

# Meeting Minutes

## Pregnant and Parenting Women Subcommittee of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Tuesday, October 28, 2025, Approved

### Attendees:

**Subcommittee Members Attending:** Tameran Asbury, Courtney Boyd, Janine Breyel, Rebecca Crowder, Dr. David Didden, Amna Haque, Dr. Stefan Maxwell (chair), Dr. Cody Smith

**Subcommittee Members Not Attending:** Rhonda Edmunds, Kelly Lemon, Kristy Richardson-Ohlis, Lisa Richards, Amy Tolliver

**Office of Drug Control Policy (ODCP) Staff Attending:** Olivia Fox, Jessica Smith

**State Opioid Response Regional (SOR) Coordinators Attending:** Rajan Masih, Jill Poe, Greg Puckett, Elizabeth Shahan, Jamie Styons

**Marshall University Staff Attending:** Bradley McCoy

### Opening:

Dr. Stefan Maxwell (chair) provided welcome and opening remarks of this meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, Pregnant and Parenting Women (PPW) Subcommittee. The meeting was called to order on October 28, 2025, and was conducted by Google Meet video conference. The September 17, 2025 meeting minutes were approved by Dr. Stefan Maxwell. There was no further discussion. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss priorities for the 2026 State Plan.

### Agenda:

#### Community Conversations Summary Report and 2026 State Plan Planning

- Bradley McCoy gave a brief overview of the 2026 State Plan timeline. Priorities will be identified during the current October meeting, key performance indicators (KPIs) will be finalized on the November 17, 2025 meeting, the chairs will present their sections of the Plan to Dr. Stephen Loyd and ODCP on December 4, 2025 in person in Charleston, and the Plan will be submitted to the legislature in January.
- Dr. Stefan Maxwell provided a brief overview of highlights from the Community Conversations Summary Report.
- Project WATCH, a statewide initiative to identify at-risk infants, and Marshall University both report a reduction in neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS). It is important that Project WATCH, Marshall University, West Virginia University, and CAMC are all defining NAS and substance exposure the same way. This is dependent on nurses' input of data at discharge and their knowledge of diagnosis with NAS versus treatment for exposure with a subsequent discharge.
- Use of synthetic and designer drugs such as Kratom and 7-hydroxy are a concern. A potential KPI for next year would be surveying providers for what tests they use and what drugs they screen for. As opioid use decreases, there is concern that usage of these drugs will continue to increase.
  - Dr. David Didden provided the following link about these drugs:  
<https://poisoncenters.org/news-alerts/13531044>
  - Lewis-Upshur Day Report Centers are using a urine screen that includes many of these

substances. These urine sample cups have dip strips included in the walls of the cup and show the results immediately. They worked with the company to develop the cup for their program participant screening.

- Aegis Labs has the capacity to perform Liquid Chromatography/Tandem Mass Spectrometry for Medetomidine and the metabolite 3-OH-Medetomidine and 7 -OH.
- Child Protective Services (CPS) was a topic that came up during the Community Conversations. The public wants CPS involvement in Plans of Safe Care and parenting classes with parents during pregnancy to keep parents united with their children. This would be dependent on CPS staff capacity though.
- Drug Free Moms and Babies has helped with the stigma around substance use program participation.

#### **Guest Speaker – Elizabeth Shahan (Prevention Expertise and Education Campaign Planning)**

- Elizabeth Shahan gave an overview of her experience in prevention and education campaigns. The goal is to get the word out broadly while spending the minimum amount of dollars. An essential piece is utilizing local people for digital campaigning. For example, Appalachian people have been proven to respond more when ads are read in an Appalachian dialect. Additionally, the use of positive messaging that does not use scare tactics works best.
- Gabe Chasnoff, with NTI Upstream, can create an education campaign on cannabinoid usage for the state. They also work to localize their content. Something that may save money in their contract would be that West Virginia has resources to locally distribute content.
- Metro News has been a partner for prevention ads in the state. Strategies for targeted ads were discussed. West Virginia could target Internet search behavior, such as when someone searches for “diapers,” or they could geofence ads to appear when in the vicinity of doctors’ offices.
- The Subcommittee discussed messaging that will convince people that cannabinoid use during pregnancy is not safe or at least instill doubt while highlighting other safer alternatives for managing stress during pregnancy.
- The Subcommittee discussed potential funding streams for the education campaign. Dr. Stefan Maxwell will discuss funding opportunities with Dr. Stephen Loyd and then set up another internal planning meeting with Gabe Chasnoff from NTI Upstream.

#### **Additional Discussion**

- Dr. Stefan Maxwell would like to revisit Subcommittee membership to make sure all appropriate stakeholders are included.
- Hope For All is a recovery residence opening in Charleston, West Virginia for moms with babies. Dr. Stefan Maxwell and Janine Breyel visited them in person.

#### **Adjournment:**

Dr. Maxwell closed the meeting by thanking all Subcommittee members for their attendance and participation. The Subcommittee will meet again on November 17, 2025, at 1:00 PM.