schools to increase education to elementary, middle and high schools about the hazards of addiction. In addition, Dr. McCarthy invited New Jersey Governor Chris Christie to visit Cecil County to speak about how his state has turned two correctional facilities into recovery centers. Also reported on our need to continue to destigmatize heroin and drug addiction in the general population.
- Ken Collins extended appreciated to the County Executive for his support of and participation in every recent local addiction informational meeting and event. Reported that Dr. McCarthy was also scheduled to provide opening remarks this evening at Union Hospital’s presentation for reducing addiction stigma.

**County Health Officer Report – Laurie Humphries reported for Stephanie Garrity:**

- No report at this time.
Other Committee/ Sub-Committee Reports:
- Workforce Committee: Howard Isenberg reported that there is nothing to report at this time.

PRESENTATIONS:

Update on the Cecil County Student Leadership Summit – Dave Dahl, Education Manager and Dean of Students, reporting for Richard Garber, Director of Education, NorthBay; Caitlyn Egan, NEXT Manager, NorthBay
- NorthBay is an outdoor hands-on environmental and character building education camp in Elk Neck State Park. Youth are taught how to identify issues in the environment along with identifying issues in their life. Students learn a process of how to take action to address those issues that will impact their community as well as their future.
- Students from all five Cecil County high schools attended the third annual Student Leadership Summit held at NorthBay. The Summit is a venue for student leaders to come together to discuss how to address the drug issue in Cecil County. Their mission is to reduce the risk of drug abuse among peers and middle school students by developing solutions, setting goals and executing their plans to impact school climate and build safe communities. Changing social norms is most effective when empowered youth take responsibility for themselves.
- Those students attending the Summit received training in how to develop a public service announcement (PSA). Each high school developed a PSA addressing specific drug abuse issues in Cecil County. The following are the topics for the PSAs and billboards in development:
  - Elkton High School’s topic is “Over the Counter Medicine Safety”.
  - North East High School’s topic is “Healthy Alternatives”.
  - Bo Manor High School’s topic is “Start the Conversation” to get parents to sit down with their kids and have a conversation.
  - Rising Sun High School’s topic is “Live Above” addressing youth marijuana use.
  - Perryville High School’s topic is “Know the Signs” addressing youth alcohol use.
- The PSAs will be refined in January of 2018. NorthBay plans to post the social media ads on local television, on billboards around the county, in the schools as well as share them with Cecil County agencies.
- Ken Collins reported that the project was initially funded by Old Dominion Electric Cooperative and supported by former Delegate Dave Rudolph. The project continued with support and strong partnership between NorthBay, Cecil County Public Schools, the Drug Free Communities Coalition, and the Health Department.

Family Peer Support Services – Toni Torsch, Maryland Coalition of Families
- Toni, a Family Peer Support Specialist, shared that the Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) serves families with behavioral health needs, including mental health, substance use and gambling issues. Shared that most of the staff have cared for a loved one with mental health, substance use or gambling issues, and that she became involved with MCF after one of her sons died from a heroin overdose. At the time, family support services were difficult to find.
- MCF staff help families understand and access the services available within the community. Toni reported that family support services offered through the MCF includes: “guiding them, giving them the tools to help them remain focused, and hand-holding.” Most calls have been for adult children and for treatment, and often involve guiding families on questions to ask their health insurance companies.
- The main number for MCF is 410-730-8267, and Toni Torsch shared that she can be reached directly at 202-573-6773.
Update on Exploration of Syringe Services Program – Sonia Pandit, MPH MBA, Consultant, The Pandit Group

- Sonia has been hired by the Cecil County Health Department to explore and consult on the viability of a Syringe Services Program (SSP) for Cecil County. Sonia is academically trained in Public Health and Business Administration, and manages a consulting firm in Maryland which specializes in Public Health and Management. Sonia has also consulted for the World Health Organization (WHO) on the use of evidence to inform health policy decisions and the MD Department of Health on the Zika virus campaign.

- Reasons for exploring the potential of an SSP:
  - In Maryland, the number of drug and alcohol intoxication deaths has been increasing for the sixth year in a row. Calendar year 2016 reached an all-time high of over 2,000 deaths, a 66% increase since calendar year 2015. The number has tripled since calendar year 2010. The number of opioid related deaths increased by 70% from 2015 to 2016, and was responsible for 90% of intoxication deaths in 2016. Since 2010, the number of intoxication deaths has almost quadrupled.
  - In Cecil County, there were 32 deaths in 2016 and at least 64 deaths through 2017. Cecil County’s drug induced death rate has consistently been approximately double that of Maryland as a whole. Cecil County has the 3rd highest age-adjusted death rate for total unintentional intoxication deaths when compared to other counties in Maryland.

- Consequences of the opioid epidemic and substance use disorder include:
  - Increased prevalence of infectious diseases. In 2015, Cecil County had the most reported Hepatitis-C cases in Maryland.
  - Increased substance use disorder-attributed crime. Nationally, criminal offenders are shown to have rates of substance abuse that are four times higher than the general population;
  - Increased needle stick injuries due to used and discarded syringes;
  - Increased healthcare costs.

- SSP is one evidenced-based strategy to address some of those issues and to reduce harm. SSP is a community based public health program that provides comprehensive harm reduction services. This type of program can be helpful as (1) a referral to substance use disorder treatment including medication assisted treatment; (2) referral to medical, mental health, and social services; (3) provide tools to prevent HIV and STDs and viral Hepatitis through counseling, condoms and vaccination; (4) provide HIV and Hepatitis testing and linkage to treatment; (5) provide education about overdose prevention and safer injection practices; (6) provide safe disposal containers for needles and syringes and distribute sterile needles, syringes and other injection equipment.

- Benefits of SSP include:
  - Reducing drug use by increasing opportunities for entry into substance use disorder treatment. Individuals who use injection drugs are five times as likely to enter into treatment for substance use disorder when there is a syringe services program;
  - Reducing overdose deaths by teaching people who inject drugs how to prevent and respond to drug overdose;
  - Reducing needle stick injuries of our first responders and the public by providing proper disposal. Data shows that one in three officers may be stuck with a needle during their career;
  - Reducing new HIV and viral hepatitis infections by decreasing the sharing of syringes and other injection equipment;
  - Reducing healthcare costs by preventing infections. It costs over $400,000 for the estimated lifetime treatment cost for a person living with HIV; and
  - No increase in local crime or drug use in areas where SSPs are located.
The first part of Sonia’s consulting engagement (12/1/17-7/31/18) includes: (1) developing a comprehensive referral resource inventory; (2) conducting context interviews with multiple Health Department staff; (3) visiting syringe services programs near Cecil County; (3) identifying and engaging local stakeholders; (4) collecting data through interviews, focus groups and surveys; and (5) presenting this data to local stakeholders in Cecil County.

If we determine a SSP is viable in Cecil County, then the second part of her engagement will include: (1) writing and presenting a proposal to all of the stakeholders, including the DAAC; (2) conducting outreach to key partners; and (3) completing an application for implementation which will be submitted to the Maryland Department of Health.

Sonia reported that the SSP in Baltimore is doing well and the number of hepatitis and HIV cases are decreasing. Baltimore City is the only operational SSP in Maryland, but there are six or seven other counties in the process of exploring, developing and implementing SSP.

Additional information is available from Sonia Pandit at www.thepanditgroup.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Cecil County Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council’s 12-Step Recovery Walk, (Planning for Next September) – Elaine Barclay, Haven House & Serenity Health

- This year’s Recovery Walk will take place from 10 am until 2 pm, on Saturday, September 29, 2018. This event will be the 8th Annual Cecil County Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council’s 12 Step Recovery Walk. At our last event in September of 2017, several workshops and presentations were facilitated. In 2018, we plan to increase the number of workshops, as well as people and agencies who attend. In addition to resource tables and workshops, the Recovery Walk includes children’s activities, food and vendors.
- All DAAC members were encouraged to attend the Recovery Walk and to set up a table of resources or activities. This is a great event and shows our engagement with the community.
- The next planning meeting will be scheduled during the spring of 2018. Jackie Hartman will send out an email to invite members to the next planning meeting.

REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES FROM – September 28, 2017

- Ken Collins motioned to approve and Joe Fisona seconded. Minutes from the DAAC meeting of September 28, 2017 were reviewed and adopted unanimously with no revisions.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE CAUSE:

Ken Collins, Cecil County Health Department:

- During October’s National Prescription Drug Take Back Day in Cecil County, a total of 199 pounds of medications were collected, an increase of 34 % over the fall of 2016, and a 49 % increase over the fall of 2015. The Drug Free Communities Coalition Health Fair and Restore Church Trunk-or-Treat event at Elkton High School was especially successful and included a visit by Mr. Richard Baum, the acting director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. Medication take back initiatives are one important strategy for reducing diversion of medications that could lead to potential addictions. Expressed appreciation to Jackie Hartman for her efforts to collect the Drug Take Back data for Cecil County. Cecil County is making great progress.
- Presentation titled “Chronic Pain and Implicit Bias” is scheduled for 5 pm tonight at Union Hospital. The presentation will explore the implications of stigma. Dinner will be provided. All are encouraged to attend.
• Goals and objectives of our strategic plan were included on the DAAC meeting agenda because the subcommittee identified these as the top priorities to address. The DAAC is looking at the goals and objectives in order to better measure our progress.

Dan Coulter, Cecil County Health Department:
• The Community Health Advisory Committee (CHAC) was asked to look at our goals and objectives. The next CHAC meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2018 at the Cecil County Health Department auditorium. The CHAC meets in order to discuss and prioritize health issues in our community. Refreshments will be provided.

Joe Fisona, Mayors’ Drug Task Force:
• Joe reported that Recovery Centers of America and the County Chamber of Commerce expressed interest in sponsoring an “Expo” in Cecil County. Joe Tabling from Carroll County offered to help Cecil plan for the event.
• Joe mentioned the tragic loss of a young family member to overdose recently and asked if we keep track of the people who recover and get in treatment. Several members responded: Mike Massuli reported that the Peer Recovery Specialists from the Health Department perform follow up from Ray Lynn’s data. Mike reported that there has been some progress in expanding outreach to overdose victims. Dr. Katz mentioned that usually individuals experience two to three overdoses prior to a fatal overdose. Toni Torsch gave appreciation to the work of the Peer Recovery Support Specialists. Ken Collins commented that the Peers create opportunities for change, and “plant a seed” for recovery. He noted that we’re seeing a need for multiple outreach attempts before some individuals engage in treatment. Kim DiSalvo commented that agencies struggle to find same day treatment for individuals. Elaine Barclay commented on the limited dental health from people struggling with addiction and limited inpatient mental health services for families involved in an overdose. Spoke to the stigma associated with overdose. Elaine also reported that her agency helps many people get the treatment that works for them including methadone and Vivitrol.

Steve Trostle, Interim States Attorney for Cecil County:
• Explained Maryland’s Justice Reinvestment Act (JRA), which says the state of Maryland will incarcerate less and move funds saved into counseling for mental health and drug addiction issues. The State has not yet funded the second half of the formula. Reinvestment Acts work as evidenced in 28 of the 29 other states which have seen decreases in the number of addictions and major crimes and increases in drug treatment services. Each of those states moved the money that was being saved into services. Maryland decided to wait and see how much we would save, but the savings will not be realized for a long time. Steve encouraged members to contact the delegates, senators, and the MD Department of Health Secretary and encourage them to cover the second half of the funding up front. Steve would like his office to be more of a presence at the DAAC meetings.

Sean Cannon, Cecil County Public Schools:
• Extended appreciation to the Health Department and law enforcement agencies and the LifeSkills teachers for participating in substance use disorder community presentations at all five Cecil County high schools. The final presentation at Perryville High School was well attended.
• CCPS was awarded a $2 million grant in collaboration with the University of Maryland for programs in the schools over the next four years. The grant addresses supporting the children who have experienced trauma. In the elementary schools, we are seeing an increase in negative behaviors tied into the drug epidemic.
Dr. Jim Ziccardi:
- Dr. Ziccardi mentioned that the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) published many articles regarding the opioid epidemic.
- Shared one article from NEJM pertaining to alcohol consumption. An article published by JAMA Psychiatry showed the national average of alcohol abuse has increased 50%. There has been an 80% increase in the 45 – 64 year old age group and a 105% increase in the 65 + year old age group. Females, minorities, and the underprivileged have experienced the most increases compared with other socio economic groups. We have seen an increase in the amount of alcohol consumed in the assisted living facilities. This increase in alcohol consumption among the senior population is another epidemic to address.

Dr. Katz, Chesapeake Wellness Center:
- Dr. Katz commented that the cannabis situation on both a national and local scale will be a problem. Referenced an article regarding the overdose victims who have smoked cannabis. Suggested that members watch this situation and continue to screen patients for this substance use disorder.

Mike Massuli, Cecil County Health Department:
- Introduced Roberta Johnson as the new Overdose Prevention Coordinator at the Cecil County Health Department.
- In line with Goal 9, Objective E, the Overdose Response Program (ORP) training provides the community with Narcan at no charge as well as education regarding opioid overdose recognition and response and information to attendees regarding substance use, recovery and support resources. To date, over 2,000 individuals have been trained with over 170+ known lives saved. Trainings are available every Monday at 6 pm at the Cecil County Health Department. ORP can also be brought to groups or agencies throughout the County. Contact the Overdose Prevention Coordinator at 445-245-3785.
- An additional prescription drug take back box was placed in the Perryville Police Department during the quarter. Installation of the box was supported by the Opioid Misuse Prevention Project. In total, there are six permanent drug drop box locations throughout Cecil County. Box locations can be found at www.rewriteyourscript.org.
- We have portable drug disposal bags to distribute to anyone who does not have access to the permanent box locations. Mike welcomed all agencies to contact Roberta with requests for the portable drug disposal bags to distribute to those in need.
- The Health Department’s Alcohol & Drug Recovery Center hired a vocational counselor, Melissa Pinson. Ms. Pinson helps individuals develop skills for finding and maintaining employment. As of December 14, 2017, Ms. Pinson has helped over 40 individuals find jobs.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Daniel Norvell, Upper Bay: Daniel introduced Stephanie Winfree as a new Program Manager at Upper Bay. Daniel mentioned the need to fund long term outpatient treatment. Success of outpatient treatment as an individual moves into recovery is increased with access to a counselor on a regular basis. Individuals receive wraparound services. Upper Bay has an exceptional co-occurring team.

Adjourned: 4:41 PM.
Next Meeting: March 22, 2018, 3:00 p.m.
Submitted by Jackie Hartman