

**Cuyahoga County Opiate Task Force  
Meeting Minutes  
March 28, 2013**

**In Attendance: Thomas Cook, Baldwin Wallace University, Bob & Jeanne Brandt, Robby's Voice, Kelly Lazar, CAPA Brecksville/Broadview Hts., City Schools, Melony Rebic St. Vincent Charity Hospital, Eric Schmidt, Medical Services Company, Nancy Pommerening, Drug Awareness & Prevention, Rose M. Allen, Northern Ohio Academy of Pharmacy, Stephanie Nath, Baldwin Wallace University, Nancy Schaumburg, Bellefaire JCB, Heidi Aungst, Baldwin Wallace University, Judith Stenta, Bellefaire JCB, Charley Wilson, Case Western Reserve University, Judge Donna, Congenni Fitzsimmons, Rocky River Municipal Courts, Laura Paynter, Jeff Grover, Fairmount Center for the Arts., Vincent Holland, Cuyahoga County Court Services, Camille Herby, Case Western Reserve University, Allisyn Leppla, Cuyahoga County Board of Health, John McLeod, Cuyahoga County Board of Health, Brad Lucas, Buckeye Community Health Plan, Sabrina Roberts, Cuyahoga County Health & Human Services, Chris Delos Reyes, Cuyahoga County ADAHMS Board, Swagata Banik, Baldwin Wallace University, Liesha Franklin Cuyahoga County ADAHMS Board., Nikesha Yarbrough, University Hospitals, Megan Hatta, The Free Clinic, Lori Mann, St. Vincent Charity Hospital, Criag Tame, U.S. Attorney Generals Office, Luis Vazquez, Cuyahoga County Health & Human Services, Scott Osieski, Cuyahoga County ADAHMS Board, Noreen Kyle, WEB, Narcotics Task Force.**

**1. Welcome & Introductions**

It was a packed house with several new people attending this meeting, representing county corrections, law enforcement, treatment, academia, non-profit outreach/awareness associations and college students.

**2. Dr. Swagata Banik, Ph.D., Director of Public Health Program & Center for Health Disparities Research and Education.**

Dr. Banik, introduced himself and gave a brief overview of his experience in research with HIV & abuse of prescription medications within adolescents in the tribal populations in Maine. Dr. Banik would like to identify the risk factors leading to the increase in opioid abuse among adolescents. In addition to identifying risk factors the project identifies areas of improvement to enhance our ability as a coalition to deliver prevention messages at multiple levels. I have attached the abstract that Dr. Banik drafted with background information, the specific task for the project. **If you would like to participate on this initiative please give me a call so I can set up a time to meet with all interested members. I would like to have this meeting by the end of this month.**

**3. Kelly Lazar (CAPA)**

Kelly gave a brief overview of the conference "The Blunt Truth about Marijuana" that took place March 1. Kelly stressed the importance of understanding truth about medical marijuana and the increased problems with abuse for those states that have already passed such legislation. Several members voiced their opinion based upon their experience on

this issue and were all in favor of keeping marijuana illegal. The complexities of legalizing marijuana for medical/social use will be a challenge for employers and law enforcement, and prevention agencies. This issue should remain on the radar for all coalition members with the potential for future legislation being proposed in the next two years.

#### **4. CADACA Highway to Heroin Video**

The Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America's (CADCA) was interested in highlighting the activities/collaborative efforts taking place in Cuyahoga County to address the increase in heroin abuse over the past five years. The video will be used nationally as a training tool for communities interested in creating task forces/coalitions to address opioid abuse. Once again, the leadership and professionalism of coalition members came to light with participation from the following; Dr. Gilson, Dr. Chris Delos Reyes, Kelly Lazar, Vince and Lt. Miguel Carrabello. Vince thanked those who participated in the production and reinforced the benefits of having such a large group of professionals who are committed to addressing this public health problem.

Following the video Kelly Lazar had asked if law enforcement knows which areas of the county/city are the highest areas for trafficking how are they addressing the issue. Kelly Judge Fitzsimmons & Andrea Rocco reinforced the connection between prescription medications leading to heroin addiction based upon the increase in cases they see within the county/municipal courts

You can access the video by visiting Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) website and download the video.

#### **5. 2012 Cuyahoga Opiate Task Force Summary**

Allisyn Leppa, Cuyahoga County Board of Health updated coalition members on a summary report she created documenting coalition accomplishment in 2012, while offering insight into the proposed initiatives in 2013. As local boards of health move towards accreditation they are required to track/document activities on multiple levels as proof of meeting the needs of the communities they serve. Allisyn, asked for any input from members on activities taking place in 2013 as we track the activities taking place within Cuyahoga County. On April 11, the Ohio Department of Health is hosting the all coalitions meeting in Columbus and this summary will be shared with the numerous coalition leaders attending this meeting.

#### **6. Drug Awareness & Prevention**

Nancy shared the progress of her education initiative and pilot projects in Cuyahoga/Mahoning County. Nancy has been working with state/local officials to bring NIDA's Educational Program "Brain Power" into the schools of Ohio educating children K-12 on substance abuse. In addition to the great work Nancy has done on the educational front she and Jeff Capretto were instrumental in the success of Operation Medicine Cabinet. Over the past five years this initiative has expanded covering several counties and numerous locations within Cuyahoga County collecting between 11,000-

14,000 pounds per event. The next collection date is set for April 27, between 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Please visit [www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov) to identify disposal sites in northern Ohio.

Vince updated everyone on the collaborative efforts of the County Executives Office, Judge David Matia, WEB Task Force, to increase the number of permanent drop off boxes throughout Cuyahoga County. The main hurdle to this initiative was the cost associated with disposal. Charter Steel was able to work through the Ohio EPA/Ohio Department of Health to receive a waiver clearance to help properly destroy all unused medications collected in Cuyahoga County at no cost. This cost savings was essential to the success of this project and we hope to have an additional 33 locations across Cuyahoga County.

Sabrina Roberts asked a question regarding what education/outreach activities are taking place on the eastside of Cuyahoga County. Vince spoke about the education/outreach activities conducted by Bellefarie JCB, and thought it would be a benefit to the eastside drug task forces if they had the resources to conduct the outreach activities in the community like WEB.

#### **7. Co-Morbidities Associated with Intravenous Drug Use**

Vince shared the Ohio Department of Health's Advisory listed below regarding an outbreak of Hepatitis A & C with many cases reporting intravenous drug use.

**Subject: ODH Advisory: Hepatitis A associated with IVDU. [id: 2013284]**

The Ohio Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are working with the Union County Health Department to investigate an ongoing outbreak of Hepatitis A infections that began in September 2012. To date 21 cases (17 confirmed) from four contiguous counties have been identified in this outbreak. Cases range in age from 16-60 years (median age 22 years). A majority of cases reported intravenous heroin use and seven cases are also co-infected with Hepatitis C. Local health departments are being asked to participate in retrospective case finding for additional cases. Local health officials who identify a potential related case are encouraged to secure the HAV IgM positive serum and contact Lynn Denny at 614-995-5599 or [ORBIT@odh.ohio.gov](mailto:ORBIT@odh.ohio.gov).

|                  |                              |    |
|------------------|------------------------------|----|
| Number of Cases: | Total Ill or Injured:        | 21 |
|                  | Hospitalized:                | 16 |
|                  | Deaths:                      | 0  |
|                  | Co-infected with Hepatitis C | 7  |

Date First Case Became Ill or Injured: 08/21/2012

Cause/Agent: Hepatitis A Virus

Vince mentioned that this has been one of the major concerns for public health since we have seen the increase in heroin abuse in southern Ohio. Several coalition members felt that this would be an additional message that should be used when we are conducting outreach activities. Megan Hatta, Manager of the Free Clinic needle exchange program mentioned that education on the risk factors associated with IVDU/Hep C currently exists and she finds that people do listen and are concerned with co-morbidities associated with intravenous drug use. Dr. Chris brought up a valid point regarding the transmission of Hepatitis A through IVDU. Historically Hepatitis A mode of transmission has been person-to-person via fecal oral route in addition to contaminated food/water. Vince said he would follow up and investigate Dr. Chris's questions and touch base with the group next meeting.

### **8 Robby's Voice**

Bob & Jeannie Brandt, we able to give an update on the outreach activities conducted in the community and local schools. Since October of last year Robby's Voice has been very active in promoting awareness on the impact that opioid abuse is having on our community. Please review the 6-month update documenting the accomplishments that I have attached to this e-mail.

### **9. Heroin Initiative**

#### **Poison Death Review**

Dr. Gilson gave an update to the group on the progress of the Cuyahoga County Poison Death Review Committee. Dr. Gilson was able to conduct a retrospective review of all heroin fatalities from 2012. The review identified contributing factors adding to the significant increase we have seen over the past five years, and provided background information to help assist in developing educational messages/outreach to the at risk population. The committee has met twice in 2013 reviewing cases and identifying those opportunities within the current system where prevention education/programs may have been available to prevent an overdose.

#### **Project DAWN**

Megan Hatta, from the Free Clinic attended the meeting and gave an update on the progress of the program. Since March 1, 46 people have received the training and the kits containing two doses of naloxone. Megan talked about her work with the needle exchange program and the benefit of using an existing system to touch base with those at greater risk of overdose. Megan mentioned that using law enforcements surveillance activities/data from the County M.E. would be useful in targeting areas of the county for education or new sites for Project DAWN. Vince gave a brief update on the communication between Metro/Board of Health to use the Parma location as an additional site in the county.

Andrea Rocco suggested the City of Lakewood would be a good location for the education/training because of the high number of fatalities over the past five years. Megan and Vince explained the current laws requiring a physician's oversight on the

training and prescribing of the naloxone only to the individuals dealing with addiction. Physicians do not have the authority to give kits to family members or partners of those dealing with addiction. Vince did mention that the Ohio Department of Health is having conversation with the Ohio Board of Pharmacy to talk about changing the rules to offer more flexibility for the training & prescribing of the complete kits.

### **Law Enforcement Update**

Noreen Kyle spoke on behalf of Jeff Capretto. Noreen said that the task force is still seeing the distribution of Rx Meds, but has seen an increase in heroin trafficking activities. Noreen mentioned that over that past few months they have seen an increase in heroin overdoses for the communities they serve.

### **10 Upcoming events**

#### **Legally Addicted**

Registration is recommended [www.yourteenmag.com/register](http://www.yourteenmag.com/register)

**Monday, April 15, Westlake Performing Arts Center 27830 Hillard Ave., Westlake Ohio 44145 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Performance and Panel Discussion**

**Monday, April 22, John Carroll Annex, 2200 South Green Road, University Heights., Ohio 44118 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Performance and Panel Discussion**

**Operation Medicine Cabinet April 27, 10:00 a.m.-2p.m. Please visit [www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov) or call 1-800-882-9539 for a collection site near you.**

#### **Bellefaire JCB SAY Coalition Facilitated Community Discussion**

Please visit [www.bellefairejcb.org](http://www.bellefairejcb.org) for the dates, times, locations in April

**The website is live and I am still interested in adding information regarding the services available for individuals/families in need of assistance. All keynote session from the conference in addition to the Highway to Heroin video are available on-line. Follow the link below for access to the site.**

[www.opiatecollaborative.cuyahogacounty.us](http://www.opiatecollaborative.cuyahogacounty.us)