



Plymouth County Drug Abuse Task Force

District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz, Chair

Sheriff Joseph D. McDonald, Jr., Chair

October 20, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Public Safety Subcommittee

Chief Marc Duphily, Chair
Chief Michael Miksch, Chair

Medical Subcommittee

Dr. Daniel Muse, Chair
Sarah Cloud, Chair

Education Subcommittee

President Fred Clark, Chair
Viriato deMacedo, Chair

Coalition Subcommittee

Jennifer Cantwell, Chair
Hillary DuBois, Chair
Joanne Peterson, Chair

Faith-Based Subcommittee

Rev. Paul Jehle, Chair
Deacon James Greer, Chair

Legislative Advisors

Rep. Matthew Muratore
Rep. Alyson Sullivan

Plymouth County

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District Attorney Tim Cruz

- Welcome, this is our 2nd Post Covid meeting
- Worcester County DA Joe Early, Worcester County Lew Evangelidis and a few members of their staff are present today.
- Much like our office, DA Early formed the Central Massachusetts Opioid Task Force back in 2015. Worcester is fortunate to have UMass Medical Center in their county to partner with on many incentives.
- Worcester Sheriff Lew Evangelidis created an innovative and effective substance abuse prevention and education program Face2Face, which he is bringing to the schools in Worcester County.
- Sharing information and collaborating is imperative to learn and grow
- Myself and members of my staff, presented at the COSSUP National Forum in Arlington, Virginia on August 29th and 30th and attended the National DEC conference in Kansas City, Missouri August 29th through 31st.
- We participated in a panel discussion at the COSSUP National Forum to share best practices from our Plymouth County DEC Initiative.
- At the National DEC Conference in Kansas City, I joined DA Early at the breakout session "From My Lens: Different Perspectives"
- During the month of October, my office will host two forums on Human Trafficking. Human trafficking is closely correlated with substance misuse. A panel of experts will discuss the realities of human trafficking in Plymouth County; the importance of collaboration between law enforcement, service providers and survivors, creating a path forward to achieve justice and allow survivors to heal.
- The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs recently awarded our office and Family and Community Resources (FCR) \$1.5 million in funding to bolster efforts to investigate and prosecute human trafficking cases and get victims vital services.
- From SAMHSA, we received a Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act or CARA funding, which Dr. Muse will discuss in depth, but the purpose of this program is to enhance the efforts of current or former Drug Free Communities (DFC) recipients to prevent opioid, meth, and/or prescription drug use among

youth ages 12-18 in our communities. This program also seeks to change the culture and context regarding the acceptability of youth use and misuse of these substances. My office will be partnering with Signature Healthcare, Dr. Muse, HighPoint Treatment Center's (BAPC), PCO and regional outreach groups to provide the framework for the Plymouth County's First Response to Substance Use and Recovery Project.

- Our Plymouth County Comfort Dog Program has grown, and now includes 14 dogs. My office is working on a modification to our COSSUP grant that would help fund and study the Plymouth County Comfort Dog Program. If approved, Bridgewater State University will be our research partner.
- After a 3-year hiatus, the Plymouth County Drug and Alcohol Resistance Education Summer Program took place. 23 out of 27 towns in our county participated. It was a fun, successful week for our students and SROs, we served over 500 students. Our Plymouth County Comfort Dogs also attended and were a huge hit with the students and alleviated the student's anxiety.

Mayor Robert Sullivan

- Welcome visitors to the city (thank you to those who traveled down from Worcester County)
- Introduced Jazmine Bradsher and John Messia to members of the task force
- The District Attorney is invested in Brockton. He could have moved his office anywhere in Plymouth County, but he chose to stay in the city.
- 106k people are living in Brockton
- At the Mayor's Office, we are in the people business and are committed to helping the community
- The influx in the homeless community is an ongoing issue
- Drug Addiction and Mental Health issues are on the rise contributing to the influx of homelessness in Plymouth County
- Important to come together to strategize, Brockton is better because we are standing together
- I am thankful for the efforts of DA Cruz and Sheriff McDonald
- I am here to work with you all...we are better together!

DA Joe Early – Worcester County

- Opioid issue is a serious issue and continuing to grow
- Worcester County wants to share what Plymouth County does and its successes with the fight against SUDs
- Worcester county has a focus on juvenile court, utilizing after school activities to keep kids busy, reducing juvenile delinquency by 79%
- Always room for improvement with collaboration
- Everything we do, we must do it with passion

Sherrif Worcester County – Lew Evangelidis

- Public Safety and Rehabilitation is essential and root of business
- Need to double mental health program, mental health and substance abuse go hand in hand
- New SUDs treatment happening in Worcester County
- 3 community correction centers with diversion programs
- Through talking with inmates recognize the same stories (life) – got involved young, stole, kicked out, break ins, prison
- Created Face2Face program for children – put on for 400k students so far
- Middle School interactive presentation to talk about drugs – myths and sharing the facts (6-8th grade)
- Focus on saving lives

Sherrif Plymouth County – Sherrif McDonald

- Our MOUD Clinic has been operational for almost a year with 23 on buprenorphine, and 11 on methadone. All medications come through the State Pharmacy and are funded by DPH.
- Clinic looking into injectable treatment that lasts 30 days, no fridge needed, lasts 2 years on shelf
- Attended National Conference on correctional health care
- Important to go to meetings/ conferences to collaborate and learn
- We have incorporated Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and Trauma Informed methods into our Correctional Officer Academy. We are now graduating our third academy with student officers who have received this full training. Our Program Staff received ACE training thanks to DA Cruz and DA Early including us in grant funded trainings they secured. This is especially important to us because we know that the people in our custody have issues directly related to ACE and the fact, they are incarcerated is creating ACE for their children, and or people in their lives. We are writing vocational grants to train formerly incarcerated people, and or their children because we see the generational impact incarceration can have.
- Art & Recovery Classes shown to be helpful to process emotions, especially grief (Suzie Loordy)
- Weekly groups on Narcan and given to those reentering

Dr. Dan Muse – CARA Grant [Medical Subcommittee]

- Got involved with Law Enforcement regarding the reality surrounding opioid crisis
- If medical community did half as much as law enforcement, crisis would be under control by now
- Immediate CPR vital – started integrating opioid education w/ CPR training
- Win/ win to upgrade training professionally (use of AEDs, CPR, and know about opioid epidemic)
- Mental Health is the underlying current in war against SUDs
- Most people with SUDs are trying to curb mental health symptoms, not become addicts
- Mental Health reform in this country is abysmal

Sarah Cloud [Medical Subcommittee]

- Private foundation funding for Columbia Suicide Screening Lighthouse Project using the wallet cards and smart phone app w/ resources for 1st responders
- First training was in person at BSU. Next training will be hosted virtually
- Continued increase in CHS with persistent marijuana use (GI distress, dehydration, etc.)
- Fact sheet on CHS went around, will continue to circulate
- Seeing increased use of alcohol use
- Alcohol addiction is slower, progressive disease that the covid pandemic fast tracked

Amanda Sandoval , HighPoint Treatment Center/BAPC

- STOP grant been able to support additional day for SRO, Adam Hill
- Also supports advisors for SADD which supports students to provide youth-led substance use prevention
- Shop talks shown very helpful to teach harm reduction and refusal techniques
- Shop talks provide education and are intimate conversations with students
- People who work in the trades have disproportionate rates of substance use and overdose

Dr. Paul Jehle [Faith Based Coalitions Committee]

- Greater awareness to offer help- church offering counseling
- Teen challenge expanded

Dave Smith – Teen/ Adult Challenge [Faith Based Coalitions Committee]

- Teen Adult Challenge Director
- Helping communities for 60 years
- Seeing an increase in Methamphetamine use
- 98 beds in Brockton
- Faith Based program , 2 FT LMHC's, 8 Full time recovery coaches

Joanne Peterson – Learn to Cope

- Grew larger due to covid
- Use of zoom has proven effective and provided some a safer “feeling” space
- 20 years and more family centers now available, 2 family centers one in Falmouth and one in Easthampton
- More attendance and people coming to meetings using “no camera” feature on zoom
- Meetings are back in person
- Meetings now offered in Spanish
- Seeing increase in psychedelics through app “Telegram”
- Through Telegram app, psychedelics can be ordered and delivered right to your door, message disappears after so parents cannot see
- Through covid, meetings were combined and more people met and bonded
- Training and giving out Narcan continuing with CPR training
- National Meeting Monthly – talks with other states around the country for more to meet and bond
- Webinars held online
- Xylazine, a lot of deaths, coming back in tox screens

Vicky Butler – Plymouth County Outreach [PCO Public Safety Committee]

- Awarded 1.6 million COSSUP award which allows PCO to continue current operations as well place a Recovery Coach in the district courts, start an overdose fatality review & start working with youth who are using substances
- 74% of individuals are accepting of services when contact is made during a follow up home visit
- 20% decrease in fatal OD from 1/1-9/30 in comparison to same time period as last year
- At risk referrals – 1% increase
- 26% of users OD in communities other than where they reside
- Narcan saved 94% of the time it was administered
- 37% of Narcan administered has been administered by a 3rd party prior to 911 being called
- Outreach teams consist of handpicked and specially trained officers alongside peer coaches who are in recovery themselves. Outreach teams bring out resource packets and harm reduction kits including Narcan during overdose follow up visits
- New office space is now open for the community to drop in by appointment or anytime during open hours Tuesday-Thursday 11-5, Friday & Saturday 10-2

Amanda Consigli – NE HIDTA [Public Safety Committee]

- At least 1 team in every state
- OD Trends: 2357 opioid-related deaths, 93% involved fentanyl in 2022
- Poly-substance OD : 53% involved cocaine
- DPH report: In 2021
- 1411 stimulant related deaths
- 82% involved opioids
- 90-95% of acute stimulant poisonings involved fentanyl
- Increase of ER visits involving stimulants
- MADDs/StreetCheck website if anyone is interested:
<https://www.info.streetcheck.org/>

Mike Sampson - NE HIDTA [Public Safety Committee]

- CINRET Commander/ South (Boston- South): Fentanyl growing problem, being manufactured into pills with different colors. Counterfeit Adderall pills contain methamphetamines being produced. Codeine syrup known as “lean”
- CINRET/ North (Lawrence/ Lynn): Increase in methamphetamine and counterfeit pills.
- CINRET/ West (Springfield-West): Increase in counterfeit pills. Mid-level dealers bringing fentanyl powder into area and pressing into pills locally.
- Counterfeit pressed pills saturated the market.
- Increase in cocaine from both Southwest Border and from Colombia to Puerto Rico then into MA. Colombian DTOs increasing market share and doubled their production. Concern for harm reduction and outreach workers. Cocaine users should be educated to also utilize Narcan.
- Crucial to track of all new mix of drugs. All need to be analyzed for substance break down.
- MA crime lab does not quantify submitted drugs, only detects primary drugs.
- OCME analyzes blood/urine from OD victims which takes approx. 3-4 months to be completed
- NE HIDTA teamed up with Brandeis University and MA DPH for street drug testing and supplied them with FTIR machines which allows drugs to be tested live time (detects numerous cuts). Drugs sent to lab in Philadelphia for full analysis confirmation (turn around 2-3 weeks)
- Brandeis provides free training for teams provided with these machines
- Currently working along Rt.9 corridor in CT-MA-VT. Various harm reduction teams in all three states are trained, have machines, and testing residue baggies in this area
- Attempting to build strategic system throughout state which will allow drugs to be tested in various DA jurisdictions, major city harm reduction sites, and major police departments
- Machines only need ½ grain of rice worth to be initially tested and then mailed to Philadelphia
- Worcester and Berkshire DA;s, Holyoke PD, and the aforementioned OD’s have already signed letters of support
- Drug remnants/ residue are not analyzed, this could be missing lin. Drugs should be stored, not destroyed, and tested at PD
- Long term goal to build regional and statewide alert system so when large LR drug seizures are correlating ODs, the municipalities downstream can be alerted and prepare outreach teams

- social media apps, FaceTime, and other encrypted communication methods for mid and upper-level traffickers due to the inability for law enforcement to easily intercept. However, street level dealers still depend on traditional calls/texts for addict customers who do not have smart phone capabilities.

- third party rental vehicles and apps for drug trafficking and deliveries.

Alyson Sullivan – State Representative

- 15 million in budget
- Gun reform bill voted down
- Extreme risk prevention expanded (mental health etc.) to be able to find family member safe or not safe
- Listening tour & hearing from community is imperative, next will be harm reduction
- Overdose prevention centers (safe sites) issues voiced and heard from Fire Departments
- New bill – will appoint a doctor in extreme cases, instead of section
- Court appointed doctors will prevent doctor shopping and reduce abuse
- Highlight 2 bills of Concerns that the Representatives will be monitoring closely throughout the legislative Process:
 - **H1981/ S1242:(Rep. Fernandes / Sen. Cyr)** establishes “Overdose Prevention Centers” otherwise known Safe injection Facilities.
 - **S1263: (Senator Moran)** legalizes usage of “Psilocybin” otherwise known as schedule 1 drug mushrooms.

Valerie Bassett – BSU [Education Subcommittee]

- New state mental health funding @ BSU – increased need, expanding supports
- Partnering with BSU police to stay in touch with what substances they are seeing students use- continued cannabis and alcohol, increase in stimulants, including cocaine and pressed pills
- Increase in harm reduction approach
- Increase Narcan access
- Make fentanyl test strips readily available for students
- Worked with PCO to increase training – looking to engage students more
- Important to connect mental health and harm reduction awareness

Kara Henderson & Rilwan Adeduntan – US Attorney’s Office

- Rilwan Adeduntan - US Attorney’s Office Chief of Narcotics
- Focus on dismantling large scale drug operations
- Will elevate, just call

Jen Cantell – [Community Coalitions Subcommittee]

- Meets quarterly
- Events & activities going on in multiple communities in the county
- Carver recently hired Meg Quirke to coordinate their Drug Free Communities grant.
- Scituate reports their YRBS data shows their ‘lowest ever’ past 30-day alcohol use.

- Scituate reports lowest past 30-day alcohol use in years. According to the 2023 YRBS, only 32% of SHS students drank alcohol in the past month.

- Marshfield rolled out their Healthy Risk-Taking initiative in September and will do a Naloxone awareness event in November with PCO and Marshfield Fire Department.

- There will be drug take back day events throughout the county

DECI Grant –

- COSSUP grant for drug endangered children
- COSSUP Grant Partner To The Moon and Back had a study published:
 - [Developmental implications of prenatal opioid exposure among school-aged children: a mixed methods and community-initiated analysis | BMC Public Health | Full Text \(biomedcentral.com\)](#)

- Presented at the COSSUP National Forum
 - **Multi-System Collaboration to Improve Outcomes for Drug Endangered Children**

- In the process of requesting a modification to our COSSUP grant to fund and study the Plymouth County Comfort Dog program. Bridgewater State University will be our research partner.