



Task Force on Holistic and Effective Responses to Illicit Drug Use

Date: 10.4.24

Open meeting law in-person location, staffing, and task force members in attendance:

Task Force members in attendance: Kurt DeVine, Ryan Kelly, Chris Bates, Jillian Dease, Barry Edwards, Lauren Graber, Shane Myre, Dziwe Ntaba, Bradley Ray, Donovan Sather, Bill Ward

Absent: Phil Baebenroth, Donald Lannoye

Design team: Office of Addiction and Recovery, Management Analysis and Development (MAD): Jennifer Blanchard, Stephanie Klein, and Abra Pollock. Chas Anderson, Ari Edelman-McHenry, Emily Kaltenbach, Anne Siegler.

Welcome and roll call

- Members and guests were welcomed
- **Roll call and introductions:** Roll call was taken, and introductions were made.
- **Review of agenda:** Agenda and objectives for the meeting were reviewed.
- **Approve of minutes:** Minutes for September meeting will be approved in November.

Draft charter

Members discussed the draft guiding principles, with key feedback including:

- Need to broaden focus beyond individuals with substance use disorders to include all people who use drugs
- Suggestion to include civil liberties, civil rights, and human rights language
- Discussion of scope and prioritization concerns
- Recommendation to frame addiction as a neurobiological disease
- Concerns about normalizing drug use while maintaining focus on prevention

Methodology

Researchers Anne Siegler and Ari Edelman-McHenry provided an overview of the methodology used to develop recommendations:

- Conducted 49 key informant interviews across multiple domains
- Used qualitative research methods with semi-structured interviews
- Focused on experts in healthcare, harm reduction, drug policing, and social determinants
- Reviewed literature and model policies/laws
- Received technical support from Vital Strategies

Recommendations review process

The task force reviewed and discussed 101 recommendations across healthcare and social determinates of health domains. Members indicated whether they had enough information to form an opinion on each recommendation. Recommendations with unanimous or near-unanimous agreement were marked as ready for voting. Those with more questions or concerns were set aside for further discussion.

- The task force reviewed 101 recommendations, ahead of the meeting, focusing on:
- Whether members had sufficient information to form opinions
- Converting "no" votes to "ready to vote" where possible
- Identifying areas needing further discussion
- Documenting questions and concerns in Mural (virtual whiteboard)

Review of recommendations

Key topics of discussion included:

- Expanding access to medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD)
- Improving harm reduction services
- Addressing social determinants of health like housing and employment
- Reforming drug policies and policing practices

Notable discussion points on recommendations included:

- Significant debate around pharmacy requirements for stocking buprenorphine
- Discussion of pharmacist collaboration in treatment
- Concerns about implementation and funding mechanisms
- Discussion of civil commitment impacts
- Focus on evidence-based approaches and measurements
- Process improvement, members suggested:
 - More time to review materials
 - Clear prioritization framework

- Better understanding of implementation mechanisms
- Focus on evidence-based practices
- Consideration of practical implementation challenges

Next steps

The task force will vote on including recommendations in the legislative report via an online form. Members can suggest changes to recommendations they vote against. Additional recommendations on harm reduction, data collection, and drug policing will be reviewed in future meetings.

1. A form will be sent next week for voting on recommendations ready for consideration
2. Members can propose changes to recommendations they vote against
3. The co-chairs emphasized the difficulty of the work and the importance of carefully considering the evidence and wording of recommendations.
4. November meeting will include:
 - a. Review of voting results
 - b. Discussion of prioritization
 - c. Further consideration of recommendations needing more discussion

Action items

1. Staff to send voting form next week
2. Members to continue adding comments to Mural board
3. Members to review draft Charter before next meeting
4. Co-chairs to consider prioritization framework
5. Staff to compile and share additional recommendations in remaining domains

Next meeting and adjourn

The Task Force adjourned at adjourned at 12:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 13 and will be a fully virtual meeting.