

Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Recovery Community Subcommittee Wednesday, September 10, 2025, Approved

Attendees:

Subcommittee Members Attending: Amber Blankenship (co-chair), Joe Deegan, Elly Donahue, Rajan Masih, Dan McCawley (co-chair), Paul Shimer

Subcommittee Members Not Attending: Brandy Blatt, Trenton Clem, Ardella Cottrill

Guests Attending: Mary Argento, Jessica Whitmore

Guest Speaker: Bob Hansen

Office of Drug Control Policy (ODCP) Staff: Rick Dempsey, Olivia Fox, Dr. Stephen Loyd, Dora Radford

SOR Regional Coordinators: Christina Adkins

Marshall University Staff: Bradley McCoy

Opening:

Amber Blankenship (co-chair) provided welcome and opening remarks of this meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, Recovery Community Subcommittee. The meeting was called to order on Wednesday, September 10, 2025, and was conducted by Google Meet conference. The co-chairs, Amber Blankenship and Dan McCawley approved the August meeting minutes. There was no further discussion. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss key performance indicator (KPI) updates.

Agenda Items:

Guest Speaker – Bob Hansen

- Bob Hansen is working towards a notion in West Virginia for development of stronger advocacy in recovery. Kentucky has shown a consistent value to develop a statewide advocacy effort. This awareness is concluded to bring increased informational education to the public about the importance of recovery. It should be aligned with the data and resources that demonstrate the existing success and value of recovery. Bob Hansen has consulted with Tara Hyde from People Advocating Recovery in Kentucky. Tara Hyde has emphasized that the entirety of all pieces showing inter-connectedness are valuable to the recovery program. Every group/subcommittee can advocate collectively for all recovery elements to lead to an overall recovery initiative in West Virginia. Feedback is welcome and is open to anyone who would like to join. Kentucky already has an existing working model. Bob Hansen summarized the need to build within the already existing infrastructure. There is growth potential in the advocacy area especially in local communities. This can lead to a statewide presence.

Key Performance Indicator Updates

- **Goal 1, Strategy 1, KPI 1: 75%,** The collaboration with West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR) to adopt a WV model which includes a written consent form along with statewide tools/resources to be used statewide with cohesion with the treatment and recovery facilities is upcoming. Jessica Whitmore, with the Office of Health Facility Licensure & Certification (OHFLAC), was on the meeting and is reviewing the form. Another meeting will be held regarding KPI 1. The May 2, 2025 version is the most recent draft and was forwarded on to the Office of Drug Control Policy (ODCP) and then to OHFLAC. OHFLAC can share this form via their website to increase accessibility for providers after review is completed.
- **Goal 1, Strategy 1, KPI 2: 25%,** The WVDHHR collaboration is contingent on the KPI 1

completion to develop a memorandum of understanding between the Bureau for Medical Services (BMS), the Recovery Subcommittee, and managed care organizations (MCOs). This KPI will enhance education in treatment and recovery facilities with a state aligned objective.

- **Goal 1, Strategy 1, KPI 3: 0%**, The collaboration with the WVDHHR to explore that written consent be used as a requirement of all contracts and funding awards is reliant on KPI 1 meeting.
- **Goal 1, Strategy 1, KPI 4: 0%**, The collaboration with ODCP will evaluate the processes and policies to provide individuals with all treatment options upon admission as well as developed a written report for findings are contingent on the KPI 1 meeting.
- **Goal 1, Strategy 1, KPI 5: 0%**, The Subcommittee's collaboration with WVDHHR to develop a consumer survey as an appendix to funding awards for providing its effectiveness is dependent on completion on KPI 1.
- **Goal 2, Strategy 1, KPI 1: 100%**, The Subcommittee will use the National Family Support Tier Association (NFSTAC) Certification for adherence to a WV Certification to develop a curriculum meeting the standards of a Family Peer Support position developed for West Virginia. A meeting is being scheduled with the NFSTAC's technical support and Dan, Amber, and Elly Donahue are scheduled to attend. A presentation was given at the September 9, 2025 Peer Recovery Support Specialist (PRSS) conference regarding Family Peer Support.
- **Goal 2, Strategy 1, KPI 2: 25%**, The Subcommittee's work with ODCP as well as WVDHHR are collaborating towards a strategic plan to draft legislation to support a Family Peer Support Certification. The certification must be sustainable. Current proposals could include a mental health support tier along with family and youth to be recognized as billable.
- **Goal 2, Strategy 1, KPI 3: 25%**, The Subcommittee is reviewing potential champions for support on the codification of the Family Peer Support certification.
- **Goal 3, Strategy 1, KPI 1: 100%**, The Subcommittee is scheduling a meeting with Stephanie Thornton from the Courts & Justice-Involved Populations Subcommittee. She will be invited to the October meeting.
- **Goal 3, Strategy 1, KPI 2: 50%**, Stephanie Thornton is the point of contact for the drafting of a letter of support to further advocacy for funding surrounding interventions and individuals who are involved with substance use disorder (SUD) justice orientation. Stephanie Thornton has provided how peer-to-peer support has already shown an ethical precedent. An assignment is being prepared for the October 1 meeting regarding legislature involvement.
- **Goal 3, Strategy 2, KPI 1: 100%**, The Subcommittee met with Misty Adams from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation in April 2025.
- **Goal 3, Strategy 2, KPI 2: 100%**, The Subcommittee met with CEO Terry Rusin and Merideth Smith with PSIMED during the February meeting.
- **Goal 3, Strategy 2, KPI 3: 25%**, The First Foundation has released the Momentum Initiative Grant for re-entry funding and improvement.
- **Goal 3, Strategy 2, KPI 4: 0%**, The Subcommittee should include an 1115 waiver proposal to identify Medicare proponents. There is a space for partnership, but sustainability should be identified. There is not a state-funded proposal currently in existence. Jobs and Hope does have a re-entry liaison. 2,500 individuals are going into the systems while 2,500 are exiting; this overlaps with the need for wraparound services. There are needs presented for widening demographics with re-entry especially focused on safe housing. The rural areas around West Virginia are facing transportation and internet access challenges which affect telehealth availability. This is the coordination of care which shows prominent needs across Appalachia. This KPI will likely carry on into the next year because in lieu of a written plan for advocacy and funding, Dr. Loyd would like to see an application for funding in the near future.

Community Conversations

- The next Community Conversation is scheduled for Thursday, September 11, at 6:00 p.m. hosted at Word of Life Church in the gym (518 Mud Fork in Logan, West Virginia.)

Adjournment

Amber closed the meeting by thanking all Subcommittee members for their attendance and participation. The full Subcommittee will meet again on October 1, 2025, at 2:00 PM.