



Task Force on Holistic and Effective Responses to Illicit Drug Use

Date: 9.25.24

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

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

Absent: 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.

Chair selection

Co-chairs were elected: Dr. Kurt DeVine and Dr. Ryan Kelly.

Scope of work of the task force

- The Task Force is charged with reviewing research and providing recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature for the 2025-2026 legislative session
- A report is due to the legislature in February 2025 (requiring completion by early January 2025)
- The Task Force has a compressed timeline with meetings in October, November, and December 2024 to review recommendations

- The group discussed the timeline for producing recommendations, with an initial report due in early January 2025.
- Members considered the possibility of requesting an extension of the task force's mandate to allow for more comprehensive recommendations.
- The formation of working groups was proposed to address specific aspects of drug policy between full task force meetings.

Presentation: Drug Policy State of the Evidence

- Researchers Ari Edelman and Anne Siegler presented findings from their comprehensive review of drug policies and their impacts.
- The presentation covered four main policy domains: healthcare, harm reduction, social determinants of health, and drug policing.
- Key findings included the effectiveness of medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD), harm reduction strategies, and the negative impacts of criminalization approaches.

Discussion

Highlights of the Task Force discussion includes:

- Improving access to medications for opioid use disorder
- Improving harm reduction services
- Addressing Medicaid payment barriers and prior authorization requirements
- Focusing on youth-specific interventions and policies
- Examining warrant policies that may discourage people from seeking help
- Considering alternatives to police response for overdose calls
- Looking at implementation challenges in both urban and rural areas

Next steps and adjourn

- The task force will review specific policy recommendations at the next meeting on October 9th.
- Members were encouraged to read the full research report before the next meeting.
- The group will consider how to categorize and prioritize recommendations for both short-term and long-term policy changes.

The Task Force adjourned at 12:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 9 and will be a fully virtual meeting.