

**LOUISIANA LEGISLATURE ACT 88:**  
**ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HEROIN AND OPIOID PREVENTION AND EDUCATION**  
**(HOPE)**

Date: September 7, 2023  
Time: 9:00 am– 11:00 am  
Bienville Building: Room 118  
628 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St, Baton Rouge, LA

**HOPE Council Minutes**

1. Call to Order at 9:00 am
2. Roll Call  
**Present:**  
Chair Dr. James Hussey  
Michael Comeaux  
Lt. William Bosworth  
Shelley Edgerton  
Lori Miller  
**Absent:**  
Dr. Allison Smith  
Tavares Walker  
Sen. Regina Barrow  
Monica Taylor  
Elsie Joanne Brown  
Judge Timothy Marcel  
Ronald Callegari  
Crystal Lewis  
\*A quorum was not reached.
3. Introduction/Welcome New Members – no new members
4. Review and Approval of September 7, 2023 Agenda- Reviewed the agenda with the council. Agenda was not approved due to lack of quorum.
5. Approval of June 2023 Minutes- Minutes were not approved due to lack of quorum.
6. Presentations:
  - a. Harm Reduction Program Recommendations  
Foster Noone, Charlotte Willcox, and Sarah Jane Robertson presented on the state of HARM Reduction.  
Harm Reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing consequences associated with drug use.  
They provided a background on HARM Reduction which included DHH providing morphine clinics in 1919 as a response to the Harrison Act, to the invention of naloxone in 1960, to the 1980s the HIV epidemic began; Chicago Recovery Alliance began world’s first naloxone distribution program and then to the Mid 2000s where SSPs were criminalized as paraphernalia;

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Naloxone accessibility through legislation paired with 2014 Good Samaritan law, and expanded HCV treatment access.

Current State: Programs as they exist today- 7 official SSPs in Louisiana (located in Shreveport, New Orleans, Alexandria, and Baton Rouge. Together they have had over 26,800 participant visits. Decriminalization of fentanyl test strips, and they have distributed 7,624 test strips so far. Also recently, launch of the LA Harm Reduction Hub. 48 distribution sites (300% increase since December 2022) and 2,863 overdose reversals using narcan from the portal. Vending machines coming soon. Narcan distributed to 36 parishes. Also treating patients in jails. Would like to see better linkage after incarceration.

Recommendations:

1. Expand syringe access- more local ordinances, statewide ordinance (a statewide law would give more flexibility to local ordinances), pharmacy access (allowing supplies to be offered at pharmacies)
2. Opioid abatement funds- advocate for fund allocation to harm reduction strategies.
3. Greater statewide collaboration- would like to break down silos

Next Steps- they offer trainings monthly, share resources they have share including distribution hub. [Louisianahealthhub.org/hrd.hub](http://Louisianahealthhub.org/hrd.hub)

Dr. Hussey mentioned It was discussed during the Healthcare Impact workgroup that they would like a review board and a panel to meet more frequently and actually collaborate on HARM Reduction. Dr. Hussey said he can include this recommendation in the Report.

b. Abbreviated 2023 HOPE Report & Possible Legislative Submission for March 1st due date for HOPE Report-

Dr. Hussey discussed this will be his last year leading the report and chairmanship. He would like to abbreviate the report. A lot of office heads change which may delay getting updates together. This may be an opportunity to change the way we report out. Jackson Carney discussed this will be a one stop shop- a review of what the HOPE council was and continuous/ trending data will be included. Data is not available until October, which is why it's now pushed back. The big Impact data table will be moved to the appendix so it's still available. He will not collect the data from each department going forward.

7. General Updates

a. Office of Public Health- Nell Wilson, Director of Opioid Surveillance Program presented highlights on surveillance data from 2022. Drug-involved deaths are up 3%, opioid involved deaths down 1% and synthetic involved deaths are down 2%. Hoping this is showing work paying off.

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Some highlights on Prevention activities are:

- 1,000 referrals to services via 2-1-1
- 1,511 clients brought into harm reduction in eight regions
- Teen crisis text line outreach in 635 junior high and high schools
  - 1,500 texts received in one year
- OPOCs registered as HUB distribution sites
- Purchased and distributing 600 cases of Narcan and 30,000 FTS

Grant for surveillance data and prevention activities will continue through August of 2028.

Surveillance includes:

- Infrastructure
- Louisiana Opioid Data Surveillance System
- CDC web-based reporting
- Forensic Toxicology Testing for parish coroners- Toxicology program is important for coroners but also for surveillance program.
- Data linkage projects

Prevention Activities include:

- Clinician and Health System Engagement
- Public Safety Partnerships and Interventions
- Harm Reduction
- Community-Based Linkage to Care

Will continue work of the OBOTs to be the primary point of contact.

You can sign up for updated data in LODSS at <https://lodss.lah.gov/>.

Dr. Hussey mentioned this is very hopeful to see these numbers going down. It may be a trend in the right direction. This data will still be included in the HOPE Report. Nell indicated a visualization may be included in the HOPE Report, as well.

b. Office of Behavioral Health- Jamie Donaldson Project Director for SOR presents on the Louisiana Naloxone Saturation Plan, along with Mary Beth Campbell from Harm Reduction Team.

- Teams from 10 states were invited to convene in Bethesda, MD July 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, 2023 to discuss state and national naloxone saturation plans. Louisiana was chosen to attend because the plan was great.
- Experts from across the US, including harm reduction advocates, offered additional information, insight, and guidance
- State teams met with regional SAMHSA officers to refine naloxone saturation plans
- Louisiana's Plan is to develop a clear, comprehensive definition of naloxone saturation, while strengthening current partner relationships, procedures, and policies to ensure

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solid foundations and, subsequently, build on previous successes and lessons learned to design a robust and effective distribution plan.

Mary Beth Campbell discussed current collaborators are:

- Office of Behavioral Health (OBH)
- Office of Public Health (OPH)
  - STI/HIV/Hepatitis Prevention Program (SHHP)
  - Overdose to Action (OD2A)
- Louisiana State University Social Research and Evaluation Center (LSUSREC)
- Local Governing Entities (LGEs)

Action Items Completed: The surveyed additional collaborators for supply distribution and funding; They met with a consultant to refine the plan.

Next steps are:

- Develop a comprehensive definition of saturation
- Refine Naloxone Distribution Plan
- Define standardized reporting
- Develop a unified statewide cross-system data reporting system
- Research policies and procedures for Louisiana Health Hub
- Establish partnerships
- Louisiana Opioid Abatement Taskforce (LaOATF)
- Drug Policy Board (DPB)
- Timeline for completion is September 30, 2024

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- Jamie Donaldson discussed Recovery Month Activities taking place:
  - Proclamation regarding recovery month
  - Social media, Recovery events, light up purple of the Capitol and LSU stadium, Woman's Foundation to publish "Maternal Mental Health and the Impact of Recovery," Dr. Faulkner to give presentation on Fentanyl on September 20<sup>th</sup>.

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- c. Community Impact Group- Dr. Allison Smith was not present to give update.
- d. Healthcare Impact Group- Dr. James Hussey gave an update on the workgroup. 6-8 people joined and discussed CA Bridge Program where a care navigator is available in Emergency Departments. Barriers have come up but letters from Board of Pharmacy and Board of Nursing letters have helped. Working with Health Standards now. Harm Reduction discussions, new ASAM criteria- so there will be service level definitions. Traci Perry spoke about Mobile Clinics being provided. Dr. Hussey also reviewed potential HOPE 2023 Recommendations derived from the workgroup:
- Consider adding Bridge update to next/September HOPE Council meeting agenda and refined Bridge program recommendations as well.
  - Consider somehow adding number or ED's dispensing Narcan to HOPE report, number with SUN's
  - Consider having Harm Reduction to HOPE in September, and adding Harm Reduction items to 2023 Recommendations
  - Consider adding movement to new ASAM criteria part of 2023 HOPE Recommendations
  - Abbreviated 2023 EoY Report
  - Recommend possible legislation to support funding for hospitals to support Bridge Programs
  - Make recommendations regarding prioritized use of some LASOR funds to support Bridge program and/or Substance use Navigators
  - Recommend mandating that hospitals/ED provide MAT-ED
  - Legislation regarding requiring pharmacies to stock and dispense Naloxone and suboxone
  - Track SUD and OUD provider numbers, including OBOTs
  - Recommend targeted and priority utilization of Opioid Abatement Settlement Funds
- e. Public Safety Impact Group- Shelley Edgerton was not available to give update.
- f. Other Updates
- Bridge Program Updates
  - Call to Action: Opioid Settlement Spending  
[https://www.opensocietypolicycenter.org/press\\_releases/united-states-must-act-to-stem-tide-of-overdose-deaths/](https://www.opensocietypolicycenter.org/press_releases/united-states-must-act-to-stem-tide-of-overdose-deaths/)

[https://www.opensocietypolicycenter.org/press\\_releases/call-to-action-opioid-settlement-funds/](https://www.opensocietypolicycenter.org/press_releases/call-to-action-opioid-settlement-funds/)

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8. Public Comments
  - An attendee from Region 4 acknowledged Care Navigators in the Emergency Departments. She spoke of a specific Care Navigators who has a 93% success rate.
  
9. Discussion and Next Steps
  - a. Future presentations? Likely no presentation at December meeting due to review of Year-end Report.
  - b. Impact Workgroups: HOPE@LA.GOV
  - c. Next Meeting: December 7th, 2023, 9-11 am
  
10. Adjourn at 11:01am.