

Opioid Epidemic Response Advisory Council (OERAC)

Meeting Minutes for December 1, 2023

Meeting Location: Hybrid meeting using WebEx and in-person at United Hospital, Hastings, Regina Campus.

Members present: (Names in italics are non-voting OERAC members)

Remote: Peter Carlson, Dr. Ashwin George, *Eric Grumdahl*, Representative Erin Koegel, Jack Martin, Senator Kelly Morrison, Toni Napier, Brock Reed, *and Judge Nicole Starr*

In person: Representative Dave Baker, *Dana Farley*, Sarah Grosshuesch, Heather Bell, Dr. Kathryn Nevins, Joe Clubb, *Jolene Rebertus*, and Dr. Charles Reznikoff

Members not present:

Sadie Broekeimer, Senator Bill Lieske

Call to order

Facilitator Stacy Sjogren began the meeting at 10:00 and a guest welcome, review of ground rules, and roll call followed. Quorum was secured. See voting log for details.

Business items

Minutes approval: Moved to approve the minutes from the October 27, 2023, meeting by Clubb. Seconded by Reznikoff. Motion passed with roll call vote. See voting log for details.

Soon to be confirmed members:

Irene Folstrom (person in recovery rep) observed the meeting today and was introduced.

Kristi Schoen (Dakota Tribe rep) introduced as a member soon to be confirmed.

Dr. Antony Stately (Urban Indian rep) introduced as a member soon to be confirmed.

Pamela Hughes (Ojibwe Tribe rep) introduced as a member soon to be confirmed.

Bylaws update: Still with DHS legal team for review.

New staff introductions: Three new grant managers: Tina Monje, Sean Culhane, and Stephanie Reeder. Interviews have been completed for a new administrative assistant and an announcement will be made soon.

Welcome to Kristi Schoen, representing the Dakota tribe and from Martin Minnesota, observed the meeting and will be joining the Council pending final approval from the DHS Commissioner.

IAA completed: Given large disparities in overdoses in tribal communities, OERAC pressed for a “carve out” of funds in DHS to more fully address the needs. Former member Darrin Prescott had been involved in this initiative along with Dana Farley. The money should be released soon but a specific date was not available.

Public Comment

Mari Mellick, Executive Director of United Way of Hastings commenting on their communities awareness activities.

Judge Stumme, drug court in Carleton County, encouraged OERAC to consider encouraging the legislature to get drivers licenses back on a provisional basis for those in recovery. This is particularly important in rural areas that don't have the robust public transportation system typical in metro areas.

RFP Reflections: Decisions for the next cycle

Jeff Campe, OERAC grant manager, reviewed the six categories from the last grant round (see slide 13). There have been three grant rounds to date and each round triggered minor adjustments to the categories.

Alicia Backer, OERAC grant manager, facilitated member conversation on the following questions:

- **Should we explore reserving a proportion of funds for sustainability of opioid response projects as funding streams begin to reduce?**
 - *Member comments from Martin, Baker, Koegel, Grosshuesch, Grumdahl, Farley, Nevins, and Reznikoff*
 - Perhaps OERAC can provide some advice to counties as to what they could do with money coming their way. Particularly counties not already set up well to address the epidemic.
 - Set up an endowment.
 - Determine what the maintenance costs are for services have already been established and let that drive the trajectory of spending long term.
 - Assess the current implementation and needs, gather information from counties on their current status, then determine path forward.
 - (\$500,000 already banked in 2023)
 - Figure out long term sustainability of programs.
 - Have two RFPs: one for new projects and one for sustainability.
 - Add rating points for sustainability.
 - Staff takeaways from discussion: Now is not the time to hold on to funds. Look at how programs can be sustained.
- The innovative category has been problematic to define. **Should we embed “innovative and emerging services or strategies” into all categories to allow for innovation across all categories?**
 - *Member comments from: Rebertus, Grosshuesch, Martin, Nevins, and Farley*

- Innovative should mean something new to the organization not just completely new concepts to an industry.
- Shouldn't require a research or study aspect built into a proposal to measure success.
- If research isn't feasible, perhaps require grantee to come to OERAC and report on results or some other means of evaluating effectiveness.
- MMB/Weston Merrick shared they would be willing to help grantees connect with a qualified researcher or research institution.
- With the most recent RFP, we used budget limits for each category to show what OERAC priorities were. **Should we explore alternative strategies to highlight OERAC's spending priorities, such as a rubric for the subcommittee to evaluate top-scoring proposals?**
 - *Member comments from: Grosshuesch, Bell, and Nevins*
 - First, need to help whole council understand the rigor of grant process and figure out how to do this work without a subcommittee so that the whole council can be engaged in the hard decisions.

A timeline for the 2023 round of grants was shared (see slide 14). Contracts for the 2023 round are being finalized now.

Follow-up: Conversation on these decision points will continue at a future meeting in preparation for the next round of grants.

Naloxone distribution

Cody Bassett, MDH Naloxone Coordinator and Odie Spinelli, DHS State Opioid Response Grant Manager, presented information on Minnesota's naloxone "hub and spokes" distribution plan utilizing the new portal for ordering naloxone. The presentation helped members understand the results of the last legislative session in terms of distribution and mandates. See slides 18-37.

Grosshuesch made motion to recommend DHS get clarity from Attorney General's office then encourage the legislature or Human Services Committee to provide counties protection from legal actions related to the use of intramuscular naloxone. Seconded by Baker. Motion passed. See voting log for details.

2023 Legislative proposals discussion

DHS presentation by Kristy Graume, Director of Legislative and External Affairs and Elyse Bailey, Budget Director. See slides 38-40 and handout provided by Bailey at meeting and shared on screen.

See brainstormed list of council recommendations generated at November meeting on slides 38-39 to be included in the 2023 legislative report. Members were asked to speak to removing any ideas from the list and identified the following for *removal or adjustment*.

- **Encourage** Require all state prisons and jails to make all FDA approved medications **and transitions of care** plans for opioid use disorder available to incarcerated populations. (members were encouraged to reach out to staff with additional ideas on how to revise this recommendation.)

- Make energy-based services billable ~~for Native Americans~~.
- Increase reimbursement rates for providers that specialize in chronic pain management, **excluding non-interventions**, ensuring they have adequate compensation for the time necessary to provide comprehensive care to their patients.
- Potentially remove “Pretrial release funding for opioid testing for all counties that have pretrial release – some pretrial release panels do not test for fentanyl.”
- Mandate the comprehensive reporting of overdose fatalities throughout the entirety of the state, including tribal lands willing to participate, with the aim of ensuring precise data collection and equitable allocation of funding. (Farley and Nevins will work with staff to restate in a way that gets better data or remove if not suitable)
- Adjust language: Remove prior authorization requirements **and substance use restrictions** for Hepatitis C treatment. (Grosshuesch and Martin will help staff to finalize language)

Nominations for chair and vice chair

Because Chair Baker is not able to attend the January meeting and nominations have now closed for the incoming chair and vice chair, Baker recommended that the council move ahead with a vote for these officers today. There were no objections.

Joe Clubb was nominated as vice chair and Kathy Nevins was nominated as chair. Both accepted the nominations. Starr moved to approve Clubb and Nevins as the new officers for the council. Motion seconded by Bell. Motion carried. See voting log for details.

Grumdahl shared appreciation, on behalf of all members, to Representative Dave Baker for his leadership of OERAC since its inception. Baker will continue as a member and past chair.

Adjourn

Next meeting: Friday, January 19, 10:00-2:00, Elmer Anderson Building, 540 Cedar Street, St. Paul.

Roll Call and Voting Log

December 1, 2023

P = in person R = remote participant A = absent

Member	Attendance status	Minutes approval	Vote: Recommend DHS get clarity from AGs office, then to encourage the legislature or Human Services Committee to provide counties protection from legal actions related to the use of injectable Nalaxone.	Vote: To approve list of recommendations for the legislative report	Vote: Approve the slate of candidates: chairperson – Dr. Kathy Nevins and vicechair – Joe Clubb
Representative Dave Baker	P	y	y	y	y
Heather Bell	R (late)	-	-	y	y
Sadie Broekeimer	A	-	-	-	-
Peter Carlson	R	y	y	y	y
Joe Clubb	R	y	y	y	y
Dr. Ashwin George	R	y	y	y	y
Sarah Grosshuesch	P	y	y	y	y
Representative Erin Koegel	R	y	y	-	-
Senator Bill Lieske	A	-	-	-	-
Jack Martin	R	y	y	y	y
Senator Kelly Morrison	R	y	y	y	y
Toni Napier	R	y	y	y	y
Dr. Kathy Nevins	P	y	y	y	y
Brock Reed	R	y	y	y	y
Dr. Charles Reznikoff	P	y	y	y	y
Judge Nicole Starr	R	S	y	abstain	y
Dana Farley	P				

Roll Call and Voting Log

December 1, 2023

Jolene Rebertus	P				
Eric Grumdahl/Kristine Preston	R				
Tally	voting members present. absent	Motion to approve: Clubb Second: Reznikoff	Motion: Grosshuesch Second: Baker	Motion: Baker Second: Nevins	Motion: Starr Second: Bell