**Surry County**

**Opioid Response Advisory Council (ORAC) Meeting**

**Historic Courthouse, 114 West Atkins Street, Dobson, NC**

**March 14, 2019**

**Members/Representatives in Attendance:**

County Commissioner Eddie Harris  
District Attorney Ricky Bowman- District Attorney’s Office   
Elkin City Schools - Cynthia Altemueller  
Judge Bill Southern-Surry County District Court   
Director Jeffery Eads-Partners Behavioral Health   
County Manager Chris Knopf-County Government   
Emergency Department Director Lynn Kennedy-Hugh Chatham Hospital   
Sandy George-Mount Airy City Schools

Sandy Snow-Assistant County Manager

Sheriff Hiatt-Sheriff’s Office   
Dr. Travis Reeves-Surry County Schools   
Director John Shelton-Emergency Services  
Assistant County Manager Sandy Snow-County Government   
Joshua Tulbert-Elkin Police Department  
Director Mark Willis-Opioid Response  
Todd Tucker-Surry County Economic Development

Diversion Investigator Julie Flanagan-DEA Diversion

Dennis Barnette-Faith Community Representative

Eddie Jordan-Surry County Emergency Services

Officer Larrie Robinson-Dobson Police Department

Nikki Hull-Surry County Child Protective Services

Samantha Ange-Director Health and Nutrition Center

**1) Minutes:** Director Willis called the meeting to order at 11:30 am. Minutes from the ORAC meeting of August 14, 2108 were adopted and voted in to record.

**2) Statistics:**

* Statistics for overdoses, overdoses deaths, Narcan distributions, and types of drugs that caused overdoses was disseminated. These statistics initiated a conversation about addressing the issue of chronic overdoses.
* The EMS Director noted that a growing number of opioid abusers have been revived on multiple occasions by first responders utilizing Narcan. The conclusion was that Narcan is not a solution to substance use, but rather a solution to reducing opioid overdose deaths.
* Commissioner Harris started a discussion about the proclivity of chronic substance users to overtax the EMS system with overdoses. This overtaxing of the EMS prompts the necessity to discuss and question the logic of continuing to provide services for a population does not appear to be interested in returning to a healthy lifestyle.

**3) Prevention**:

* Denise Krochta was recently hired as a part-time Surry County employee for Opioid Response with the mission to start efforts at community outreach. Specifically, Ms. Krochta will be organizing public awareness forums, parenting training, a newsletter, podcasts and a weekly newspaper letter. Opioid response has joined efforts with the Health and Nutrition Center, Insight, School Resource Officers, independents, and Ms. Krochta as force multipliers.
* Partners Behavioral Health Director Eads noted that studies indicate that if prevention efforts for 14 to 25-year old’s are successful, in that this age group does not utilize drugs, then this age group will not experiment with illegal substances after they pass the age of 25.
* EMS Director Shelton noted that the poor conditions that parents are allowing their children to live in is in turn causing a generation of children to grow up with poor life skills, who then are more prone to experiment with drugs.
* Cynthia Altemueller from the Elkin City School District noted that the school system has tried to provide educational opportunities to parents to learn more about substance abuse, but the school system has found these events to be poorly attended by parents.

**4) Intervention**:

* The County’s intervention efforts are presently limited to criminal incarceration. Detention facility is 38% over capacity and 85% of detainees have some degree of a substance use problem.
* The Opioid Response Office created a “Care Package”, containing essential knowledge on substance use disorder, and have distributed over 100 packages. Ms. Kennedy indicated that Hugh Chatham would be interested in including the Care Package is with discharge documents from the emergency room for substance users.
* The Opioid Response Office is discussing with doctors from Baptist Wake Forest about the use of Peer Support Specialists for intervention with substance users in the emergency rooms of Surry County hospitals. In addition, the Opioid Response Office is working on protocols for a Post Overdose Response Team as a mobile unit and Qualified Professional to conduct screenings in the Detention Facility.
* An information packet on the “Stepping Up Initiative” was provided to the Sheriff.
* Although the District Attorney’s Office declined to endorse a Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program, information on initiating a LEAD program was provided to the Sheriff for his consideration.
* Director Willis provided an update on efforts to establish an Adult Drug Treatment Court in Surry County. The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) recently announced a $500,000 two-year grant to support Adult Drug Treatment Courts for rural jurisdictions. The Opioid Response Director has requested funding from the BOCC for a Recovery Court Program Manager.

**5) Treatment**:

* Pinnacle Therapeutic Services recently opened a treatment center in State Road and offers SAIOP, family and group counseling, school counseling, drug screening, life skills and relapse prevention. RHA, a multi-state for profit treatment provider, has submitted an RFP to Partners Behavioral Health for opening a treatment center in Elkin. If approval is provided RHA may establish a treatment provider office in Elkin by the end of 2019. Director Willis noted that Daymark Recovery Services has plans to expand their present capacity to provide treatment in the Substance Abuse Intensive Outpatient Programs (SAIOP) from 40 clients to 80 clients. This expansion is predicated on negotiations with Red Cross and obtaining their office space which is located adjacent to the Daymark RS offices on Westlake Drive in Mount Airy.
* EMS Director Shelton noted his endorsement for a 23-Hour Step-Down Facility in Surry County as the County does not presently have the services of a “detoxification” facility or a “Step-Down” facility that could provide a location for a short-term stay under observation for a subject who desires to go treatment but cannot find a treatment provider that has an opening in a program at that time.
* Hugh Chatham Director Kennedy noted that Hugh Chatham does not have the capability or services to provide transportation to treatment to overdose victims who desire an intervention.

**6) Recovery**:

* A faith community opioid forum is schedule for May 7, 2019 at the Surry Service Center in Dobson.

**7) Enforcement:**

* Director Willis queried the Council as their thoughts on the creation of a Drug Overdose Death Review Panel. The Panel would be staffed with much of the same personnel as those that already participate in the Child Fatality Review Team. It would be a collaborative effort between law enforcement, District Attorney’s Office, Health and Nutrition Center, Opioid Response, DSS, EMS, the Medical Examiner and other offices as required. As very few deaths in Surry County due to overdoses are investigated nor prosecuted under violation of NCGS 14-17 as second-degree homicides, very little information is known about the 100 overdose deaths that have occurred in the County since January 1, 2017. The purpose of the Panel would be review fatalities caused by drug and alcohol overdoses to identify trends, recommend improvements to law enforcement and collaborate efforts between organizations. Most panel members agreed that the formation of the Panel would be of benefit to Surry County’s Opioid Response efforts.

**8) Adjournment:** As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm.

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Mark J. Willis, Opioid Response Director