

Sonoma County Advisory Board on Alcohol and Drug Problems

Monthly Meeting Minutes

May 18, 2005: 5 - 7 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Edi Patrick
Trey Dunia
Steve Thomas

MEMBERS ABSENT

Michael Falk
Harmony Galford
Marvin Mars
De Williams
John Abrahams

STAFF PRESENT

Barbara Graves
Ellen Bauer
Sarah Moore
Derrick West
Holly White-Wolfe

PROVIDERS & GUESTS

Cheryle Stanley, Women's Recovery Services
Michael Spielman, DAAC
Jenna McAdam, Athena House
Susan Anderson, DAAC
Elizabeth Ward, SRTP
Dana Alvarez, CHDC

I. Public Comment

No public comments.

II. Review of Minutes

No quorum: review of March and April minutes held until June meeting.

III. Narcotic Treatment Program License Renewal

In order to renew the licenses for Narcotic Treatment Programs (NTPs), each year ADP requires a recommendation of renewal from the county Alcohol and Drug Program Administrator. As the Sonoma County Alcohol and Drug Program Administrator, Gino Giannavola has historically requested that the Advisory Board support his recommendation for renewal for both Sonoma County programs: Santa Rosa Treatment Program, Inc. (SRTP), and Drug Abuse Alternatives Center (DAAC).

NTPs provide opiate replacement therapy, usually in the form of methadone. In order to qualify for the methadone program, clients must have a history of several years of abuse, and two previous treatment failures in a different modality. The program requires counseling to accompany the methadone doses. Clients on methadone are not "high" but are stabilized. Some clients eventually taper off of the methadone, and some clients remain on methadone indefinitely. In a recent survey, 25% of clients expressed interest in a slow taper off of methadone.

In addition to the methadone program, both SRTP and DAAC offer a 21-day detox program, which does not require clients to have an extensive history of opiate abuse or two treatment failures. However, failure in the 21-day detox program can be considered as a treatment failure for the purposes of entering the methadone program.

Narcotic Treatment Programs are based on a harm reduction model. They reduce IV drug use, thereby reducing associated diseases such as HIV, Hepatitis C, and crime. Over 90% of clients who enter the methadone maintenance program are positive for Hepatitis C, as a result of unsafe needle use. NTPs also reduce the risk of birth defects related to drug use in opiate addicted mothers, and increase the chances that she will receive documented healthcare throughout her pregnancy.

Due to the lack of a quorum, the Board was unable to take action to recommend renewal of the NTP licenses. However, throughout the discussion there was no indication that the Board might have questioned or opposed the recommendation.

IV. Subcommittee Reports

Policy Development/Advocacy Subcommittee

There is no current action to report from this subcommittee. However, they expect to meet and discuss possible support for addressing the needs of a senior population.

Community Education Subcommittee

Trey Dunia, De Williams, Harmony Galford, Marvin Mars, and Holly White-Wolfe met with Shirley Zane of the Council on Aging, to help determine the local impact of drug and alcohol problems in the senior population. They were surprised to discover that the problem is considered epidemic by the Council on Aging, but that there is very little being done to address it. The Council on Aging is not designed to intervene in these situations, although they may be able to act as a vehicle for distributing literature. While the Council on Aging only represents the portion of the senior population that accesses their services, such as Meals on Wheels and Friendly Visitors, they did have some insight into the senior population as a whole.

Many seniors may feel lonely or disconnected, especially as relatives move out of the area, friends or acquaintances pass on, and their mobility is compromised. Alcohol consumption is one way that people might self-medicate for depression. In addition, social drinking is fairly common with this population, and the same amount of alcohol that a person consumed at a younger age carries an increased risk as that person ages. Whereas with children and young adults, many surveys and educational programs are funded in order to determine the scope of the problem and how best to address it, the senior population has not had the same resources. Therefore, the scope of the problems is not really understood, and the population is largely uneducated about the risks associated with drug and alcohol abuse. In addition, there is a particularly serious stigma within this population related to the concepts of “addiction” or having a “problem” with alcohol or drugs. The issue may need to be presented in another light, such as being related to overall wellness.

Shirley recommended a focus group for the senior population, and then an effort to bring the information to seniors where the focus groups indicate that it might be needed. There are senior apartment complexes, senior mobile home parks, Oakmont, etc.

An additional point that Shirley stressed was that those in the treatment community should not assume that the current system of care has all the answers for this particular population. It may be that new perspectives or resources will be needed to be truly helpful for a senior population with drug or alcohol-related problems.

Some ideas discussed by the Advisory Board included inviting Patrick Arbore to do a grand rounds presentation. He recently presented a training on “Alcohol, Medications, and Other Drugs: Their Abuse and Misuse among Older Adults.” The subcommittee will meet to determine what their next steps might be regarding this issue.

V. SACPA (Prop 36) Update

Today’s Steering Committee meeting was cancelled.

The SACPA Status Report for fiscal years 2001-2004 was distributed. It was approved by the Board of Supervisors and is now available to the public. Of particular interest is the demonstrated reduction in jail bed days for those clients who successfully completed a SACPA episode. The Advisory Board and other attendees expressed interest in finding out how much a jail bed day actually costs, in order to translate the reduction in days to a reduction in dollars. AODS will try to obtain this information before the June Advisory Board meeting.

The four bills currently being proposed that address the issue of additional funding for Prop. 36 remain on watch status.

VI. Prevention Division

HIV and HCV risk assessment and testing will be offered to all inmates at incarceration. Previously, these services were offered only if an inmate requested them after the initial health screening.

Prevention and Planning is working on a proposal that would coordinate local efforts to participate in the pharmacy-based needle sales, while reducing some of the inherent problems. The proposal is scheduled to go before the Board of Supervisors on July 14th. The biggest issue is the disposal of the used needles, once they have been purchased. A package of 10 needles costs between \$2.50 and \$3.00. For an additional \$1 per sale, pharmacies might provide a home sharps container that could then be returned to the pharmacy when full, and then properly disposed of. Three local pharmacies have agreed to the proposal, and several others are interested.

On June 8th, they are going to release an RFP for early intervention and support services for at-risk youth and their families. The RFP for the \$5,000 planning grants for the Spanish language parenting program has already been released, and they are looking forward to seeing what types of proposals are submitted.

They are currently analyzing and preparing the data to submit in the SIG plan, which is due to the state on June 1st.

The 4th annual Youth Activist Convergence was very successful. 17 different community agencies sponsored the event, and 214 youth and adults attended. It was a very diverse group that represented Sonoma County’s diversity well. They will be doing it again next year. The one area they plan to concentrate on improving is in filling the busses that were scheduled to bring youth from some of the outskirt communities to the event. They were not as well utilized as expected.

VII. AODS Division Report

The Counselor Certification Regulations have been approved and are in effect. However, there is a possible complication. The Regulations specify that the ten certifying organizations have until July 1, 2007 to become certified through NOCA (National Organization for Competency Assurance). Those that do not meet this deadline will not longer be approved certifying organizations. Those counselors who elected to become certified through them will need to become re-certified through an organization that has been NOCA approved. There is speculation that Breining may not meet the NOCA requirements, which would impact a significant number of Sonoma County counselors who have already become certified through Breining.

Due to the new Regulations, the division will meet and confer with the unions. This is likely to take place in the next few months.

The Recovery Happens Planning Committee is currently being formed in order to plan this year's annual event. Meetings are expected to begin in June. Advisory Board members are invited to participate. Trey Dunia expressed interest in participating, and there may be some interest from Youth Coalitions to participate as well. Holly White-Wolfe will follow up with this possibility. Those who are interested should contact Sarah Moore, at (707) 565-6948.

Proposition 63 (Mental Health Services Act) planning orientation meetings have been scheduled. Those who would like to be able to provide input during the Prop 63 plan should attend one of these meetings. The schedule was distributed to those present, and can also be found at the following website, along with additional information on the Mental Health Services Act: <http://www.sonoma-county.org/health/mh/mhsa.htm>

VIII. Roundtable

DAAC

Anna Broderick is getting married and moving out of state. Susan Anderson will be the new DAAC Marketing Director.

DAAC is participating with Mental Health in order to submit a SAMHSA grant that would assist with better coordination between AOD and Mental Health services for specific populations. Those present discussed this ongoing collaboration effort, and expressed some positive activity around the issue in recent months. Hopefully, these efforts will successfully continue.

On March 1st, three Catholic Charity-funded beds became available at DAAC for non-criminal justice clients. They have been full since they opened, and DAAC hopes to be able to expand this effort.

WRS

Clients and staff attended this year's Human Race, and Cheryle got some great pictures of clients participating in the event, wearing Recovery Happens T-Shirts. The clients have signed authorizations to share the photos, and they may be used in media efforts for the 2005 Recovery Happens event.

Their Kaiser client is doing well, and although their Kaiser funding is running out, the client has asked to continue as a private pay client. They are encouraged by this level of commitment to the recovery process, and the message that it relays to Kaiser about the value of their services.

CHDC

CHDC is remodeling their diversion and outpatient restrooms in order to make them available for urinalysis testing. This will be more convenient for clients, who have been going to Redwood Toxicology to submit UA samples, and Redwood Toxicology is not on a main bus line.

They seem to have more dual diagnosis clients lately, and they are looking forward to seeing the outcome of the planning process for Proposition 63.

Trey Dunia

Trey expressed his support of the pharmacy-based needle sales project that Prevention and Planning is working on. He will not be able to attend the meeting in June.

The issue of Advisory Board member recruitment was discussed, and it was agreed that this would be a specific topic for discussion at the July meeting. Steve Thomas also agreed to contact Michael Falk to determine what his plans are for continuing to serve on the Advisory Board.

Meeting adjourned: 7:00 pm