

INDIANA COMMISSION TO COMBAT SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

August 1, 2024

MINUTES

The Indiana Commission to Combat Substance Use Disorder met on August 1, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. EST at the Indiana State Library, History Reference Room 211.

Present: Chairman Douglas Huntsinger (Executive Director for Drug Prevention, Treatment and Enforcement); Ms. Bernice Corley (Executive Director of the Indiana Public Defender Council); Mr. Dan Evans (retired CEO, Indiana University Health); Ms. Lindsay Hyer (Executive Director of the Indiana Professional Licensing Agency); Mr. Cris Johnston (Director of the Office of Management and Budget); Indiana State Representative Cindy Ledbetter; Mr. Chris Naylor (Executive Director of the Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council); Mr. Michael Ross (Behavioral Health Division Director of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute); Dr. Daniel Rusyniak (Secretary of the Indiana Family & Social Services Administration); Mr. Cory Voight (representing the Office of the Attorney General); Dr. Lindsay Weaver (Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Health); Indiana State Senator Shelli Yoder.

Call to Order & Consideration of Minutes

Chairman Douglas Huntsinger

Chairman Huntsinger calls the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Chairman Huntsinger asks for a motion to approve the minutes for the February 2, 2024, meeting. Dr. Daniel Rusyniak moves to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Dan Evans seconds. Minutes are approved unanimously.

Chairman Huntsinger announces the awardees of a \$5.5 million funding initiative for the expansion of certified peer support professionals. The request for funding, released in May, resulted in the submission of 80 proposals to the Division of Mental Health and Addiction. The Division awarded funding to 20 organizations for a total of 63 peer positions.

Chairman Huntsinger announces the launch of the annual reporting cycle for local units of government. Indiana Code requires all 648 local units of government that have received Opioid Settlement funds to report their use of the funds annually to the Family and Social Services Administration.

Chairman Huntsinger introduces Ms. Lindsay Huff, a client recovery advisor at Aware Recovery Care, to share her story of recovery.

Recovery Speaker

**Lindsay Huff,
Client Recovery Advisor,
Aware Recovery Care**

Ms. Huff greets the commission and introduces herself. She says her family has a history of substance use disorder, with her personal battle beginning after the death of her brother. She

details the progressive nature of her drug use, beginning with marijuana and moving to cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine.

Ms. Huff cites the support of her family, her introduction to the organization Adult and Child, and the guidance of her peer support professional as contributing factors to her long-term recovery.

Chairman Huntsinger thanks Ms. Huff and introduces the next speaker, Hannah Maxey of the Bowen Center for Workforce Research and Policy at the Indiana University School of Medicine.

Playbook Project

**Hannah Maxey
Director,
Bowen Center for Workforce Research and Policy,
Indiana University School of Medicine**

Ms. Maxey introduces the findings and recommendations of the Playbook for Enhancing Indiana's Mental Health and Behavioral Health Workforce. She says the Playbook is focused on the clinical workforce with graduate-level training that directly care for people with substance use disorder and other co-occurring conditions, a workforce currently experiencing a shortage.

Ms. Maxey introduces the high-level findings and recommendations of the Playbook Project. The recommendations are divided into five categories: 1) Secure the pipeline, 2) Strengthen clinical training and practice, 3) Align education, policy, and practice, 4) School-based behavioral health workforce, and 5) Additional considerations.

Beginning with the "secure the pipeline" category, Ms. Maxey presents a dashboard plotting every behavioral health training program in Indiana. This map highlights the state's training deserts, what Ms. Maxey attributes to the closure of numerous programs over the years. Educators have reported a decrease in student interest which has led to decreased in-person enrollment.

Moving on to "strengthening clinical training", Ms. Maxey explains that there is a shortage of clinical training experiences available to young professionals, as well as a shortage of clinical supervisors available to provide the necessary guidance.

In the "align education, policy, and practice" category, Ms. Maxey says there are challenges with adequate staffing support for alignment, and there is a need to ensure evidence-based practices and align education with regulation.

The final recommendation is "assessing the school-based behavioral health workforce." Considering that 50% of adolescents with untreated mental health disorders will go on to develop a substance use disorder in adulthood, Ms. Maxey says it is crucial to support prevention initiatives in schools. The Indiana Department of Education is developing a pulse survey to be distributed to Indiana K-12 programs to gather data to inform future decisions.

Additional recommendations include reviewing model legislation, conducting aid and wage studies, aligning psychology policies, improving the transition from degree to licensure, and understanding the impact of remote learning.

Ms. Maxey says the press package for the Playbook is available to anyone who is interested as a resource.

Chairman Huntsinger calls for questions.

Mr. Dan Evans asks why the project has not emphasized collaboration between post-secondary leaders, particularly between in-person and remote institutions.

Ms. Maxey says she would support the establishment of a forum for higher education institutions to collaborate.

Representative Cindy Ledbetter asks whether psychiatric nurse practitioners are included in an earlier statistic mentioned in Ms. Maxey's presentation.

Ms. Maxey's assistant responds that nurse practitioners are listed under a separate category.

Chairman Huntsinger thanks Ms. Maxey for her presentation and introduces Ms. Jennifer Pferrer of the Wellness Council of Indiana.

**Mental Health and Substance Use:
Employer Insights and Intervention**

**Jennifer Pferrer,
Executive Director,
Wellness Council of Indiana,
Indiana Chamber of Commerce**

Ms. Pferrer says the Wellness Council's goal is to improve the quality of life of Indiana residents by empowering employers and communities to create thriving places to live, work, learn, and play through connection, collaboration, education, and evaluation. With 76% of U.S. workers reporting at least one symptom of a mental health condition, she says it is crucial to ensure that supports are available to maintain a happy and healthy workforce.

Ms. Pferrer shares data showing that employees consider their employers to be a trusted source of information. To maintain and improve this trust, she says employers should model healthy workplace behavior, make special accommodations for employees, and speak out to address public health issues.

She continues that while nearly 90% of employers agree that mental health is a community problem, only 8% believe it is a problem for their organization. Understanding that mental health problems and struggles impact everyone, regardless of their background, is the first step to improving the workplace environment, Ms. Pferrer says. Unfortunately, she adds, nearly half of employers believe they lack the resources to adequately support employees struggling with mental health and substance use disorders.

Ms. Pferrer gives an update on what resources the Wellness Council offers to employers, including individualized mental health consultations, mental health first aid trainings, best practice second chance policies, a stigma-free toolkit, and the Recovery at Work video series.

Ms. Pferrer concludes by sharing emerging themes of the Wellness Council's work, including the importance of upstream prevention, the impact of the social determinants of health, community wellbeing, employee-centric programs, peers in the workplace, artificial intelligence, and digital health. Other emerging themes include family-forming policies, the need for a flexible work environment, and employer pharmacy spends.

Chairman Huntsinger calls for questions. There are no questions.

Chairman Huntsinger thanks Ms. Pferrer for her time.

Chairman's Comments

Chairman Douglas Huntsinger

Chairman Huntsinger announces that Indiana experienced the second highest decrease in fatal overdoses in the nation, an estimated 18% drop over 2022, according to provisional data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Indiana Commission to Combat Substance Use Disorder will meet Thursday, November 14, 2024, at 10 a.m. EDT at the Indiana State Library, History Reference Room 211.

The meeting adjourns at 11:30 a.m.