



**Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership**  
**February 4, 2021**  
**1:00 PM**  
**State Capitol Executive Tower**  
1700 W. Washington St., Phoenix, AZ 85007  
Virtual Meeting

A general meeting of the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership (ASAP) was convened on February 4, 2021. The public meeting was hosted virtually, notice having been duly given.

<b>Members Present (24)</b>
<b>Sheila Polk</b> , Chairperson, Yavapai County Attorney's Office
<b>Sara Salek</b> , Vice-Chairperson, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System
<b>Andrew LeFevre</b> , Arizona Criminal Justice Commission
<b>Angela Paton</b> , Arizona Attorney General's Office
<b>Brenda Cochran</b> , Pure Heart Church
<b>Sheila Sjolander</b> , Arizona Department of Health Services <b>[Proxy for Dr. Cara Christ]</b>
<b>Dawn Mertz</b> , High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area
<b>Joseph Grossman</b> , AZ Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation, & Reentry <b>[Proxy for David Shinn]</b>
<b>Deborah Jones</b> , Substance Abuse Epidemiology Work Group
<b>Ed Gilligan</b> , Arizona Department of Adult Probation
<b>Tony Mapp</b> , Arizona Department of Public Safety <b>[Proxy for Col. Heston Silbert]</b>
<b>Mike Rosenberger</b> , Arizona Department of Liquor License Control <b>[Proxy for John Cocca]</b>
<b>Jeff Hood</b> , Arizona Department of Juvenile Justice
<b>Kathleen Grimes</b> , Graham County Substance Abuse Coalition
<b>Jean Ajamie</b> , Arizona Department of Education <b>[Proxy for Kathy Hoffman]</b>
<b>Lawrence LaVeque</b> , Cisco Systems
<b>Lee Pioske</b> , The Crossroads
<b>Maria Cristina Fuentes</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family
<b>Merilee Fowler</b> , Matforce
<b>Sala Webb</b> , Arizona Department of Child Safety <b>[Proxy for Mike Faust]</b>
<b>Thomas Kelly</b> , Apache Junction Police Department
<b>Tobi Zavala</b> , Arizona Board of Behavioral Health Examiners
<b>Vanessa Bustos</b> , Pascua Yaqui Tribe
<b>Wanda Wright</b> , Arizona Department of Veterans Services
<b>Members Absent (3)</b>
<b>Alberto Gutier</b> , Governor's Office of Highway Safety
<b>David Klein</b> , US Department of Veteran Affairs
<b>Leah Landrum-Taylor</b> , Arizona Department of Economic Security

### Call to Order

- **Sheila Polk, Chair** called the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership (ASAP) meeting to order at 1:00 PM with 24 members present. **Ms. Polk** reviewed virtual meeting platform procedures.

### Welcome/Introductions

- **Sheila Polk, Chair, welcomed** everyone to the February 2021 ASAP meeting.
- **Sara Salek, Vice-Chair** conducted roll call of the ASAP members in attendance.

### Approval of Minutes

- **Sheila Polk, Chair** requested a final review of the December 3, 2020 meeting minutes.
  - **Joseph Grossman** motioned to accept the December 3, 2020 minutes without revision.
  - **Andrew Lefevre** seconded the motion.
    - The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

### Opioid Data Update

- **Sheila Polk, Chair**, introduced the first agenda item: Opioid Data Update and welcomed **Sheila Sjolander**.
- **Sheila Sjolander** first reviewed the CDC's issued health advisory on Thursday, December 17, 2020 to alert public health departments, healthcare professionals, first responders, harm reduction organizations, and medical examiners of substantial drug overdose death increases across the United States further highlighting the western states' dramatic spike.
- **Sheila Sjolander** next reviewed the 2019 and 2020 Opioid Deaths including the decrease in heroin deaths reported in 2020 compared to 2019. **Ms. Sjolander** highlighted the Opioid deaths by county and the rates per 100k, the highest being in rural areas: Yavapai, Santa Cruz, and Mohave.
- **Sheila Sjolander** further emphasized the overdose deaths trending at a younger rate with the highest amount being 25 to 34 years of age. **Ms. Sjolander** next reviewed the verified Opioid overdoses by month and the additional substances involved with Fentanyl becoming the most commonly identified substance in the verified opioid overdoses data as of January 2021.
- **Sheila Sjolander** ended her presentation with the highlighted prevention strategies with the department including the "Find Your Joy" social media campaign which was funded by GOYFF and the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) mentoring project. **Ms. Sjolander** explained this mentoring program encourages doctors to prescribe medication assisted treatment at a higher rate for opioid use disorder in conjunction with U of A and AHCCCS.
- **Sheila Polk, Chair** thanked **Sheila Sjolander** for her presentation and read **Jean Ajamie's** question which asked if the 15 to 24 age group could be broken down further. **Ms. Sjolander** confirmed that data could be broken down even further.
- **Merilee Fowler** asked if ADHS tracks the correlation between syringe use and overdose deaths with their data sets and if they are seeing a decrease. **Sheila Sjolander** explained ADHS does not collect that information through the opioid surveillance but it would be collected through the overdose fatality review board. **Tony Mapp** emphasized DPS is continuing to see a high level of syringe use and recently encountered 75 filled syringes during a surveillance stop.
- **Joseph Grossman** asked how widely the opioid data and updates are shared with the Arizona legislature to help with policy discussions. **Sheila Sjolander** stated the ADHS is always happy to offer information to update the legislature.
- **Dawn Mertz** asked if there is any additional work being done to provide naloxone to individuals who overdose but choose not to go to the hospital. **Ms. Sjolander** confirmed ADHS is working with EMS departments to participate in a naloxone leave behind program.
- **Andrew Lefevre** stated that he assumed some of these reported overdoses were from illegal substance use and wondered how ACJC would access the data and analyze it through a

criminal justice lens. **Ms. Sjolander** stated ADHS does not track that type of data through the surveillance system but again it might be captured through overdose fatality review board.

- **Sheila Polk, Chair** thanked **Sheila Sjolander** again for her presentation.

## 2020 Arizona Drug Threat Assessment

- **Sara Salek, Vice-Chair**, introduced **Dawn Mertz** to provide an overview of Arizona's High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) and the 2020 Arizona Drug Threat Assessment.
- **Dawn Mertz** began her presentation by reviewing the vision of HIDTA, the national structure, and 2019 accomplishments. **Ms. Mertz** further explained the components of Arizona HIDTA which includes an intelligence support center, overdose response strategy, training department, and demand reduction program.
- **Dawn Mertz** then reviewed the top Arizona drug threats for 2020: Methamphetamine, Fentanyl/Synthetic Opioids, Marijuana/THC Derivatives, Heroin, and Cocaine. In addition, **Ms. Mertz** highlighted the work of Arizona HIDTA's Overdose Response Strategy department. She explained a CDC funded public health analyst is stationed at ADHS and HIDTA. The whole purpose of the position is to reduce overdose deaths and bring both disciplines together to best attack the overdose problem.
- **Dawn Mertz** next highlighted the Demand Reduction Prevention and the Arizona Drug Summit. **Ms. Mertz** ended her presentation with an overview of the HIDTA resource center website at [www.azhidta.org](http://www.azhidta.org).
- **Sheila Polk, Chair**, thanked **Dawn Mertz** for her presentation and asked the members if they had any questions. **Lawrence LaVeque** asked if most of the drugs involved in drug overdoses were imported or manufactured within the United States. **Ms. Mertz** confirmed the drugs are often being imported into Arizona from Mexico.
- **Dr. Sala Webb** asked if Cannabis oil has been legalized since the laws have changed in Arizona. **Dawn Mertz** confirmed all forms of THC derivatives have been legalized; however, since THC is still federally illegal HIDTA still ranks THC as a drug threat. **Andrew Lefevre** further explained if legalization is similar to what states like Colorado saw then there will be an increase of black-market activity and the ways products are produced will shift. **Dawn Mertz** confirmed legalization may increase the illegal activity associated with Marijuana.
- **Dr. Sara Salek, Vice-Chair** explained since Marijuana has been legalized the chairs of ASAP are hoping to use the EPI workgroup and ASU CHIR to not only look at these important Marijuana trends but also the five other drugs. **Dr. Salek, Vice-Chair** emphasized the goal is to be proactive and create data driven approaches. **Dawn Mertz** encouraged everyone to read the HIDTA impact reports from Rocky Mountain, Washington and California with the gold standard being Rocky Mountain HIDTA to best approach the Marijuana legalization.
- **Sheila Polk, Chair** thanked **Dawn Mertz** again for her presentation.

## State Opioid Response Grant Strategies

- **Sheila Polk, Chair**, introduced **Sara Salek, Vice-Chair** and **Hazel Alvarenga** to provide a comprehensive overview of the State Opioid Response Grant (SOR) strategies.
- **Dr. Sara Salek** reviewed AHCCCS's role in the Opioid Action Plan and the collaboration between GOYFF, AHCCCS, and ADHS. **Dr. Salek** emphasized the importance of primary prevention and the goal of reducing stigma associated with opioid use disorder and the distribution of naloxone.
- **Dr. Sara Salek** further reviewed the substance use spending of SFY20 and explained only four percent of the AHCCCS budget is federal grants. **Dr. Salek** additionally emphasized the importance of this funding and invited opioid grant coordinator **Hazel Alvarenga** to present on the SOR service innovation and expansion.
- **Hazel Alvarenga** provided the history of opioid specific funding and the difference with SOR II being the addition of stimulants specifically instead of polysubstance use disorder. **Ms.**

**Alvarenga** then reviewed the additional components of opioid funding including, but not limited to, treatment activities including: 24/7 access points, the central real time service locator, OAR line, recovery supports and then the primary prevention focused activities.

- **Dr. Sara Salek** updated the Partnership on the data of Paxis Institute's Good Behavior Games. **Dr. Salek** emphasized the long-term program results including higher graduation rates, increased college attendance, decrease in substance use, and reduction in violent behaviors.
- **Hazel Alvarenga** ended the presentation by highlighting the Substance Abuse Coalition Leaders of Arizona (SACLaz) their extensive work on psychostimulants, fentanyl and counterfeit pills. **Ms. Alvarenga** further mentioned that through the support of SOR and SACLaz, coalitions are starting to form in Douglas, Peach Springs, Apache Junction, and Glendale.
- **Sheila Polk, Chair** thanked **Dr. Salek** and **Hazel Alvarenga** again for their presentation.

## 2020 Arizona Youth Survey

- **Sheila Polk, Chair**, introduced **Andrew Lefevre** to provide an overview of the 2020 Arizona Youth Survey and a preview of the new Arizona Criminal Justice Commission data visualization dashboard.
- **Andrew Lefevre** began by reviewing the Arizona Youth Survey (AYS) history and survey administration components. **Mr. Lefevre** identified AYS as the longest running youth survey of it's kind with the largest data set in the nation.
- **Andrew Lefevre** described the traditional topic sections of the survey and explained if trends arise across the state then sections can be added. **Mr. Lefevre** then provided an overview of the new 2020 sections which included gambling, vaping, and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).
- **Andrew Lefevre** then summarized the participant data of 2020 AYS and explained the data for Greenlee and Cochise counties was not available due to small participation sizes. **Andrew Lefevre** finished his presentation by providing the partnership members with a review of the new Arizona Community Data Portal including the website link: [https://acjc.azcjc.gov/cdp\\_site/default.aspx](https://acjc.azcjc.gov/cdp_site/default.aspx). **Mr. Lefevre** explained there is still work to be done to refine the data sets and make the dashboard as useful as possible to various community stakeholders like the coalition members and state legislators.
- **Joseph Grossman** commended **Andrew Lefevre** and his time for the work on the data dashboard and growth ACJC has experienced through the years.
- **Merilee Fowler** emphasized how important this data is for youth drug use prevention and asked if it would be possible to create a dashboard section which could predict trend data for example what the data will look like in 10 years. **Andrew Lefevre** stated ACJC wants this dashboard to be useful to everyone and is open to adding additional data points as needed.
- **Sheila Polk, Chair** thanked **Andrew Lefevre** again for his presentation and underlined the importance of this conversation so partnership members can bring the information back to their departments and bridge gaps between disciplines.

## Areas of Need Update: Counterfeit Fentanyl within Arizona

- **Sheila Polk, Chair** introduced the next agenda item and stated Fentanyl was the last quarter's identified substance and thanked **Sergeant Deb Stoks** for her compilation of the Counterfeit Fentanyl document. **Ms. Polk, Chair** then opened the meeting for a report on any progress made toward the identified areas of need.
- **Sheila Polk, Chair** recognized today's presentations highlighting all the important work being done to combat Counterfeit Fentanyl and further highlighted the work within Yavapai County. **Ms. Polk** stated Yavapai County has begun prosecuting drug traffickers with drug induced homicide when a drug overdose has occurred. **Ms. Polk** further highlighted Arizona House Bill 2779 which has been introduced and will lead to a second-degree murder charge if a counterfeit drug sale leads to death.

- **Sara Salek, Vice Chair** asked if there is currently such a law. **Sheila Polk, Chair** stated the federal government and twenty-two other states have adopted similar laws and encouraged the members to reach with any additional questions.

#### 2021 Second Quarter Substance Focus

- **Sara Salek, Vice Chair** thanked everyone for their updates on Fentanyl and asked the Partnership to identify a new drug for the next quarter based on the meeting presentations. **Dr. Salek** reviewed for the partnership the substances which had already been discussed: Methamphetamine and Counterfeit Fentanyl.
- **Joe Grossman** thanked the partnership for their discussion and voiced his concerns about the impact shortened prison sentences are having on illegal drug sales across the state and recommended Marijuana be the next quarter substance.
- **Merilee Fowler** agreed with the Marijuana recommendation for the next quarter's substance and felt a discussion on the effects it has on youth development was important.
- **Andrew Lefevre** requested clarification if all forms of Marijuana would be discussed or would there be a focus on Hash Oils. **Dawn Mertz** suggested the discussion be inclusive.
- **Sheila Polk, Chair** agreed and confirmed the next quarter substance be Marijuana.

#### 2021 Meeting Dates

- **Sara Salek, Vice-Chair**, asked participants to mark their calendars for remaining 2021 meetings and let **Emily Uline-Olmstead** know if any conflicts arise with the dates.

#### Adjourn

- **Sheila Polk, Chair** adjourned the February 4, 2021 meeting of the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership at 2:55 PM.

Dated the ninth day of February, 2021  
Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership  
Respectfully Submitted By:  
Emily Uline-Olmstead  
Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family