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**Meeting Minutes from**  
**Notice of Public Meeting**  
**CROSS-SECTOR TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS OVERDOSE**  
**JOINT MEETING OF**  
**ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR A RESILIENT NEVADA (ACRN)**  
**SUBSTANCE USE RESPONSE WORKING GROUP (SURG)**

**August 23, 2023, 10:00 AM**

**Agenda and/or Materials Link:** [2023 Cross-Sector Task Force to Address Overdose Meeting](#)

I. Call to Order, Roll Call of Members, and Establish Quorum

Members Present: Attorney General Ford, Senator Fabian Donat , Dr. Stephanie Woodard, Jessica Johnson, Lisa Lee, Shayla Holmes, Christine Payson, Debi Nadler, Chelsi Cheatom, Angela Nickels, Dr. Farzad Kamyar, Dr. Karla Wagner, David Sanchez, Jessica Barlow, Lilnetra Grady, Ryan Gustafson, Karissa Loper, Katherine Loudon, Elyse Monroy-Marsala, Darcy Patterson, Pauline Salla. Ariana, Saunders, Jamie Ross, Quinnie Winbush

Members Absent: Assemblywoman Claire Thomas, Assemblywoman Melissa Hardy, Dr. Lesley Dickson, Jeffery Iverson, Steve Shell, Brittney Collins-Jefferson, Cornelius Sheehan

Staff/Guest Present: Dr. Terry Kerns, Henna Rasul, Connie Lucido, Vanessa Diaz, Trey Delap, Linda Anderson, Teresa Benitez-Thompson, Alex Tanchek, Lianne Nishida, Beth Slamowitz, Stephani Barham, Lisa Hoover, Joe Engle, Sam Anastassatos, Gisele Pollack, Lea Tauchen, Joseph Filippi, Ari Chelli, Lea Case, Sarah Mersereau-Adler, Jimmy Lau, Debra DeCius, Dawn Yohey, Garrett Goodlander

Attorney General Ford called the meeting to order at 10:00am. Mr. Goodlander called the roll and announced quorum was established.

II. Public Comment #1

Ms. Nadler expressed concern for a friend getting prescriptions through the same pharmacy. She questioned whether there was a red flag system in place, and if integration through the prescription monitoring program (PMP) was mandatory. She referenced programs in other states that require all pharmacies to report abuse of prescriptions.

III. Review of Objective for Cross-Sector Task Force to Address Overdoses

Attorney General Aaron Ford, Chair of the Substance Use Response Working Group (SURG)  
David Sanchez, Chair of the Advisory Committee for a Resilient Nevada (ACRN)

Chair Sanchez offered the objectives for the Cross-Sector meeting:

- Determine necessary action to reduce the risk of overdose in Nevada's communities
- Prepare responses for the State and local jurisdictions in the event an increase in overdoses occur
- Provide technical assistance, guidance, and resources to rapidly implement best practices to reduce risk for overdoses, enhance capacity to respond to events, and recover should such overdose events occur

Attorney General Ford commented that the Cross-Sector Task Force has a budget of five hundred thousand dollars to achieve its goals.

- IV. Discussion and Vote to Approve Minutes of the meeting on December 13, 2022  
Ms. Lee motioned to approve the minutes. Ms. Monroy-Marsala seconded the motion. The minutes from December 12, 2022, were approved unanimously.
- V. Presentation, Discussion and Vote to Approve Task Force Action Plan Topic: Leveraging Programs  
Chair Sanchez started with an introduction to leveraging programs and funding. The message was to develop outreach response providers that can respond to overdose and offer follow-up support and services. He included a recommendation to connect people leaving incarceration to post-release treatment, housing, and education about the risk of overdose.

Chair Sanchez moved on to target populations and goals:

- Utilize existing community providers to be deployed to support anyone being released from an institutional or community setting.
- Leverage existing programs and funding to develop outreach response providers.
- Equipped providers can respond to overdose and offer follow-up support, referrals, and services to the affected community.

He explained that provider buy-in is needed for local agencies and providers to commit to responding to community overdose events. He suggested possible contributors include local emergency medical technician (EMT) service providers, hospitals, law enforcement, mobile crisis response teams, forensic assessment services triage teams (FASTT) within the jails, county Health and Human Services, and local public defenders' offices.

The lead agency or point of contact would provide collaboration between local Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (CCBHC), hospitals, EMT services, and 911 dispatchers. They intend to establish a cooperative agreement and implement programming as quickly as possible. Chair Sanchez asked the subject matter experts (SMEs) to offer ideas on how to use the five hundred thousand dollars.

Ms. Holmes noted each local county in the Northern Nevada region has behavioral health task forces bringing these partners together already.

Ms. Monroy-Marsala commented that many counties already have spike response plans in place as a part of the Overdose Detection Mapping Application Program (ODMAP) buildout. The results from an Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) provider survey showed many were unwilling to offer harm reduction services. She noted Nevada CCHBCs are required by law to admit people in crisis. She challenged the committee to think about how to use their budget outside of supporting initiatives tied to bureaucratic companies.

Chair Sanchez stated CCHBCs are presenting their mobile crisis units as ready for service, but that is not actually true.

Ms. Nadler suggested the committee focus on the relatives who have lost family members due to overdoses.

Ms. Lee challenged the committee to focus on funding for people who do not have systemic involvement through a CCHBC or a friend who uses with them to who can administer Naloxone. She suggested vending machines.

Dr. Wagner offered websites offering help to families grieving a loss:

- <https://broken-no-more.org>
- <https://www.shatterproof.org/our-work/educating-and-empowering-communities/educating-families>
- <https://www.anewpath.org/>
- <https://grasphelp.org/m/>

Ms. Johnson mentioned they could increase support for harm reduction-based post-overdose outreach in collaboration with many of the systems mentioned, including wraparound services for surviving family members and engagement in postmortem services for families.

Ms. Nadler suggested a public messaging campaign on the Good Samarita Law to inform users to not leave their friends when an overdose occurs.

Ms. Lee reiterated the need for a public messaging campaign for the Good Samaritan law.

Attorney General Ford noted the SURG recommended a public messaging campaign.

Ms. Holmes reiterated Attorney General Ford's recommendation for the campaign.

Chair Sanchez informed them of Renown's plan to offer a crisis stabilization center providing psychiatric stabilization and medical detoxification services soon. He challenged them to focus on how to get EMT services responding without law enforcement involvement; it would help patients more easily receive care through a warm handoff to a care provider. He also recommended a real-time GPS in partnership with regional crisis centers, to proficiently connect resources. He offered a few ways to incorporate services to the teams responding to overdose:

- Triage and screening, including screening for fentanyl
- Assessment

- De-escalation or resolution
- Peer support
- Coordination with medical and behavioral health services
- Crisis planning and follow-up

Ms. Johnson mentioned the 2022 SURG recommendations included a harm reduction recommendation modeled after Maryland Stop Act, which passed in 2022. It authorized emergency medical service providers to do “Naloxone leave behind” Naloxone for folks who received treatment for a non-fatal overdose or to those evaluated by a crisis team. It also required certain community programs and hospitals to dispense Naloxone free of charge to individuals hospitalized for circumstances related to overdose.

Dr. Wagner challenged the committee to move from making recommendations to an actionable Good Samaritan public messaging campaign.

Ms. Monroy-Marsala recommend the public messaging campaign be conducted by doctors on television, and by social media influencers who reach the affected communities.

Ms. Ross stated multiple grass roots campaigns were in place and have been able to accomplish outreach in the past. She suggested updating those campaigns to overcome hurdles created in the past.

Ms. Johnson recommended Ms. Cheatom give or others to provide input on their experience at the next meeting and offer what future initiatives would look like.

Ms. Nadler mentioned that there is no mandate for schools to carry Narcan.

Attorney General Ford recommended the committee put a public messaging campaign on the next agenda and create a small subcommittee to help develop scripts, guidelines, which outlets to use. His office will develop a timeline. He suggested they vote on the campaign to approve it for action.

Dr. Wagner recommended a parallel campaign centered around educating law enforcement on the Good Samaritan law and how to enforce it.

## VI. Presentation, Discussion and Vote to Approve Task Force Action Plan Topic: Bad Batch Jessica Johnson

Ms. Johnson introduced the bad batch application and the intention of the app:

- Jurisdictions can use “spike alerts” to address drug overdoses in communities
- Targeted messages are sent to notify recipients of an unexpected increase in drug-related overdoses in a specific area.
- Messages can be shared via email, social media, or text messages and are free to use
- Notifications can help reduce injury or death from opioid overdoses during spike events

She mentioned that according to the Nevada statewide unintentional drug overdose reporting system (SUDORS), illicitly manufactured fentanyl and fentanyl analogs were involved in 39% of statewide deaths from January to June of 2022, a slight increase from the 34% reported in the same period the previous year. Drug checking is a crucial harm reduction strategy that has the potential to save numerous lives by providing individuals with essential information about substances that they intend consume through testing the composition and purity of drugs prior to use. These services can uncover harmful additives, unexpected elements, or potentially dangerous doses, depending on a quantitative or qualitative type test. This has been demonstrated to enable allows folks to make informed decisions and steer clear of high-risk substances during the opioid crisis, identifying opportunities about the prevalence of synthetic drugs. The services act as a lifeline, averting unintentional overdoses and adverse reactions. By incorporating these processes into an application, individuals can access knowledge more conveniently and foster opportunities to reduce the toll on individuals experiencing overdoses within the systems that might be impacted.

She mentioned the bad batch application is being reviewed through the Northern Nevada Harm Reduction Alliance, which is funded through OD2A dollars through the Safety Outreach System (SOS). The application allows folks to sign up for alerts voluntarily and allows them to report overdoses or fentanyl-positive drugs from a fentanyl test strip. The information would include the zip code of where the events occurred. The information gathered is anonymous and creates an alert through push notifications. The application reviewed came from Ohio's called the Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance Outreach, Access, and Recovery app. Current literature in Nevada has not yet determined implementation factors, such as, acceptability, adoption, or reach to focus populations. Evidence from fentanyl test strip evaluation studies shows that when a user is informed of the contents of their supply, most users report using less. She informed the committee that the primary use of the bad batch app would be for the user. The secondary use of the app would be the social network of the user, such as families or peer outreach workers.

Ms. Johnson concluded with a recommendation the committee evaluate the “Bad Batch” app in other regions, and impact and reach to determine its effectiveness and next steps taken for expansion.

Ms. Lee expressed a concern for publishing the app to a store.

Attorney General Ford offered his office's contacts with the app stores for help with publishing. A presentation from those contacts could be added to the next agenda.

Ms. Nadler recommended having University of Nevada, Reno help with publishing of the app. She also recommended QR codes on the back of student identification cards for the link to app.

Dr. Wagner mentioned a study conducted through Institutional Review Board approved and National Institutes of Health-funded research and will add questions to the study that would assess whether people are using the app.

Ms. Lee mentioned the study already had those questions built into the study.

Ms. Johnson offered to work with Dr. Wagner to identify an appropriate number of questions to move an evaluation forward and report back to the committee with the results.

Attorney General Ford motions for a Ms. Johnson to work with Dr. Wagner on the study.

VII. Ms. Monroy-Marsala made a motion to have Ms. Johnson and Dr. Wagner work on the study. Ms. Nadler seconded the motion. The motion passed without abstention or opposition.  
Discussion of Future Presentations for Action Plan Topics

Dawn Yohey

Ms. Yohey presented the committee with results from a survey conducted eight months ago to identify actionable items for review and discussion in future meetings, and who would take the lead on presenting these items to the committee. She asked members to review the items listed and assigned in her presentation.

The actionable items recommended for communications were as follows:

- Identify substances involved in overdoses quickly
- Connect public safety and local overdose spike monitoring agencies
- Provide technical assistance, guidance, and resources to rapidly implement best practices to reduce risk for overdoses, enhance capacity to respond to events, and recover should such overdose events occur
- Increase prevention in schools
- Educate the public on the identification of treatment needs and treatment access and resources

Ms. Nadler offered to make a presentation on increasing prevention in schools.

Ms. Loudon volunteered to help Ms. Nadler with the presentation.

Ms. Lee asked what “identifying substances involved in overdoses quickly” referred to.

Ms. Yohey answered it was identifying substances and pushing messages out to the public for safety.

Ms. Lee asked if that could apply to toxicology in hospitals and postmortem.

Ms. Yohey replied a specific recommendation including overdose and postmortem would help.

Ms. Monroy-Marsala offered to give a presentation on the opioid communication assessment. Ms. Lee agreed to help.

The actionable items recommended for harm reduction were:

- Provide access to fentanyl testing
- Increase naloxone distribution, targeting populations in need using data, including those using drugs and medication assisted treatment (MAT) clinics, including leave-behind programs (EMS, fire, law enforcement, mobile teams), “naloxboxes”
- Use exchange sites for additional harm reduction efforts

- Create street outreach teams to provide street medicine programs, harm reduction, psychiatry, and care management. Support and expand street outreach for harm reduction, messaging, education, and care

The actionable items recommended for access were:

- Initiate buprenorphine in the emergency department and during inpatient stays. Education: Fentanyl is not added in the rapid drug screen tests- testing may take several days up to a week - See Tyler's Law, California
- Support low threshold prescribing for buprenorphine treatment
- MAT in all adult correctional and juvenile justice facilities

Ms. Cheatom offered to give a presentation on increasing naloxone in schools and prevention in schools.

Ms. Yohey informed them teams were limited to two people due to open meeting law.

Ms. Monroy-Marsala commented that providing access to fentanyl testing and identifying substances quickly should be combined and offered to give a presentation at the next meeting.

Ms. Yohey agreed.

Ms. Lee offered to work with Ms. Monroy-Marsala for the presentation at the next meeting. She suggested the presentation include street outreach.

Ms. Saunders offered to provide solutions to Ms. Monroy -Marsala and Ms. Lee for their presentation.

Ms. Nadler offered to give information on Tyler's Law, and she asked to only be included on prevention in schools.

Ms. Ross volunteered to support on prevention programming in schools.

The actionable items recommended for additional action were as follows:

- Training on the Good Samaritan Law
- Facilitating opportunities for entry into treatment and/or recovery, ensure that Black, Latinx/Hispanic, Indigenous, and people of color communities receive overdose prevention, recognition, and reversal training, and overdose prevention supplies such as fentanyl test strips and naloxone to reduce fatal overdoses among Black, Latinx/Hispanic, Indigenous individuals, and people of color in Nevada

Ms. Monroy-Marsala noted OD2A provided training for public defenders on the Good Samaritan law and offered to share that with the committee.

Ms. Lee commented Black Wall Street is ensuring underrepresented communities have naloxone access and messaging around being at-risk is disseminated effectively and she offered Don Griffin as a resource in the future.

Ms. Saunders offered to give a presentation on treatment opportunities for communities of color asked for volunteers to help her.

VIII. Discussion of Next Steps for the Cross-Sector Task Force

Attorney General Ford recommended they meet again in two weeks to discuss a public service announcement/public messaging campaign on the Good Samaritan Law and to vote on a chair and members for a subcommittee to determine guidelines/timelines for the campaign.

IX. Public Comment #2

Ms. Johnson informed them of a community event that happening next week. Thursday, August 31, 2023, is International Overdose Awareness Day. The event will be held in the same location as the last three years in the south. Naloxone training is available to those interested. They can hear testimonials from the community who have been impacted by overdose, a time to remember and a time to act.

Ms. Nadler informed the task force of an event on August 31, 2023, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. for anyone who has lost a loved one to overdose.

Ms. Lee informed of an event for International Overdose Awareness Day in Northern Nevada taking place Saturday August 26th, 2023, from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. at Teglia's Paradise Park.

Attorney General Ford stated his office is holding town hall meetings about the proposed merger between Kroger and Albertson's. The dates and times are listed on the Attorney General's website.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:49 a.m.