

Vermont Alcohol and Drug Abuse Advisory Council

DLC, Montpelier, VT

Minutes of Wednesday, February 23

Attending: David O'Brien, Joy Mitchell, Debby Haskins, Patrick Martin, Chauncey Liese, Christine Peterson, Trudee Ettlinger, Andy Snyder, Barbara Cimaglio, Mitch Barron, Mark Ames, Steve Waldo, Mike Hogan

Regrets: Willa Farrell, John Flannigan, Lisa Ann Atwood, Sarah Scrodin

Guests: Doug Racine

1. Minutes

Minutes from December were approved with the addition of Chauncey to the attendees list.

2. Conversation with Secretary Racine

The Council welcomed Doug Racine, the new Secretary of Human Services, to the meeting. David gave a synopsis of the Council's make-up and purpose. Secretary Racine expressed his gratitude for citizen's groups such as the Council to inform him of what is going on in communities. He received the letter we drafted for the Governors Transition Teams and he is aware of some of the Council's current concerns. He shared that this will be a tough budget year, the administration is aware that the proposed cuts will impact Vermonters. Governor Shumlin is not considering raising revenue at this time because of the economy and concerns that higher taxes will drive people across borders for purchases. Secretary Racine acknowledged that substance abuse is a huge issue that impacts several areas of AHS; DCF Health Care, Corrections, Mental Health etc. AHS is putting its efforts into breaking down silos, making programs more integrated and developing systems that make the most of our money. There has been progress over time in collaboration among programs but there is more work to do. He sees a lot of resources going to treatment and recovery, less on post recovery and prevention. He said that AHS must deal with people in crisis first. He knows there is a lot of good work being done, however, the SAMHSA data shows young adult use is getting worse. He feels programs should question effectiveness.

David expressed his concern for the erosion of what we have in place for Prevention (SAPs, coalitions, mental health) and these efforts keep people out of hospitals and jails. He's concerned about the stress on the safety nets. Andy mentioned the recent loss of Safe and Drug Free School funds. He went on to share information on his visit to a school in Rutland where students eligible for free and reduced lunch has gone from 12% to 60%. This school has no SAP and one SRO officer. Children in that area are in homes where substance abuse is happening but the only thing that will show up data wise is that they are tardy for school. This is an example of how the data we have does not accurately show the problems. Mitch said that he believes there is a lot of collaboration and adaptation going on the ground and the fragmentation happens on the funding level. He pointed out that SAPs (currently facing elimination) are dealing with kids in crisis. The majority of their time is spent on emergencies; very little time is spent on education. He feels that the administration could make changes to support care providers. As examples he cited changing compliance requirements, changing multiple reporting requirements and ensuring that we are collecting data for outcomes. He will follow up with the Secretary about his recommendations. Secretary Racine wants to know where we see redundancy in state regulation and the funding should coordinate. He mentioned that a lot of the regulation comes from the federal level.

Mark commended the new administration on increasing opiate treatment. He is seeing many people recovering from opiate addiction turning to street use for **buprenorphine** because there aren't enough service providers. David said there is huge need in his area as well. Mark mentioned that there is a need to reduce the number of people on bupe and move them towards abstinence. Many doctors treating opiate addiction are general practitioners who don't have understanding of people in recovery. Barbara said that that opiate addiction is a priority for the Dept of Health. We spend 1 million dollars on travelers for

medication every year. The Department is very aware of the need on the Route 7 corridor and Dr. Chen is very interested in changing the system. She said that one of Vermont's challenges is that we only have four addiction specialists

Trudee voiced her concern about prescription drug abuse. There are a lot of pain medications prescribed out there that are not needed by the people they are prescribed to so the market is flooded. She mentioned some legislation in Florida that requires a person requesting a narcotic prescription take a urine test.

Chauncey gave an update on the pilot Interlock program. 24-26 candidates have been identified. He anticipates having 6 devices installed in March. The driver must pass the test before the car will start and the device instigates a rolling retest every eight minutes so the driver must blow into the device repeatedly. The device takes a photo of the driver when it tests. The monitoring is important. DMV wants to put it into administrative rule but the legislature has resisted that. He said the candidates are sincere and motivated to succeed. For an applicant to be eligible he or she must have a car and insurance and must be clear of any other offences and paid outstanding fines. The interlock device costs \$60-\$90 to install, the installation of the pilot device has been donated and there is a \$90 per month fee. These fees are paid by the applicant. On July 1st the program will be available to the public. There is no time to effectively evaluate it. The only penalties are if an offender tampers with the device or drives without it.

David mentioned some other concerns of the Council; rise in marijuana use, the possibility of marijuana "compassion centers" in Vermont, underage drinking and the elimination of the SAP positions.

The Secretary thanked the Council for the invitation and encouraged us to continue to invite him. He would like to hear from Dr Chen and other physicians on the physician issues that were mentioned.

There was some discussion on how to follow up with him. A bulleted comprehensive document outlining specific solutions was suggested. The counter argument is that the data is out there and has been presented on many occasions and that people in leadership are presented with data on a regular basis.

3. Update from ADAP

The Council congratulated Barbara Cimaglio on her reappointment. Barbara let us know about a webinar that is coming up on marijuana on March 28, 30 and 31. Interested folks can learn more and sign up at centerforhealthandlearning.org.

The FY 12 budget; SPF grants are winding down. The current RFP that has been released is an integrated community health grant. This grant is the first step in combining funding integrating efforts for substance abuse, Fit and Healthy, CHAMPPS grantees. Tobacco grantees will be integrated in 2013. These grants come from money the Dept of Health has in hand, not federal money coming next year. The current budget cuts the SAP program. There are no plans to release an RFP for SAPs for FY12. If there is a change, ADAP will release one. Tobacco cuts are concentrated in cessation and media. On the federal level, the SAMHSA budget is in the beginning of the process of being put together. She mentioned that there are proposed changes for prevention block grants which would be similar to a SPF process focusing on the highest area of need and targeting the most high risk youth. She urges Prevention people to get in touch with the Congressional delegation with input on these changes, particularly Senator Sanders who is on the committee who makes these decisions. There are changes in the Mental Health grants based on a program called "Project Launch" There is nothing in the House proposals for FY 2011 cuts that impacts our funding. There is a reduction in CDC funding which will impact our infrastructure grant for Blueprint for Health. Challenges for Change grants are out and the projects are very exciting and good data systems are being developed.

4. SAPs

Debby and the SAPs are doing everything in their power to reduce the elimination of the program. There has been testimony for several legislative committees, letters have been written, principals have testified,

the president of the Vermont Principals Association has testified and youth are speaking about the value of the SAPs in school. The elimination of the positions will reduce or eliminate the number of VKAT or VTLSP groups in school and there is a question of who will administer the YRBS survey. 96 counselors will lose their jobs. The cost of the SAP program is \$38.63 per student. It is a money saving program and more importantly, it saves kids' lives.

5. Legislative Updates and Constitute Updates

We talked briefly about two recent legislative items. Chauncey reported on Nick's Law. If the law passes as currently written, it would require people to physically go to a DMV office to renew vehicle registration. Other forms of registering vehicles would no longer be valid which would bring back long lines at the DMV. Another piece of the law mentions a requirement of vehicle forfeiture for a DUI offender. Chauncey pointed out that Vermont has that now and it doesn't get used. He mentioned that for many DUI offenders, Project Crash works. Barbara said that data on Project Crash outcomes can be found on the VDH website.

Debbie asked about the current Senate bill to develop "Compassion Centers" in Vermont for the 264 people who are prescribed marijuana.. Barbara said that last year when a similar bill was in the legislature the Dept of Health was named as the agency to manage these centers. This time, the Dept of Public Safety would be in charge of them. Public Safety will testify on this bill soon. David will put it on the agenda for John Flannigan to update us on at a future meeting.

Andy gave an update on a grant program that was generated by an earmark from Senator Sanders and administered by OJJDP. This is for summer programs for kids. The programs can be very broad and include art and nature programs and outdoor activities. This grant would give awards of 10-50k over 3 years.

Joy informed us about an upcoming conference on gambling on May 23 and 24th. Youth treatment will be a topic. The Vermont Lottery is offering 6 scholarships to the National Conference in Boston on June 30-July 2.

Steve spoke about a report on Vermont's compliance data. For 2010 we had an 88% compliance rate on tobacco and a 91% compliance rate on alcohol. The data shows that training done by the DLC results in better compliance rates than owner training. DLC has recently begun offering online training. They are considering licensing for bartenders and cashiers. The training bartenders currently get does not include Vermont laws.

David asked who should be our guest for next months meeting. Barbara said that John Searles has just completed the Epi Report so it would be interesting to hear from him.

The next meeting is March 23 at the DLC.