



# COUNTY OF HUNTERDON NEW JERSEY

## HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION MENTAL HEALTH BOARD



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**REFERENCE:**

- Council
- Mental Health
- Youth
- Disability Services
- Substance Use Disorder
- Transportation

Draft to be approved November 1, 2023.

### LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE

#### Regular Meeting

Wednesday, September 20, 2023, 2:30 p.m.  
Human Services Conference Room I, Building 3  
Flemington, New Jersey 08822

#### MEMBERS PRESENT

K. Schwartz  
M. Logan  
D. LaClair  
J. Giotis  
E. Newton

#### STAFF

S. Becker

#### GUESTS/PACADA LIAISON

F. Crisologo  
S. O'Connor  
G. Drugos  
R. Neiber  
T. Rich  
R. Robinson

#### **I. CONVENE: OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT:**

“This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21. Notice of this meeting has been provided in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Courier News. A public notice announcing this meeting has also been placed in the lobbies of the Hunterdon County Department of Human Services, the first floor of the Main Street County Complex, 71 Main Street Building #1, Flemington, NJ; the first floor of the Route 12 County Complex, Building #3, 314 State Route 12, Flemington, NJ and County Clerk’s Office.”

The regular meeting of LACADA was opened at 2:30 p.m. with the reading of the Open Public Meetings statement. Introductions were made by all participants.

S. Becker stated she is the Drug and Alcohol Director for Hunterdon County.

E. Newton stated she is a professional at Posen Architect with specialization in Mental Health and Architecture. She is also the vice chair of LACADA.

M. Logan stated she is a community member and Chair of LACADA.

F. Crisologo stated he is the Captain with the Hunterdon County Prosecutors Office.

G. Drugos stated she is the Prevention Outreach Coordinator for Safe in Hunterdon.

R. Neiber stated he is a Lieutenant with the Hunterdon County Prosecutors Office and runs the Narcotics Taskforce.

K. Schwartz stated he is attending as a community representative in recovery.

S. O'Connor stated she is with the Hunterdon County Health Department in Public Health Nursing and Preparedness.

T. Rich stated he is a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist and working with the Hunterdon County Prosecutors Office.

II. **MINUTES:** E. Newton made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 17, 2023. K. Schwartz seconded. All were in favor. The motion passed.

### III. **REPORTS:**

A. **County Update:** S. Becker reported that the Hunterdon County Housing Waiting List is closed, and there are approximately 500 households on the waiting list. Notification has been sent to applicants regarding placement on the waiting list via the lottery.

The Division of Housing is working with the Department of Children and Families regarding Foster Youth Initiative Vouchers and is looking to receive referrals for youth between the ages of 18-24 that are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and have at least 1 day in placement. The three-year County Human Services Request for Proposal (RFP) was released last week. A technical assistance session is scheduled for September 21, 2023, at 2:00pm at building 1 in room 5. This session is also available via Microsoft Teams.

There was recently a listening session, and two surveys were distributed regarding the Opioid Abatement Funds. The Opioid Settlement taskforce will be meeting to review the data collected and a plan will be developed to submit to the County Commissioners for review and approval. This plan will include the funding priorities for the Abatement Funds.

S. Becker stated the Opioid Abatement Funds are being received from various Pharmaceutical Companies that were involved in handing out Opioids indiscriminately.

B. **Municipal Alliance Program:** S. Becker reported that A. Deluca has left the Municipal Alliance Program Coordinator position. D. Childers is currently covering that position. The school year has started, and all schools are up and running. There are questions about funding and what the schools will be doing with the funding. That information will be provided later.

C. **PACADA Update:** S. Becker reported that the PAC-PACADA meeting is tomorrow. There has not been a meeting since May 18, 2023. There will be a presentation on a new provider in Clinton Township who will be opening a Mental Health Clinic.

D. **HSAC Update:** S. Becker reported at the July meeting, representatives from the Center for Family Service presented on the NJ4S program and Abilities of New Jersey presented on Possibilities Thrift Boutique. The Possibilities Thrift Boutique assists in providing a valuable service to our local community while serving as vocational training on career exploration, employment, and volunteer opportunities for people with different abilities.

The department of Children and Families are working with NJ 211 to design their website to be more user friendly. NJ 211 has a live assistant dashboard available to be filtered for county demographics. <https://www.nj211.org/>.

**Discussion Ensued.**

**IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None**

**V. NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. 2024-2027 CCP Executive Summary:** S. Becker reported the CCP Executive Summary is submitted every 3 years and it is funding that comes from the State through the County. There are rules that LACADA is aware of, however it is all the Drug and Alcohol funding that the county receives. A planning session needs to occur to setup for the next 3 years as it is a living document that can be updated. It is a road map on how to spend the funding and what the county's priorities are which affects how the Request for Proposals (RFP's) go out.

Hunterdon County envisions a future for all residents facing the chronic disease of substance misuse in which there is a fully developed, client centered, recovery-oriented system of care comprised of prevention, early intervention, detox, treatment, and recovery support services that reduces the overall risk for substance misuse in the local environment and meets the clinical treatment and recovery needs of the county's residents. In Hunterdon County currently there is no detox treatment. There are no inpatient rehabilitation facilities, the County contracts outside of the County for these needs. Hunterdon County needs rehabilitation facilities. Hunterdon County has seen an increase in Alcohol, Heroine and Opioid misuse. The use of Marijuana has doubled since 2021. According to the Substance Use Survey, 74.5 percent of the population expressed that the Opioid Epidemic was their biggest concern for substance use in Hunterdon County. 64 percent expressed Prescription Drug Use, 66 percent expressed Alcohol Abuse and 47 percent expressed Marijuana. In 2021, Hunterdon County had 30 suspected overdoses, more than any previous year since NJCARE records first began being kept. The numbers have come down since 2021 however there is still a concern. Driving Under the Influence (DUI) statistics remained lower these last couple of years and a lot of that thought was that individuals were not driving because of COVID-19 Pandemic and there is also huge backlog in the courts for DUI cases. In 2020 there were 151 consumers who were on Recovery Court and 112 consumers were on Probation while facing treatment for their substance use.

According to the Substance Use Overview, 50 people entered treatment in 2021 for the first time, 20 for Heroin and 15 for Marijuana. However, 151 people under the age of 17 entered treatment for Marijuana while 449 individuals between the ages of 18-24 sought treatment for Marijuana. In 2021 622 people sought treatment for Alcohol and 606 people for Heroine. Hunterdon County does fund prevention and are going to continue that through our early prevention system as well as the Municipal Alliance and continue educating children and spread that awareness to never start substance use. Early intervention, which started with our CCP plan for 2020-2023, was run by Prevention Resources, which started in 2021. Prevention Resources served 41 clients in 2021 and 45 clients in 2022.

Early Intervention is used to divert an individual who has been caught misusing a substance to put that individual on a path to a healthy lifestyle.

There is a large gap for treatment in Hunterdon County. Hunterdon County does not have an inpatient withdrawal rehabilitation provider, or a standalone medication assisted treatment provider. There are long wait times along with transportation issues to obtain assistance out of the County. The out of County agencies are becoming overburdened.

Hunterdon Medical Center is going to begin Medication Assisted Treatment Inductions, but they will not be participating in maintenance treatment at this time. The goal is to get an

individual started on medication assisted treatment however with this they will have to go out of County to continue treatment. With the significant transportation problem in Hunterdon County, it makes continued treatment very difficult. The facilities outside of the County that are available have opening hours that are early and usually they close in the early afternoon. The goals for treatment are to continue to cultivate available treatment options and have access to in-county treatment options. There are limitations of the Hunterdon County Link Transportation System, so it would be beneficial to cut down on individuals having to drive hours for treatment and individuals having to go out of county for these services. The county wants to continue to grow the residents that receive treatment by 20 percent and assess the ongoing unmet need of treatment in the County.

**Discussion Ensued.**

Transportation continues to be a barrier for those outside of the Flemington area, they face long wait times for the bus, long commutes, as well as limited public transportation options in the evening hours and on weekends.

Regarding Opioid Settlement Funds, Sober Living Individuals need housing. Hunterdon County has one Sober Living Facility, and that Facility is not receiving County Funding. Hunterdon is one of a few Counties not funding Sober Living. Sober Fit 2 is in Clinton. It is an all-male facility that has 16 beds. They fall short of the need that is required. Hunterdon County has two halfway houses in the area, one for each gender. The male facility has a wait list and no longer has contract with us. Hunterdon cannot pay for any males in need to go to Freedom House. The Anderson House is for females, and they have not utilized their county funding in several years, however they may be receiving outside funding.

The county wants to spread awareness regarding the recovery source and where they are located and will do that through festivals, town hall meetings, advertising on social media sites and the HOPE 1 Van. The main objective is to spread awareness of the importance of recovery support. There is a recover WE app, it talks about the recovery resources in the community and where you can find them and how you can utilize them. The county would like to continue to grow the recovery supports in the community besides the ones in Flemington area. Hunterdon would also like to fund Medication Assisted Treatment for the County however there needs to be research requirements on what can be funded.

**Discussion Ensued.**

S. Becker requested for her members to vote on the CCP Plan. M. Logan made a motion and D. Laclair seconded. S. O'Connor abstained and the CCP Plan was approved.

- B. Tianeptine:** F. Crisologo conveyed that Tianeptine has not been found in Hunterdon County, but information was sent out regarding Tianeptine and Kratom. Kratom is available in Hunterdon County. Kratom is an Opioid and a Stimulant. The reaction was to be a sedative however it is a reverse of a stimulant in larger doses it becomes a stimulant.

D. Laclair reported that she has a Recovery Core participant that had alerted them to Tianeptine. It was available at one gas station in Hunterdon County. The overdose experience is that of Heroine however Narcan does not influence the overdose of Tianeptine.

M. Logan asked F. Crisologo if there is any coordination with the County Board of Health for Health Inspections of the gas stations in Hunterdon County? F. Crisologo advised they work with all partners; however, this is a natural substance and not illegal and there is not much that can be done.

S. O'Connor stated her time at the Hunterdon County Health Department is spent in Communicable Disease Investigation. She works along with registered Environment Health Inspectors. The inspections fall under NJAC 857-1. For more information visit this link <https://casetext.com/regulation/new-jersey-administrative-code/title-8-health/chapter-57-communicable-diseases/subchapter-1-reportable-communicable-diseases>

T. Rich wanted to reiterate what F. Crisologo had conveyed that Kratom, from what he understands acts in two different ways. As lower dose it acts as a stimulant whereas a higher dose it acts as an Opioid. It is easily accessible. It is not something that can be regulated. S. Becker asked what Kratom was for? T. Rich advised it is a Chinese Herb that individuals have discovered that provides a euphoria type of feeling. It is highly addictive and is extremely difficult to withdraw from.

F. Crisologo conveyed regarding the Hunterdon County Drug Task Force, he had shared 2 flyers that were sent to the department from the Drug Monitoring and Analysis Unit.

- C. **News and Updates:** F. Crisologo reported they have had 38 overdoses in the County to date. 4 of the overdoses have been fatal. Narcan was used one to three times in each instance. What should be known in our community is that 100 percent of the submissions that have been sent in from Hunterdon County to our labs that all Heroin submissions have contained Fentanyl.

Law Enforcement are now also seeing Xylazine in our submissions in addition to Fentanyl. Xylazine is a Veterinary drug and is being mixed with Fentanyl to create Heroin.

R. Robeson reported that the Black Poster Project had occurred at Raritan Valley Community College. This was on the August 26, 2023, Tri-County awareness day. Chief Drew was able to attend, it was a successful and impactful program. Somerset, Warren, and Hunterdon Counties had an Overdose Awareness Night at the Somerset Patriots Ballfield. In July 2023 we were able to get our van, which is funded through Helping Hands and the Attorney General's Office, up and running and our office has been working on outreaches since July 5, 2023. Members of the Narcotics Task Force have participated in over 20 outreach events in which the van goes out to. S. Becker stated at the Overdose Awareness Night, at the Somerset Patriots Ballfield, over 1000 doses of Narcan were handed out.

S. Becker reported that 11 of the counties in New Jersey are showing 100 percent Fentanyl. The County with the least amount of Fentanyl in the glassine bags is at 92 percent.

S. O'Connor reported in Public Health Nursing, they are monitoring the Xylazine epidemic, and it is known to cause wounds and that are dangerous among people who are living in congregate settings.

S. Becker reported that there are Wound Care Kits received from the Attorney General's Office. The kits contain Fentanyl test strips, bandages, alcohol prep pads along with other items. If anyone is interested in getting these kits to please let her know.

S. Becker reported that the State of New Jersey's new initiative is to have a Harm Reduction Centers in every county in New Jersey. They are providing limited funding for establishing Harm Reduction Centers. It is a requirement that if a Harm Reduction Center is to open it must have a needle exchange. There have been 11 sites that have applied to become harm reduction centers to date.

There being no further business the meeting of September 20, 2023, was adjourned at 3:30 p.m. The next LACADA meeting will be held Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 2:30 p.m.