

Opioid Epidemic Response Advisory Council (OERAC)

Meeting Minutes for June 21, 2024

Meeting Location: Hybrid meeting using WebEx and in-person at MN Health Professionals Regulatory Boards - 335 Randolph Avenue, Room 104, St. Paul, MN

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

Remote: Dr. Heather Bell, Dr. Ashwin George, Rep. Erin Koegel, Dr. Charles Reznikoff, Dr. Antony Stately

In person: Dr. Kathy Nevins, Joe Clubb, Rep. Dave Baker, Sadie Broekemeier, Sarah Grosshuesch, Jack Martin, Brock Reed, Kristi Schoen, Judge Nicole Starr, *Jolene Rebertus, Dana Farley, Eric Grumdahl*

Members not present:

Peter Carlson, Irene Folstrom, Pam Hughes, Senator Bill Lieske, Senator Kelly Morrison, Toni Napier

State Staff Members Present: Amanda Langston, Laura Farlow, Sam Nord

Guest Speakers: Kristine Preston, Weston Merrick, Cody Bassett

Call to order

Facilitator Stacy Sjogren began the meeting at 10:00 am, reviewed the OERAC mission, the meeting ground rules and gave a guest welcome. The meeting agenda was confirmed, and a roll call followed. Quorum was secured. See voting log for details.

Public Comment

Facilitator, Stacy Sjogren, welcomed public comment at 10:10AM. No comments were made from members of the public.

Facilitator, Stacy Sjogren, welcomed public comment at 1:50PM.

- Colleen Ronnei discussed expansion of Steve's Law, giving protections to bystanders in an emergency event. Shared Minnesota legislation with legislators in Alaska.

- Evan Romanoff from Attorney General's Office came online to answer any questions from Dashboard presentation. Question from Dave Baker on information of Purdue Pharma court decision. At time of council meeting, no decision had been made.

Business items

Minutes approval: Joe Clubb moved to approve the minutes from the May 17, 2024 meeting. Seconded by Dave Baker. Motion passed with roll call vote. See voting log for details.

DHS Restructuring Update: Eric Grumdahl, Assistant Commissioner of the Behavioral Health, Housing and Support Services, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Administration, spoke on the restructuring happening at the Department of Human Services. This Administration is separating into two administrations: Behavioral Health Administration and a Housing and Support Services, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Administration. At time of meeting, application for new Assistant Commissioner of the Behavioral Health Administration was open. Eric Grumdahl will stay with OERAC through this transition before moving to the Housing and Support Services, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Administration.

RFP Update: Amanda Langston, OERAC Lead, stated that the 2024 OERAC RFP was published on June 11th, 2024. Closes on August 6th at 4pm. Provided link to RFP and link to application for community reviewers. Eligible community reviewers will receive a \$200 stipend.

OERAC RFP subcommittee will meet during the September 20th meeting. First hour of the meeting will be the standard OERAC meeting with the full council. The following four hours will be a subcommittee meeting to review RFP proposals. Council vote for awarding proposals will be held during the October 25th meeting.

- Council member comments: Broekemeier, Stately, Starr, Nevins, Rebertus, Clubb, Baker
- Council requests an outline of entire review process and how each reviewer stage fits into the voting process.
- Emphasis on need to create equity in process, understanding many organizations do not have professional grant writers. Current RFP has changes to scoring to better support these organizations.
 - Discussion that this process is always evolving. Council will discuss lessons learned during October meeting when planning for next RFP.
 - Questions from council members on available technical assistance offered to applicants. There is a DHS hosted Responders Conference on June 26th, 2024 for applicants to ask questions. Applicants can also submit questions to the FAQ. There are resources available, but the group recognizes that there is need for improvement. DHS must ensure all resources are granted equally to all applicants.
 - Discussion on flexibility of funding amount each year and the highly competitive process of an RFP, resulting in many applicants not being awarded.
 - Council must ensure all funding decisions and assistance given to applicants are provided in allowance with policy in order to protect the integrity of the process.
- Confirmation from DHS Staff that previously awarded and non-awarded applicants can request their scoring sheets from DHS using the [Data Request Form](#). This information is available once all awarded contracts have been executed.

Methadone Update for OTPs

Dr. Charles (Charlie) Reznikoff presented on Opioid Treatment Programs that provide methadone as treatment for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). Reviewed federal and state methadone regulations. Discussion of other countries policies and work in this field, as well as current studies being conducted.

Conflict of Interest Training

Kristine Preston, Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Behavioral Health Division. Provided conflict of interest training for council members to be used as a resource moving into upcoming RFP review process. One purpose of OERAC is to “recommend to the commissioner of human services specific projects and initiatives to be funded”. Kristine provided overview of statutes, policies, and forms for conflict of interest in grantmaking. Council members will complete non-executive branch grant reviewer Grants COI Disclosure Form before participating in process.

- Council member comments: Broekemeier, Clubb, Schoen, Nevins, Koegel, Rebertus, Grumdahl, Reznikoff, Starr
- Emphasis that when reviewing proposals, applicants are reviewed based solely on their written application to the RFP.
- OERAC is responsible for deciding how Conflict of Interest is defined and monitored within the group. Must complete COI Disclosure Form provided by State. OERAC can involve ethics office at the Department of Human Services for support.
 - Discussion on later bylaw change to include COI procedure.
- Importance of understanding that conflict of interest in grant reviewing is highly situational. Many communities have far-reaching family connections.
 - Objectivity and disclosure are key factors. A reviewer must disclose their COI and objectively review an applicant based only on their written proposal.
- Discussion that outside knowledge of an organization cannot be included in decision making process in order to maintain the integrity and fairness of the process. This is not the role of a grant reviewer. State will conduct a risk assessment after full council vote.
 - Members discussed how expertise can be included in review process, without bringing outside information into the discussion.
 - Judge Starr gave comparisons to Jury trials. Evidence given in written proposals are to answer the specific RFP questions.
- Blinding applications for the review process was proposed. DHS will collect COIs at start of review process and manage COIs, therefore blinding will not change which proposals a council member will review.
- DHS will provide one pager of RFP applicants this year ahead of the October meeting vote.
- DHS will provide overview of how COIs can be managed within a group, for all three OERAC reviewer stages (grant reviewer, subcommittee, full council vote).
- Chair Kathy Nevins discusses potential of an additional 1-hour meeting to review COI information.

Settlement Dashboard & Naloxone Saturation Report

Weston Merrick, from Minnesota Management & Budget, presented on the Opioid Epidemic Response Spending Dashboard, which provides transparency on the allocation of funds for opioid epidemic response across cities and counties in Minnesota. This dashboard reflects spending for the years of 2022 and 2023.

Naloxone saturation report will be shared at a future meeting.

OERAC Acknowledgement of Council Member

Council members gave a thank you to Dana Farley, an inaugural member of OERAC, and a congratulations on his retirement.

Naloxone Portal Update

Cody Bassett, Naloxone Coordinator at Minnesota Department of Health, presented on naloxone distribution in Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Health's Naloxone Portal, myths and misinformation about fentanyl, and naloxone saturation in the state.

Adjourn

OERAC Chair Dr. Kathy Nevins adjourned the June 2024 meeting.

Next meeting: July 19th, 2024: 12PM – 1PM

Roll Call and Voting Log

June 21, 2024

P = in person R = remote participant A = absent

Member	Attendance status	Minutes approval for 5/17/24
Dr. Kathy Nevins	p	y
Joe Clubb	p	y
Rep. Dave Baker	p	y
Dr. Heather Bell	r	y
Sadie Broekemier	p	y
Peter Carlson	a	--
Irene Folstrom	a	--
Dr. Ashwin George	r	y
Sarah Grosshuesch	p	y
Pam Hughes	a	
Rep. Erin Koegel	r	y
Senator Bill Lieske	a	--
Jack Martin	p	y
Senator Kelly Morrison	a	--
Toni Napier	a	--
Brock Reed	p	a
Dr. Charlie Reznikoff	r	a
Kristi Schoen	p	a
Judge Nicole Starr	p	--
Dr. Antony Stately	r	--
Dana Farley	p	
Jolene Rebertus	p	
Eric Grumdahl/Kristine Preston	p	
Tally	voting members present= absent=	Motion: Joe Clubb Second: Dave Baker Motion Passed