



ANOKA COUNTY OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

Opioid Advisory Council Minutes

Friday, January 10, 2025

9:00-11:00 am

Blaine Human Service Center, Room 2402

Mission: To improve health, save lives, and reduce the impact caused by opioids and other substances in Anoka County by managing opioid settlement funding and supporting strategic partnerships.

Vision: All Anoka County residents and partners are supported, engaged, and prepared to overcome the opioid crisis and meet the challenges related to substance use in the community.

Called to Order by Patti Constant, Senior Program Specialist – Opioids, at 9:01 am

Present: Lori Lachner, Patti Constant, Randi Prebil, Lacey Towe, Ryan George, Chris McCook, Diana Hoffman, Katherine Cole, Susan Ferron, Todd Ostertag, Jess VanKuyk, Joe Amerman, Nancy Norman, Samantha Guthman, Peggy McNabb, Dorian Harvey, Carrie Wood, Quita Curtis, George Borrell

Absent: Nicholas Warnke, Tim Kizer, Molly Nee, Derek Schuldt, Justin McNeal, Reysel Castillo, Megan Schueller, Corey Kohan, Christina Lefkowich, Joshua VanHeuveln, Musab Adam, Krista Johnson

1. Welcome, Introductions, Moment of Grounding, and Approvals

- Patti welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2025. Thank you for being here today.
- A moment of silence was observed to honor all the people that we have lost to deaths of despair (including suicide, drug overdose, & alcoholism), all of those currently struggling with behavioral health challenges (substance use disorders, mental illness), those who are bravely walking the recovery path, and all the families, friends, community members, and supports that are impacted.
- A reminder from Patti: Every single person in this room brings a unique piece of knowledge, information, and experience. It's what makes us powerful. Puzzle Board analogy.... EVERY person is important. Every perspective helps provide a piece of a bigger picture. No one is more important than another. This is also a field filled with acronyms. We become comfortable in 'our little piece of the puzzle' and think everyone shares that knowledge. I invite and encourage each of you to question/ask when things are unclear. There is no judgement. Asking questions helps everyone in the room. We do NOT, nor should we, all come with the same background information – so we need to feel comfortable questioning/asking. I thank each and every one of you for what YOU bring to this group.





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- Patti acknowledged two new members: Krista Johnson, Owner/Operator of Meraki Recovery Housing in Blaine, who will join us in February. I would also like to welcome Quita Curtis, Street Outreach Worker with the Salvation Army Anoka. She also works at Stepping Stone Shelter. Self-introductions were made.

Quita acknowledged her familiarity with Anoka County, her passion for doing outreach, meeting friends where they are at, and moonlighting at Stepping Stone Shelter and helping those folks. *I love what I do. That's why I am here.*

- Motion to approve the December 13, 2024, Advisory Council meeting minutes by Todd Ostertag. Second by Ryan George. Motion carried.
- Motion to approve the January 10, 2025, Advisory Council meeting agenda by Samantha Guthman. Second by Lacey Towe. Motion carried.

2. Assorted County and Community Updates / Patti Constant

Patti provided a time for community updates:

- Quita noted the annual Point in Time (PIT) Count coming up on January 22. Contact Quita with your interest in joining her for the PIT Count in Columbia Heights. Patti is hoping the opioid initiative can become involved in future PIT counts.
- George Borrell noted the 2025 Anoka County Senior Expo is on Saturday, April 5, Lord of Life, Ramsey. There was conversation and agreement for the opioid initiative to have a vendor table at the Senior Expo. Patti will pursue. Others should contact George with their interest.
- Carrie Wood:
 - The Jail now has a medical coordinator, Sheri Fischer. She has been reaching out and advocating for the jail.
 - Once the new/added social worker is on board after March 1, additional outreach will be coordinated to the opioid groups.
 - Met this week with a release planning specialist. Excited to pursue a program for inmates that will help to set them up for success upon their release.
- On behalf of Corey Kohan and Carrie Wood, the jail and workhouse are in the early stages of implementing a system to offer/provide naloxone for inmates upon release. They are still figuring out the logistics.
- Patti reported a new full-time AmeriCorps member started with Public Health on Monday. Will increase our capacity. Chris will continue on with a part-time schedule.
- Patti facilitated a discussion on her work with the SUD Workgroup initiative that would bring ongoing training opportunities to Anoka County -- a variety of topics for increased knowledge. There is so much to learn. Diana added she envisions the first session being Opioid Epidemic 101 – what it is and what Anoka County is doing about it, followed by more in-depth education. Council members generated the following list of potential topics / presenters:





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- Stigma
 - Harm Reduction
 - Jail Release / MAT resources
 - Direct Street Outreach – connecting with people, with Quita presenting
 - Peer Support/RCO Group Training –
 - Stepping Stone Shelter potential presenter
 - Lori suggested education surrounding the 12-step AA program.
Very successful and very available. Some exposure would be great!
Patti noted potential incorporation of the large spectrum of recovery groups out there as well.
- Patti is still looking for one or two RFP reviewers from the Advisory Council.
If your agency is not submitting an RFP and you would be willing to review between three and six RFPs between February 3 and 11, please contact Patti. A training will be provided at the end of January, but non-mandatory. Thank you.

3. **Deterra Bag Discussion / Patti Constant**

Patti facilitated a discussion on the potential or thoughts on incorporating Deterra bags into our Anoka County Opioid Solutions Initiative efforts. Deterra bags are a safe and secure method of destroying opioids by way of charcoal deactivation within a pouch. We have contemplated purchasing a small supply to have at events, or perhaps at some NAPs for example. As well, it could be an effort with pharmacists and offered with each prescription. The cost for 250 small bags is \$735. Same quantity of a larger bag is \$856. The issue is that opioids are on the FDA 'flush list' for disposal. Contradictory, the MNPCA does not want medications in the water supply. We do offer some drug take-back programs/resources within the county. Is this how we spend settlement funds?

There was a lengthy discussion wherein the consensus seemed to be a strong desire to enhance or establish more drug take-back opportunities and medication safety education (including safe disposal), rather than invest largely in Deterra bags. The group felt that would be a better investment of funds although they agreed there may be a small/targeted use distribution. There was suggestion and strong support to work on establishing more drug take-back programs within pharmacies, along with having a list of drug take-back locations stapled to each prescription at the time it is dispensed from the pharmacy. We discussed offering at the Sr. Expo – but general thought is that people would take because it is 'free' and then they would sit unused in peoples closets.

Samantha Guthman suggested making a small supply of deterra bags available at smaller agencies for folks who cannot get to a drop-off or who would not go to a drop-off, but would destroy at home via a deterra bag.

Lori Lachner suggested partnering with funeral homes for ensuring safe disposal of medications at the time of death. Ryan George noted that addressing medications found in the home is routine for law enforcement when going to homes where there has been a death.





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Patti met with an Eau Claire County Opioid Task Force member this week and brought back and circulated three opioid informational packets Eau Claire County has developed and is using for community education:

- What Do You Know About Opioids?
- The Little Recovery Book
- This Packet Could Save A Life – What to do after an overdose.

Patti noted being intrigued with the Eau Claire County Opioid Education Program. They are out in the community educating and presenting – both in-person and virtual – with a very concerted effort on safe medication use and disposal, including opioids. Patti is thinking about possibly replicating components and implementing as part of our efforts. Eau Claire would support this and simply asks for acknowledgement.

4. **Advisory Council Goals and Opioid Related Projects/Statistics for 2025**

Patti is asking members for their thoughts on potential Advisory Council goals and/or projects for 2025.

- What would you like the goals of this group to be for 2025 and where do you see us going?
- What activities or projects would you like to see this group take on this year?
- E-mail ideas to Patti.

5. **Member Presentation – Lacey Towe, Midwest Medical Examiner’s Office**

Lacey introduced herself as both an office investigator and autopsy technician with the Midwest Medical Examiner’s Office (MMEO), in the city of Ramsey. Lacey’s PowerPoint presentation relating to her role with the MMEO, addressed:

- The overall role of medical examiners.
- Minnesota and Wisconsin counties currently being served by the MMEO.
- Detailed autopsy components, exams, lab tests, toxicology panels/reports, and more.

Patti noted it is these toxicology reports that feed our OD mapping and our numbers / substances within a decedent’s system at the time of death.

6. **Member Presentation – Todd Ostertag, Mental Health Resources**

Todd serves as treatment director at Mental Health Resources (MHR), Fridley, and provided an overview of MHR’s Substance Use Disorder (SUD) program’s philosophy and approach to serving clients.

- Serving adults ages 18 and older who are struggling with SUD and individuals who have a co-occurring mental illness.
- Person-centered treatment that focuses on engagement and the goals of the client, ranging from complete abstinence to just using less/ managing their drug use.
- Long-term approach for working with clients. I assume a client will be with us for at least a year. We talk with and reassure clients that there will be no shame and no getting





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kicked out of the program for possible relapse. We want them to be open and honest with us so we can help them live in their environment.

- Strong focus on mental health, given the impact of childhood environment and trauma on brain development, neurodevelopment, and the relationship/likelihood of SUD.
- We work to build supports and foster connections for our clients. Help them to understand they are worthwhile and allowed to have hopes, dreams, and goals.
- Peer support specialist (lived experience and in recovery) services are set up for clients while in the program and when they leave the program.
- We work to foster hope, health, and recovery for people affected by mental illness and/or SUD.

Thank you to Lacey and Todd for today's presentations.

7. Closing Reminder / Next Meeting

- Continue to think about training topics and presenters.
- What are your ideas / suggestions for our Opioid Advisory Council goals for 2025?
- Contact Patti with your interest in participating in the upcoming RFP review.
- Next Meeting -- Friday, February 14, 2025, 9-11:00 am, Blaine Human Service Center, Room 2402

Adjourn 11:07 am

Approved: 2-14-2025

Patti Constant
Senior Program Specialist

Randi Prebil
Health Promotion and Planning Manager
PHES

Peggy McNabb
Administrative Services Supervisor



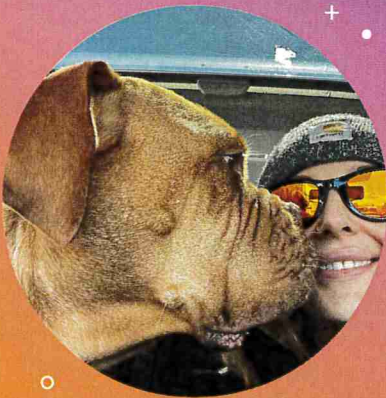
MIDWEST MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE (MMEO)

Lacey A. Towe



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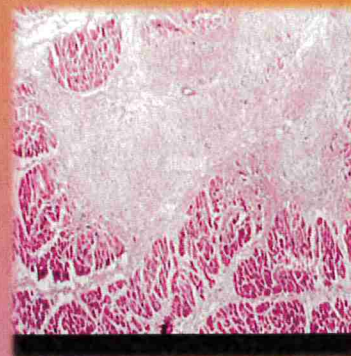
WHO AM I?



- B.A. in Psychology and Administration of Justice
 - B.S. in Mortuary Science – Licensed Mortician
- M.F.A. in Creative Writing – haven't written anything (thought about it!)
 - I have 2 cats, a dog, a fiancé and live in Anoka
- Worked at MMEO since 2011 as a Forensic Technician

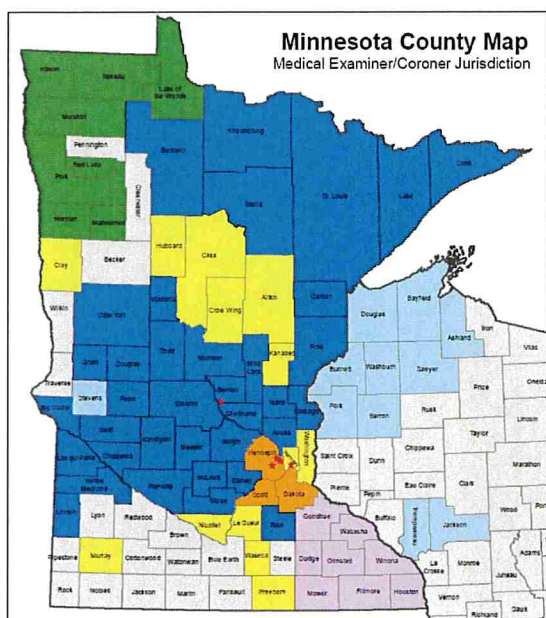
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WHAT IS THE MEDICAL EXAMINER?



- Specially trained physician within a particular jurisdiction(s)
- Performs death investigations, as required by MN Statute 390.11
- Conducts postmortem examinations
- Provides education
- Provides consultations to affiliated counties

3



JURISDICTION

- The county you die in, the medical examiner of that county has jurisdiction over the death
- Jurisdiction used regarding signing death certificates
- If we decline jurisdiction – primary care provider signs
- If we assume jurisdiction – we are signing the death certificate, but that does not always mean we do an autopsy

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Minnesota County Map
Medical Examiner/Coroner Jurisdiction

What MMEO handles:

- 38 counties in MN
 - Field investigators staff 13 counties
- 11 referral counties
- Hospital requested autopsies
- Family requested autopsies
- Special studies
- Federal tribal requests
- Federal correctional facilities

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AUTOPSY

Postmortem examination to aid in determining the cause of death and manner

- Full/complete/internal
- External
- Limited

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POSTMORTEM CHANGES



Biological processes that occur after death

- Rigor mortis
- Livor mortis
- Decomposition

All can be affected by:

Season, size of decedent, injuries, clothing, room temperature and toxicological changes

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TOXICOLOGY

- Not only can affect postmortem changes, but can be affected by post-mortem changes
- Vary greatly from case to case
- We do not interpret results to families or law enforcement
- There are many different types of toxicology panels with varying levels of what we typically look for
 - Basic
 - Expanded
 - Novel Psychoactive Substances
 - 6-MAM

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6-MAM (6-Monoacetylmorphine)

In our realm, there is no test for heroin, but if we are concerned for heroin, we will run a 6-MAM.

Heroin metabolizes to 6-MAM (unique to heroin), then will metabolize to morphine.

Heroin

6-monoacetylmorphine (6-MAM)

Morphine

1st hydrolytic step
2nd hydrolytic step
glucuronidation

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Positive Findings:

Compound	Result	Units	Matrix Source
Caffeine	Positive	mcg/mL	001 - Hospital Blood
Colinine	Positive	ng/mL	001 - Hospital Blood
4-ANPP	0.65	ng/mL	003 - Hospital Blood
11-Hydroxy Delta-9 THC	1.2	ng/mL	001 - Hospital Blood
Delta-9 Carboxy THC	42	ng/mL	001 - Hospital Blood
Delta-9 THC	2.9	ng/mL	001 - Hospital Blood
Methamphetamine	19	ng/mL	001 - Hospital Blood
Fentanyl	11	ng/mL	001 - Hospital Blood
Norfentanyl	5.6	ng/mL	001 - Hospital Blood
Cannabinoids	Presump Pos	ng/mL	012 - Urine
Amphetamines	Presump Pos	ng/mL	012 - Urine
Fentanyl / Metabolite	Presump Pos	ng/mL	012 - Urine
Morphine - Free	86	ng/mL	012 - Urine

See Detailed Findings section for additional information.

Testing Requested:

Analysis Code	Description
9050U	Postmortem, Urine Screen Add on (6-MAM Quantification only)
3098B	Alcohol Screen, Blood (Forensic)
8210B	Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS) Screen 2, Blood
8052B	Postmortem, Expanded, Blood (Forensic)
8756B	Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS) Screen 1, Blood

Specimens Received:

ID	Tube/Container	Volume/ Mass	Collection Date/Time	Matrix Source	Miscellaneous Information
001	Lavender Vial	2.9 mL	05-25-2020 21:00	Hospital Blood	
002	Gray Vial	0.6 mL	05-25-2020 21:00	Hospital Blood	
003	Lavender Vial	5.75 mL	05-25-2020 21:00	Hospital Blood	
004	Light Blue Vial	2.5 mL	05-25-2020 21:00	Hospital Blood	
005	Green Vial	1.3 mL	05-25-2020 21:00	Hospital Blood	
006	Red Vial	0.75 mL	05-25-2020 21:00	Hospital Serum or Plasma	
007	Gray Top Tube	8.8 mL	05-26-2020 12:20	Femoral Blood	
008	Gray Top Tube	8.8 mL	05-26-2020 12:20	Femoral Blood	
009	Gray Top Tube	8.8 mL	05-26-2020 12:20	Femoral Blood	

TOXICOLOGY REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL

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ID	Tube Container	Volume/ Mass	Collection Date/Time	Matrix Source	Miscellaneous Information
010	Gray Top Tube	8.8 mL	05-26-2020 12:20	Femoral Blood	
011	Gray Vial	3.3 mL	05-26-2020 12:20	Femoral Blood	
012	Yellow Vial	7.75 mL	05-26-2020 12:20	Urine	
013	Yellow Vial	7.75 mL	05-26-2020 12:20	Urine	

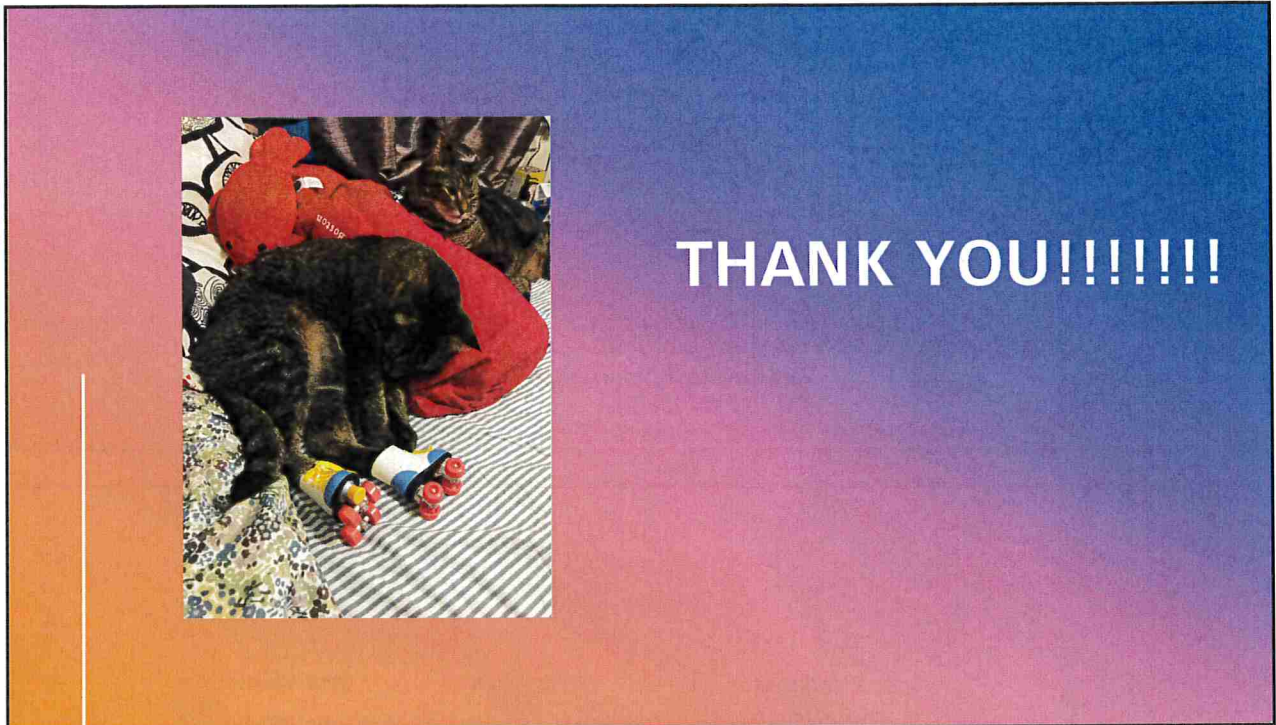
All sample volumes/weights are approximations.
Specimens received on 05-28-2020.

Detailed Findings:

Analysis and Comments	Result	Units	Rpt. Limit	Specimen Source	Analysis By
Caffeine	Positive	mcg/mL	0.20	001 - Hospital Blood	LC/TOF-MS
Colinine	Positive	ng/mL	200	001 - Hospital Blood	LC/TOF-MS
4-ANPP	0.65	ng/mL	0.10	003 - Hospital Blood	LC-MS/MS
11-Hydroxy Delta-9 THC	1.2	ng/mL	1.0	001 - Hospital Blood	LC-MS/MS
Delta-9 Carboxy THC	42	ng/mL	5.0	001 - Hospital Blood	LC-MS/MS
Delta-9 THC	2.9	ng/mL	0.50	001 - Hospital Blood	LC-MS/MS
Methamphetamine	19	ng/mL	5.0	001 - Hospital Blood	LC-MS/MS
Fentanyl	11	ng/mL	0.10	001 - Hospital Blood	LC-MS/MS
Norfentanyl	5.6	ng/mL	0.20	001 - Hospital Blood	LC-MS/MS
Cannabinoids	Presump Pos	ng/mL	50	012 - Urine	EIA
Amphetamines	Presump Pos	ng/mL	500	012 - Urine	EIA
Fentanyl / Metabolite	Presump Pos	ng/mL	2.0	012 - Urine	EIA
Morphine - Free	86	ng/mL	25	012 - Urine	LC-MS/MS

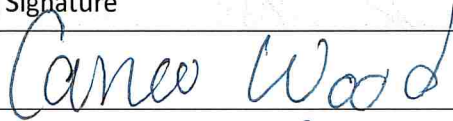

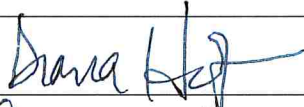
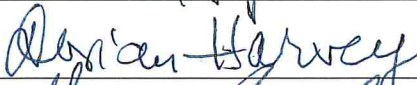

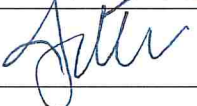


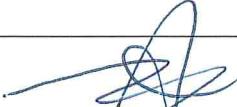

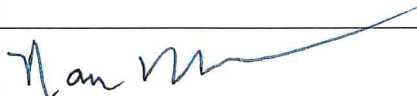
- Testing on admission specimens first
- Draw dates and times affect final results

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Anoka County Opioid Advisory Council Meeting Sign-In / January 10, 2025

Name	Signature	Representing
Carrie Wood		Operations Lieutenant, Anoka County Jail / Sheriff's Office
Chris McCook		Associate Health Education Specialist / Anoka County Public Health & AmeriCorps
Christina Lefkowich		Director of Treatment Service, Riverplace Counseling Center
Corey Kohan		Senior Manager, Rum River Campus Anoka County Community Corrections
Derek Schuldt		Narcotics and Violent Crime Lieutenant, Anoka County Sheriff's Office
Diana Hoffman		Senior Social Worker, Anoka County Social Services and Behavioral Health
Dorian Harvey		Community Member
George Borrell		Director, Anoka County Social Services and Behavioral Health
Jess VanKuyk		Senior Manager, Anoka County Children and Family Services
Joshua VanHeuveln		Chemical Health Professional, Anoka-Hennepin Schools
Joe Amerman		Cannabis Planner / Anoka County Public Health
Justin McNeal		Executive Director, Begin Anew Recovery
Katherine Cole		Supervisor, Anoka County Public Health Budget and Technology
Krista Johnson		Owner/Operator, Meraki Recovery Housing
Lacey Towe		Forensic Technician, Midwest Medical Examiner's Office
Lori Lachner		Community Member
Megan Schueller		Supervisor, Anoka County Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder
Molly Nee		Senior Communications Specialist, Anoka County
Musab Adam		Director of Community Relations, Access Healing Center
Nancy Norman		Anoka County Attorney's Office
Nicholas Warnke		Community Member
Patti Constant		Opioid Prevention Specialist, Anoka County Public Health
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Opioid Advisory Council Agenda

Friday, January 10, 2025
9:00-11:00 am

Blaine Human Service Center, Room 2402

***Mission:** To improve health, save lives, and reduce the impact caused by opioids and other substances in Anoka County by managing opioid settlement funding and supporting strategic partnerships.*

***Vision:** All Anoka County residents and partners are supported, engaged, and prepared to overcome the opioid crisis and meet the challenges related to substance use in the community.*

Call to Order

1. **Welcome, Moment of Grounding, Introductions, and Approvals (9 to 9:10)**
 - **12-13-2024 Meeting Minutes**
 - **1-10-2025 Meeting Agenda**
2. **Assorted County and Community Updates (9:10 to 9:25)**
3. **Deterra Bag Discussion (9:25 to 9:35)**
4. **Advisory Council Goals and Opioid Related Projects/Statistics for 2025 (9:35 to 9:55)**
5. **Member Presentation (9:55 to 10:25)**
 - **Lacey Towe, Midwest Medical Examiner's Office**
6. **Member Presentation (10:25 to 10:55)**
 - **Todd Ostertag, Mental Health Resources**
7. **Closing**

