



## Opioid Abuse Advisory Committee

**Meeting #22 Minutes**  
**Wednesday April 2, 2025**

**Virtual Meeting**

The spring meeting of the Opioid Abuse Advisory Committee was called to order by Advisory Committee Chair Lori Martinec at 9:05 am CT. The following members of the Advisory Committee were in attendance: Becky Heisinger, Sara DeCoteau, Jennifer Ball, Mallie Kludt, Erin Miller, John Rounds, Brian Mueller, Amanda Miiller, Tyler Laetsch, Margaret Hansen, Susan Kornder, Jason Jones, Joe Kippley, and Brenna Koedam.

State and program staff in attendance included: Beth Dokken, Melanie Boetel, Kiley Hump, Melissa DeNoon, Amanda Weinzetl, Jennifer Humphrey, Michelle Worden, Randee Peterson, Colleen Hannum, Gretchen Stai, Vanessa Barnes, Shaina Smykle, and Rachel Oelmann, Bre Baltzer, and Nick Oyen (contracted project supports from Sage Project Consultants, LLC).

Guests included: Kendra Joswiak (Project Recovery); Angela Kennecke (Emily's Hope); Matt Tribble (CDC Foundation); Steve Ardis (Midwest HIDTA); Sandra Melstad (SLM Consulting); Susan Puumala and Minga Vargas (University of South Dakota); Loretta Bryan (South Dakota Association of Healthcare Organizations, or SDAHO); and Makenzie Huber (South Dakota Searchlight).

### **Minutes Approval**

Minutes from the August 2024 committee meeting were approved and published in the same month. Meeting slides, handouts, and other supporting materials presented are available at <https://doh.sd.gov/programs/avoid-opioid-prescription-addiction/prescription-opioid-abuse-prevention-initiative/>.

### **Welcome & Initial Comments**

Lori Martinec, Opioid Program Director, South Dakota Department of Health (DOH) and Committee Chair welcomed the Advisory Committee members and guests. Introductions followed. Special introduction was made of new committee member Brenna Koedam, Chief of Behavioral Health for Department of Social Services.

### **Funding Updates**

DOH efforts were reported by Lori Martinec. The DOH Opioid Program is funded by the Centers for Disease Control, Overdose Data to Action in States Grant or OD2A-S Grant. DOH is presently in Year 2 of funding through this grant and recently submitted its workplan for Year 3 activities which would begin September 2025. OD2A-S grants run on a five year cycle.

OD2A-S funds support seven different grant strategies for prevention and response to opioid use and misuse. The grant strategies are a combination of programs and activities that are classified as either being a surveillance type of activity or a prevention activity.

Department of Social Services (DSS) efforts were reported by Melanie Boetel, Director for the Division of Behavioral Health within DSS. The State Opioid Response grant funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) remains in place, currently in its fourth iteration (SOR 4) which began September 2024 and will end September 2027. Boetel relayed there were no major changes between required or allowable activities between SOR 3 and SOR 4 with the focus being on supporting treatment and recovery cost assistance for individuals without another payer, and to support related prevention activities. Boetel spoke to the changing federal funding landscape but noted that the SOR program has not yet impacted. The federal public health emergency declaration to address the national opioid crisis was renewed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary on March 18, 2025<sup>1</sup>.

In closing, Martinec called attention to the Opioid Annual Report prepared by DSS and DOH, publicly available on the [letsbeclearsd.com](https://letsbeclearsd.com) website. Members and guests were encouraged to review and reach out with questions.

### **Legislative Updates**

Beth Dokken provided a short legislative update. Bills monitored this session included:

- House Bill 1056 aimed at prohibiting the preparation, sale, and distribution of certain kratom products, which was signed into law on February 25.
- House Bill 1141 aimed at providing an exception for employers to acquire and distribute opioid antagonists that are available over the counter, which was signed into law on March 13.

Melanie Boetel relayed that DSS was additionally watching Senate Bill 83, which revised the penalty and provides treatment for the ingestion of certain controlled substances. This bill was signed into law on March 13. Prior to this, ingestion was a felony charge; this bill was brought forward to change that so 1st and 2nd violations could be charged out as a Class I misdemeanor and the court could order probation and supervision to address substance use disorder, rather than going straight to a felony and incarcerated status. A third or subsequent violation would still continue to be a felony.

### **Stigma-Free Language and Best Practices**

Information was presented by Randee Peterson, Substance Use Services Manager with the Division of Behavioral Health, DSS, and Dr. Melissa Dittberner, University of South Dakota. Following introductory remarks from Randee Peterson, a short video was shared provided by Dr. Dittberner which reviewed the importance of using stigma-free, person-centered language when discussing substance use disorders. A link to the video is available in the enclosed slides. Key points included avoiding terms like 'addict' or 'alcoholic' in favor of 'person with substance use disorder'. Using 'person in recovery' versus 'former addict' was also encouraged. Following this discussion, the committee considered changing its name to remove the word 'abuse' from its title and agreed to further discuss this and any additional bylaw changes at the next meeting.

### **Opioid Settlement Fund Updates**

Jennifer Humphrey, DSS, provided an update on opioid settlement funds received to date and their allocations. More than \$18 million has been received to date out of an anticipated \$54 million to be

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hhs.gov/press-room/secretary-kennedy-opioid-crisis-emergency-declaration.html>

received by 2040. Funds are being distributed to support various prevention, treatment, and recovery initiatives as approved by the committee in previous meetings.

**Community Grant Awards.** A total of 33 applications were received for consideration in the most recent application window for a total of more than \$1.1 million. Approximately half of the applications received were from organizations that have or have had a prior Community Grant Award. The area of highest focus was Treatment and related initiatives. Applications have been reviewed, scored, and are pending review with the DSS Cabinet Secretary at the time of this meeting. Awards will begin June 1, 2025.

The committee discussed forming a workgroup to reassess funding criteria for the Community Grant Award program and to identify priority areas for future grant cycles. Members also discussed incorporating more specific focus on sustainability planning and alignment with emerging needs to be identified through the upcoming opioid needs assessment anticipated to begin in June 2025. Lori Martinec indicated members would be invited to join or suggest nominations for this workgroup.

**Overview of Participating Local Government Activities to Date.** Since 2023, local governments have distributed more than \$1.8 million in opioid settlement funds through reports provided to DSS as of January 2025. Activities were reviewed at high level; see enclosed slides.

**Opioid Needs Assessment Project Update.** The RFP for vendor selection was released in January 2025, responses due March 6, 2025. Eleven proposals were received and are being scored as of this meeting. Award decisions are anticipated in April for contract(s) to begin June 2025.

## **Project Updates**

**Overdose Response Programs.** Representatives from both opioid settlement funded pilot overdose follow-up programs provided updates to the committee.

- Kendra Joswiak presented on behalf of Project Recovery. The Rapid Response Team operates in the Black Hills area and has connected with 82% of referrals made to its program, with 56% of those individuals engaging in ongoing treatment. Partnering with the local Fusion Center has significantly increased referrals. The team is expanding public outreach through social media and naloxone distribution efforts.
- Angela Kennecke presented on behalf of Emily's Hope. The Post Overdose Response Team operates in Minnehaha and Lincoln counties. This team partners closely with local emergency departments and provides peer support specialists to connect with overdose survivors. The program offers connection to treatment scholarships and ongoing support for up to a year. They are developing training videos for healthcare providers and law enforcement.

Both programs emphasized the importance of rapid response and reducing barriers to treatment access, and are working together to share ideas and work together.

**Naloxone Distribution.** Update provided by Shaina Smykle, Division of Behavioral Health, DSS. The state's efforts around naloxone distribution to date have been heavily funded by the State Opioid Response grant and related funding since Fall 2017, which was used to support several different ways that South Dakotans have been able to access and obtain naloxone.

- **First responders and those in a position to assist:** Naloxone has been distributed to first responders, treatment agencies, recovery support homes, harm reduction agencies, schools,

universities, and other agencies working with populations or their loved ones who may be at risk for opioid overdose. Discretionary grant funds as budgeted have met the need (requests received for resupply and from new requests) to date.

- **Through prescription at partnering pharmacies.** There has also been a statewide standing order, implemented in September 2020, for no-cost naloxone access among partnering pharmacies statewide.
- **Over the counter.** NARCAN Nasal Spray (a specific brand and concentration of naloxone) has been available over the counter for purchase since late 2023.
- **Through prevention providers.** Each of the Prevention Resource Centers have worked with organizations and businesses in their catchment areas to distribute naloxone and provide NaloxBox storage receptacles for on site access over the preceding year.

In addition to funding distribution efforts, the State Opioid Response grant required the state to develop and utilize a naloxone saturation model to ensure all counties have sufficient supply of naloxone to respond to suspected overdose events in their area. A saturation model was developed in response to research and best practices available to inform naloxone distribution to counties of high need. Data will be used to monitor access and distribution of naloxone statewide moving forward. Efforts for 2025 will focus on but not be limited to counties identified as under-saturated: Minnehaha, Lincoln, Corson, Pennington, Roberts, Turner, Todd, Oglala Lakota, Beadle and Meade Counties.

Additional distribution in 2025 will be done through anonymous access in partnership with Emily's Hope (see minutes from ad hoc meeting held February 2025 for more information on this project). It was reiterated by Smykle that funding for the anonymous distribution efforts is supported through settlement funding.

The saturation model will be updated on a regular basis with distribution and utilization data so as to inform county-by-county need moving forward.

### Data & Surveillance

Opioid overdose data was presented by Amanda Weinzetl, DOH. South Dakota has the second lowest overdose death rate in the nation (2023), and overdose deaths decreased 5% from 2023 to 2024. Opioid-related deaths decreased 23% and fentanyl-related deaths decreased 41% over the same timeframe (2023 to 2024). See the slides for specific information shared.

Data related to the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program was shared by Melissa DeNoon, Board of Pharmacy. Trends on opioid prescription and stimulant prescription rates and quantities were shared. Of note, overall utilization of the PDMP among registered users has quadrupled since 2018. Efforts on safe medication disposal sites among partnering pharmacies was also shared. See the slides for specific information shared.

### Committee & Partner Updates

Lori Martinec encouraged partners to share about efforts ongoing at local communities, as well as any upcoming events or conferences going on for the group's awareness.

- Sara DeCoteau discussed the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate MOUD clinic, naloxone training efforts, and plans to implement a community response team.
- Erin Miller announced several upcoming events at SDSU focused on reduced stigma and improving access to treatment, including a film screening, panel discussion, and guest speaker.

**Public Input**

Chair Martinec invited any public comment. No comments were received.

**Closing Remarks**

The meeting concluded with a reminder that the next full committee meeting would be held late summer or early fall. Members were encouraged to provide feedback on potential bylaw changes and committee name updates in the coming weeks.