

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

Date: January 13, 2023  
Time: 9:00 am– 11:00 am  
Bienville Building: Room 118  
628 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St, Baton Rouge, LA

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order at 9:03am**

**2. Roll Call**

***Present:***

Dr. Allison Smith  
Shelley Edgerton  
Lori Miller  
Dr. James Hussey  
Michael Comeaux  
John Ford- Proxy: Crystal Lewis  
Captain Heath Guillotte- Proxy: Kristy Miller

***Absent:***

Linda Theriot  
Tavares Walker  
Sen. Regina Barrow  
Elsie Joan Brown  
Monica Taylor  
Judge Timothy Marcel

A quorum was reached.

**3. Review and Approval of January 13, 2023 Agenda-** Voting was tabled due to lack of quorum at the beginning of the meeting and took place later in the meeting while approving the Report.

**4. Approval of prior minutes: December 9th 2021, January 27th 2022, March 19th 2022, and June 9th 2022, September 9th 2022 HOPE Minutes –** Voting was tabled due to lack of quorum at the beginning of the meeting and took place later in the meeting while approving the Report.

**5. Presentations:**

**e. Review of 2022 HOPE Council End of Year Report Recommendations**

New: A list of acronyms and the prevention report have been added.

Chair Dr. James Hussey provided an overview of the data. Some highlights were as follows:

- During the 12 month period ending in June 2022, there was a 2.3% increase of deaths nationally and an 11% increase in Louisiana. The number of opioid prescriptions per resident has decreased about 31% since 2018. However, Louisiana's 72 prescriptions per 100 residents is higher than the national average is 43.3.

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

Date: January 13, 2023  
Time: 9:00 am– 11:00 am  
Bienville Building: Room 118  
628 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St, Baton Rouge, LA

- Two maps were presented. The first map, Louisiana Opioid-Involved Deaths, 2021 rates per 100,000 Opioid Prescriptions Issued, showed the death per prescriptions. The second map, Louisiana Opioid Prescriptions, 2021 rates per 100, showed the rates of prescriptions. The parishes with the highest rates of prescriptions did not correlate to the highest rates of opioid deaths.
- In 2019 the deaths due to synthetic opioids began to increase significantly.
- Telehealth Utilization Trends is a new metric included for the first time this year. Approximately 1/3 of outpatient visits are by telemedicine.

Kristy Miller asked if telehealth data is available nationally or from other states and if there are best practices that we should promote. This could be a topic for a future meeting.

- Bridge program discussion: More emergency departments need to implement these programs. Michael Comeaux asked why they don't. Dr. Hussey responded that some possible reasons include: increased cost, they need to have clinical champions, they need more training. Dr. Allison Smith asked if the type of presentation that was made by CA Bridge to the HOPE Council has been made to providers in Louisiana. Dr. Hussey stated that presentations have not been made yet, however, we want to do that within the coming year with the group from California and the Region 1 and 5 programs participating.
- Expansion of Methadone clinics: Stigma has prevented expansion in Bogalusa. Local businesses objected to the selected location. The RFI may have to be reissued. A new clinic should open in Houma during March 2023. A member of the audience stated that the incorrect address was listed in a newsletter.
- Changes in Legislation for 2022: HB 378/Act 46 added certain substances to the Schedules within the Louisiana Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substances Law, including a number of powerful opiates identified a derivatives of fentanyl.
- Discussion of fentanyl test strip distribution. The Bridge programs stated that they provide the test strips. And OPH stated that they are in the process of identifying a provider to distribute test strips to organizations at no cost. Kristy Miller stated that the Governor's office would like to promote those opportunities. Dr. Hussey suggested that this could be a topic for a future presentation.

Also, Dr. Hussey stated that test strip distribution information is not currently in the plan, but he would like to add it.

- Recommendations are as follows:
  - Include hospitals and EDs in statewide Opioid response strategy
  - Provide start-up funding and technical assistance for EDs to develop a Louisiana Bridge Program.
  - Enhance buprenorphine access

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

Date: January 13, 2023  
Time: 9:00 am– 11:00 am  
Bienville Building: Room 118  
628 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St, Baton Rouge, LA

- Support treatment navigation
- Expand MAT provider network
- Expand Recovery Housing access
- Solidify Naloxone distribution in EDs
- Prescription Digital Therapeutics
- Additional and expanded Harm Reduction recommendations
- In addition to the information in the slides Dr. Hussey mentioned Neuromodulation. He stated that it is not included as a recommendation for Medicaid coverage because of inadequate documentation of the effectiveness at this point. This can be examined more in the next year.
- OPH harm reduction program representative stated that harm reduction programs have a large reach. Specifically, syringe reduction programs have 30 years of evidence. Dr. Hussey stated that there was a presentation by a couple of syringe exchange programs 2 years ago. The major issue seems to be stigma. It may be time to have another presentation.
- Dr. Allison Smith stated that stigma makes it difficult to implement harm reduction in higher education settings. She asked what the status is in K-12 schools. Michael Comeaux stated that DOE added opioid abuse to the instruction requirements a couple of years ago.
- Melissa Stainbeck provided clarification to the harm reduction recommendation: Region 5 Team is LaSOR funded through Imperial Calcasieu

During the meeting, Captain Guillotte appointed Kristy Miller as his proxy.

A motion was made by Michael Comeaux to accept the report and second Allison Smith. The report is approved.

Dr. Allison Smith moved to approve the agenda and all minutes, seconded with no opposition. All minutes are approved.

Dr. James Hussey reviewed additional data for 2022 which is included in the report.

**6. General Updates**

- Workgroup Updates:
  1. Community Impact- Dr. Allison Smith said it's a good time to reset and focus on harm reduction strategies in different regions.
  2. Public Safety- Shelley Edgerton said there were 3 meetings in the last year. Now that the harm reduction legislation passed, there hasn't been as much to discuss. Now looking to get the word out and generate recommendations for next year.
  3. Health/ Healthcare Impact- Dr. Hussey said they met 4 times per year with 4 to 7 people participating. Recommendations were derived from this group. He said they will continue to meet and look into the additional items that were mentioned today for future recommendations and presentations.

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

Date: January 13, 2023  
Time: 9:00 am– 11:00 am  
Bienville Building: Room 118  
628 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St, Baton Rouge, LA

- New LaSOR activities discussed by Melinda Robinson:
  - Mobile medication unit to be used during disasters
  - ECHOs through partnership with Tulane will focus on pharmacists
  - Harm reduction hub. Centralized mechanism to increase access to distribute Narcan, fentanyl test strips, vending machines
  - Opioid Use Disorder Resource website should be ready by March
  - Bridge Programs
  - Digital Therapeutics will be promoted in 2024
  - Support 5 of 7 syringe service programs, will expand to all 7
  - Continue to fund evidence-based prevention programs in schools

Dr. Hussey suggested a full presentation at a future meeting

- Opioid Treatment Program Update:

Traci Perry stated that OBH is going to start another needs assessment process. If a need is identified another clinic will be opened.

  - A new clinic will open in Houma in March. An onsite visit is planned on 1/25.
    - There are currently 2 clinics with 24/7 access (Shreveport and Westbank). In addition, a third site is planned (BR). And Hammond has expanded hours (not 24/7 on weekends).

There was a question about moving toward offering prescription methadone through pharmacies like in other countries. Traci Perry stated that the decision would come from SAMHSA and DEA. She also said that during COVID, clinics were allowed to provide 2 weeks of take home meds and that is continuing.

Dr. Hussey suggested that this is a good opportunity for a study.

- Kristy Miller with Drug Policy Board: DPB will meet on 2/10/2023. HOPE Council falls under the board. Looks at all drug related issues. Legislative session this year: 4/10-6/6
- Announcement by Dr. Allison Smith with Higher Education will launch their CORE survey which is conducted every 2 years 1/25-2/8.
- Shelly Edgerton with Department of Corrections reported McNeese study of relapse rates for people on Vivitrol – no overdoses in first 4 weeks. Working on MOU with OPH.

**7. Public Comment**

- Melissa Stainbeck – Region 5 looked at mortality rates with the coroner’s office and there has been a 30% decrease from 2021 to 2022. Stated that she appreciates the support and collaboration with harm reduction team and ImCAL. Harm reduction teams reported 156

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

Date: January 13, 2023  
Time: 9:00 am– 11:00 am  
Bienville Building: Room 118  
628 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St, Baton Rouge, LA

overdose reversals. However, non-fatal overdoses have increased. Naloxone is believed to be a huge factor.

- George Lovecchio with the Louisiana Board of Drug and Device Distributors worked with Monica Taylor with the Attorney General and other law enforcement agencies to distribute 3-4,000 educational coloring books.
- Rodrick Shannon, Safe, Hope and Healthy crime prevention. Wants to know how the information is being distributed and offered to help. Melissa Stainback shared the strategies that were used in region 5 including collaboration with the community. Melinda Robinson shared an overview of the Baton Rouge LGE efforts.
- Lonnie Granier pointed out that the data showed a decrease in residential treatment and increase in opioid exposed newborns. He proposed: Back to Basics of MAT (To better understand MAT and the barriers) as a topic for a future presentation.

Lonnie Granier also discussed residential treatment. Asked are we tracking women with children or women with families and residential treatment? We need to continuously evaluate how behavioral health overlaps with child welfare and this is a metric. And what about adolescents in residential treatment?

Lonnie Granier mentioned that the Odyssey House COVID + unit accepts clients from all over the state.

**8. Next Steps**

Next meetings: March 9<sup>th</sup>, June 8<sup>th</sup>, Sep. 7<sup>th</sup>, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> all 9-11am.

**9. Impact Workgroups**

Email [hope@la.gov](mailto:hope@la.gov) to join impact workgroups

**10. Meeting adjourned**