**OPIOID ABATEMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION OFFICIAL PUBLIC MEETING**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**MAY 15, 2024**

The Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission was held at District of Columbia Hospital

Association, 1152 15th Street, NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20005 on Wednesday, May 15, 2024. Members of the public were also invited to attend in-person and virtually via WebEx.

Recording of the meeting can be found at the following link: [Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission Meeting (May 15, 2024)-20240515 1309-1 - OCTO WebEx Enterprise Site.](https://dcnet.webex.com/webappng/sites/dcnet/recording/5a788479f4ea103caf7e00505681c6b8/playback)

**ATTENDEES**

Present

1. Jean Moise, Ph.D. designeed for BArbara Bazron, Ph.D., Director, Department of Behavioral Health
2. Carl Filler as designee for Ayanna Bennett, Ph.D., Director, DC Health (virtual)
3. Ciana Creighton, Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services
4. Christina Okereke, Representative of the Attorney General of the District of Columbia
5. The Honorable Christina Henderson (then Marcia Huff as the Designee), Chair, DC Council Committee on Health (virtual)
6. Edwin Chapman, MD, President Designee, Medical Society of the District of Columbia (virtual)
7. Jacqueline Bowens, Chief Executive Officer, District of Columbia Hospital Association
8. Mark LeVota, Executive Director, District of Columbia Behavioral Health Association (virtual)
9. LaVerne Adams, DMin, Chief Executive Coach, Total Life Consultancy LLC (virtual)
10. Demetrius Jones, Certified Peer Recovery Specialist, Wards 7 & 8 DC Prevention Center/DC Recovery Community Alliance
11. Larry Gourdine, Program Manager, Psychiatric Institute of Washington
12. J. Chad Jackson, MS, CEO, Ardan Community Living, LLC
13. Beverly Settles-Reaves, PhD, Program Manager, Howard University (virtual)
14. Nnemdi Elias, MD, MPH, Addiction/Internal Medicine
15. Juanita Price, M.Ed, Chief Executive Officer, Hillcrest Children and Family Center
16. Senora Simpson, PTMPH, DrPH (virtual)
17. Melisa Byrd, Interim Director, DC Department of Health Care Finance
18. Franciso Diaz, MD, FACP, DC Chief Medical Examiner (virtual)

Absent

1. Patricia Quinn, Designated Representative, District of Columbia Primary Care Association
2. Queen Anunay, MPH MCHES, Designee, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice
3. Larry Bing, Certified Peer Recovery Specialist, Leadership Council for Healthy Communities

**Call to Order**

* Chair J. Chad Jackson called the meeting to order at 9:10 AM.

**Quorum Declaration**

* Chair Jackson conducted a roll call for quorum declaration.

**Approval of Minutes**

* Chair Jackson presented the minutes for the March 13, 2024, Commission meeting.
* A motion to approve meeting minutes was made by Jackie Bowens and the motion in was seconded.
* The Commission approved the minutes by unanimous vote.

**Welcome and Overview of Agenda**

* Chair Jackson presented and discussed the agenda for the meeting.

**Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Support Act Address**

* Councilmember Christina Henderson Henderson previously forwarded a formal letter to OAAC proposing to allocate monies from the Opioid Abatement Fund to support 3 initiatives that align with the areas of focus around SUD, Prevention, and Treatment.
* First initiative: SUD/Behavioral Health Target Outreach Pilot; began in Wards 1,5, 7, awarding FMCS’ such as HIPS to provide daily outreach and intervention within wards “hot spots”. Currently proposed to include 3 additional locations in Ward 8 (Good Hope & MLK Avenue), Ward 6 (King Greenleaf), and Ward 5 (North Capital & Florida Avenue).
* Second initiative: Funding OCME’s illicit drug surveillance reporting initiative to avoid break in service and sustain programs forensic toxicology testing capabilities; previous federal grant supporting this work expired, and there was limited information on continuing to operate under federal funding.
* Third initiative: School Based Behavioral Health Peer to Peer pilot during SY2024-25 will fund program to engage youth through their peers on various topics including OUD, SUD prevention, and other risky behaviors.
* DC Council will engage in full vote on the budget within two weeks.
* **Discussion:**
  + Point of clarification for Commission by Dr. Diaz, OCME; illicit drug surveillance performs a comprehensive post-mortem toxicology report that is labor intensive and requires a lot of resources; Dr. Diaz further explains that over 50% of medical examiners and coroner cases are drug related deaths and this work is especially crucial to combat the OUD crisis in the District and supported by the OAAC.
  + Councilwoman Henderson intends to recommend permanent funding of OCME’s illicit drug surveillance program during the FY26 mayoral budget formulation.
  + Dr. Senora Simpson expressed concerns related to fiduciary decisions and funds awarded the Commissions input and vote, particularly that the Commission is not being consulted or given the ability to make formal vote.

**Opioid Abatement Public Forum Report**

* Chair Jackson discussed the information learned from the Opioid Abatement Public Forums.
* Key takeaways:
  + Public forums were voted upon and intends to serve as listening sessions for District residents and community partners to raise areas of concern and ideas to the OAAC.
  + The Opioid Abatement Strategic Impact Grant was discussed at both forums held on 4/24/24 and 5/8/24 to inform the public on the abatement funding available.
  + Starting a recovery high school- educational system that involves youth with substance use issues. (e.g. Phoenix academy in Maryland). Chairman Jackson supports funding the idea, however, the infrastructure is not yet developed.
  + Homelessness/housing insecurity continues to be a barrier along with co-occurring disorder. Bridging these barriers for consumers is critical.
  + Establishing a location to house individuals experiencing homelessness and opioid use disorder (OUD) which could be accomplished by buying hotel for wraparound treatment services.
  + Parent Watch Inc.- educating parents on substance use issues and working with them resolve children’s substance use issues.
  + Other ideas presented: starting a “jobs not guns” program; providing more employment training support services (especially for peers); provide more positive role models for youth and; starting programs that allow youth to develop news ways to cope with stress.
  + Not enough staff to manage Stabilization Centers; OOA can enhance centers with funding for staffing and efficient contingency plan.
  + Supplantation and duplicate use of program staff is an area of concern.

**Discussion**

* Taking ideas from listening sessions and present them to OAAC sub-committees to assess and prioritize to integrate into SIG opportunity.
* Is there any specificity on infrastructure for OOS funding allocation; having a way to connect individualized programs and how is OAAC driving various types of infrastructure to include facilities (brick and mortar), inter-agency coordination, and care coordination- SIG funding intends to do that.
* Dr. Settles Reaves commented that the OAAC needs to prioritize collaboration over competition.
* Recommended that Commission is readily available and in attendance at DC Council Committee on Health’s public hearings moving forward.

**District of Columbia Peer Network Planning**

* Dr. Mark S. Johnson, MD MPH presented the presentation titled: Howard University College of Medicine – Approaches to Reversing the Opioid Epidemic.” The full report is available.

**Discussion:**

* Dr. Laverne Adams commented on the idea of collaboration and connecting resources to communities in need.
* Dr. Simpson commented in agreement with the need for more peers and people that are available for Spanish translation but added that there is also a need for individuals to translate other languages.
* Dr. Simpson also objected to having peer training being at the university level because peers do not need to be “elite” and that having individuals be to educated might cause them to lose sight of what the rules are.
* Dr. Diaz commented on the significant increase, from the medical examiner’s level, of alcoholism and opioid use amongst members of the Hispanic community.
* Dr. Settles-Reaves addressed Dr. Simpson’s concerns, stating that the education and training in the university will not stop peers from being able to provide that personal and familiar communication necessary for talking to and supporting individuals in the community.

**Office of Opioid Abatement: Director’s Update**

* Dr. Orlando Barker of the Office of Opioid Abatement presented the current budget for the Opioid Abatement Fund and introduced the Opioid Abatement Strategic Impact Grant (SIG). The full report is available.

**Discussion**

* Dr. Barker clarified that there is a $20,000 floor and up to $1,000,000 ceiling for SIG awards, and that the public has an opportunity to apply for the dollars set forth by the SIG funding vehicle.
* Marcia Huff questioned how the Commission should decide to prioritize grant proposals.
* Dr. Simpson Intentional coordination of commission and sub-committees for grant prioritization and approval of funding.
* Chair Jackson expressed concern about DBH conducting the grant review process and recommended that and independent third-party reviewer be brought in to conduct the review, Suggestion for OAAC to prepare and provide sub-committee reports and presentations before commission meeting; also provide current expenditures, and evaluation of program effectiveness.
* Commissioner Juanita Price motioned to vote if Commissioners shall take part in review panels as individuals or subject matter expert’s (SME’s);
  + The commissioners vote yes, motion passes (8 for, 2 against and 1 abstained).

**Public Comment**

* Ambrose Lane, Judy Ashburn and Gordon Simmons provided public comments in-person.
* Prince Hamn and Nura Green Lane provided public comments via WebEx.

**Adjournment**

* Chair Jackson adjourned the meeting at 11:27 am.