



ANOKA COUNTY OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

Opioid Advisory Council Minutes

Friday, March 14, 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 9:02 am

Present: Lori Lachner, Patti Constant, Chris McCook, Katherine Cole, Susan Ferron, Joe Amerman, Nancy Norman, Peggy McNabb, Carrie Wood, Krista Johnson, Joshua VanHeuveln, Corey Kohan, Troy Friesen, Nicholas Warnke, Christina Lefkowich, Melissa Olsen, Derek Schuldt, Lacey Towe, Quita Curtis, Tim Kizer, George Borrell, Musab Adam

Absent: Molly Nee, Randi Prebil, Ryan George, Diana Hoffman, Jess VanKuyk, Dorian Harvey, Reysel Castillo, Justin McNeal, Megan Schueller, Samantha Guthman

Guest: Alicia House, Steve Rummeler HOPE Network

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

- Patti welcomed everyone to today's meeting of the Opioid Advisory Council.
- 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. Thank you. It is important to remember.
- A reminder from Patti: Every single person in this room brings a unique piece of knowledge, information, and experience. Every perspective helps provide a piece of a bigger picture – no one is more important than another. The magic of the group is that we are all together.
- 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. We do NOT, nor should we, all come with the same background information, so we need to feel comfortable questioning/asking.





ANOKA COUNTY

OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

Please feel comfortable using AcroKnock... if you hear someone using an acronym or language that you are not familiar with, please knock three times – it's a gentle/friendly reminder to us all.

- Noting this being AmeriCorps Week, Patti recognized the great work AmeriCorps members Chris McCook and Troy Friesen are contributing to our Public Health Department and the opioid solutions work here in Anoka County.
- Patti acknowledged and welcomed new member Melissa Olsen, Treatment Director at Specialized Treatment Services. *I am thankful to have Melissa here, representing treatment.* As an Anoka County resident, Melissa commented on being very invested in both her work community and her home community.
- Self-introductions were made, along with commentary on spring break plans!
- Motion to approve the February 14, 2025, Advisory Council meeting minutes by Carrie Wood. Second by Corey Kohan. Motion carried.
- Motion to approve the March 14, 2025, Advisory Council meeting agenda by Derek Schuldt. Second by Lacey Towe. Motion carried.

2. Assorted County **and Community Updates / Patti Constant**

- Patti called on members to share on upcoming events, opportunities, trends or issues you are seeing, etc. What should this group be aware of?
 - Musab Adam invited members to a Ramadan Iftar Dinner with dialogue for law enforcement and probation officers surrounding Access Healing's faith-based SUD treatment center. Friday, March 21, 6 to 8 p.m., Access Healing Center, St. Anthony.
 - Nick Warnke is interested in producing sponsorship/promotional videos at no cost to Advisory Council members/agencies. View his work at www.believersboxing.com. Contact Nick with your interest.
 - Krista Johnson raised a discussion on the closure of NUWAY Recovery's treatment and residency programming, noting the impact and concern for the 800+ people being displaced. Watching the 2025 Minnesota legislature's program funding closely. Quita Curtis offered to enter the names of those being displaced by NUWAY into her outreach database so she can work to connect with them with her services.
- Patti's Updates:
 - A reminder to register for notification of the MDH naloxone portal opening. Said to be soon.
 - Medical Examiner has indicated tentative 2024 OD deaths in Anoka County dropped from 44 in 2023 to 39 in 2024. Interesting numbers:
 - 31 of 39 involved fentanyl
 - 28 involved meth





ANOKA COUNTY

OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

- 14 involved cocaine
 - Across the 38 counties served by the Midwest Medical Examiner's Office, in 2024 there were:
 - Four heroin overdose deaths, three of which were in Anoka County.
 - Eleven Xylazine overdose deaths, three of which were in Anoka County.
- Patti noted a potential need to delve into the data once it is finalized by the ME Office and more information is available.
- The RFP awards are in process. I look forward to sharing and having the awards made public. Likely next month.
 - NAPs should be up and running at our library sites by the end of this month. Naloxone dispensing boxes have been ordered / arriving next week. Post-Meeting NOTE: There was a supply problem, and boxes are now delayed.
 - Strategy Overview informational hand-outs are printed and available today:
 - Broadening Access to Naloxone
 - Enriching Prevention Strategies
- Patti is contact for additional or electronic copies. Please share with your groups as appropriate.

3. While emphasizing a preference and the importance / benefits of having members being together in-person for our monthly meetings, Patti facilitated a discussion on potentially adding options for members to participate via some level of technology when needed. Most members felt in-person created the most conducive environment for connection but agreed that at times it isn't possible to attend. Felt even having an option to call in and listen to the meeting may be beneficial. Patti will take today's feedback to the Executive Council for discussion.

4. **Alicia House, Steve Rummler HOPE Network, presented a three-part informational PowerPoint on Naloxone, Harm Reduction, and Stigma**

Alicia's overview of the Steve Rummler HOPE Network noted the non-profit works to heighten awareness of the opioid crisis, address its impact on the physical and emotional burdens of SUD and chronic pain, and improve the care process. Alicia's slides addressed:

Part I – Naloxone

- The life-saving medication that can reverse an opioid overdose. It is safe and effective. Has been used for decades.
- In Minnesota, "Steve's Law" (the Good Samaritan/naloxone legislation) provides immunity for individuals who call 911 to report a suspected overdose and for those who administer naloxone without fear of legal repercussion.
- Among the slides / detail presented:
 - What is an opioid overdose?
 - National and Minnesota statistics.
 - Signs and symptoms of an opioid overdose.
 - Vital functions during an overdose – breathing and heartbeat.





ANOKA COUNTY OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

- What is naloxone and how does it work?
- Side effects, i.e., allergic reaction.
- Naloxone formats, costs, where to get, and storage.
- Naloxone injection sites.
- How might someone react after having naloxone administered?

Part II -- Fentanyl & Harm Reduction Portion

- Where is fentanyl coming from?
- Increased risks.
- Fentanyl: Expanding the risk of overdose pool as tolerance changes.
- Myths about fentanyl.
- Xylazine: not an opioid. It is a sedative for large animals. Never studied on humans. A need to raise awareness of the impacts of using Xylazine.
- Harm Reduction – the practice of strategies aimed at mitigating risk.
 - Why is harm reduction important?
 - Who is harm reduction for?
 - Eight Principles of Harm Reduction established by National Coalition <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>
- Harm Reduction Services
 - Testing substance for safer use. Legal and implemented here in Minnesota.
 - Fentanyl testing strips.
 - Supervised consumption sites – none in Minnesota at this time.
 - Individual safer use strategies.
 - Myths.

Part III -- Stigma

- Cultural norms / shared standards.
- Personal experience -- negativity bias, labeling theory, compassion fatigue
- Media-stigmatizing language
- Three types of stigma – social, structural, and self.
- Effects of stigma – family and friends; providers and treatment; racism and prejudice.
- Fighting stigma – Pay attention to word choice. Language is powerful. “Use” rather than “abuse” and “person with a use disorder” rather than “addict,” for example.

Thank you from Patti and Advisory Council members to Alicia for today’s presentation.

Steve Rummer HOPE Network . . . <https://steverummlerhopenetwork.org/>

5. Closing

- As always, reach out to Patti with questions, thoughts, and ideas.
- I appreciate you being here today.
- Next Meeting -- Friday, April 11, 2025, 9-11:00 am, Blaine Human Service Center, Room 2402



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Adjourn 11:04 am

Patti Constant
Senior Program Specialist

Peggy McNabb
Administrative Services Supervisor

Approved: 4-11-2025





STRATEGY OVERVIEW: Enriching Prevention Strategies

Anoka County received opioid settlement funding that will be distributed within the community over the course of 18 years to save lives and address the opioid epidemic. Communities have been asked to use evidence and research to guide spending, focus on equity, and develop a fair and transparent process for deciding where and how to spend funding. The Anoka County Opioid Solutions Initiative (ACOSI) Advisory Council is leading the strategic planning process.



WHAT: ACOSI staff and partners prioritized to prevent misuse of opioids and other substances, opioid use disorder, and opioid overdoses in Anoka County.



WHEN: Initial activities will be implemented in 2025. ACOSI staff will evaluate these initial efforts and determine which activities to sustain, expand, or enhance over time.



WHY: Evidence-based primary prevention programs have been shown to reduce drug misuse, especially if delivered across age groups, aimed at preventing risk factors for both substance use and mental health, delivered in a variety of community settings, inclusive of parents and caregivers, and implemented in trauma-informed and equitable ways.



HOW: Activities will include a media/awareness campaign, assessing prevention education needs among schools and providers, and issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for prevention programming within the community.



If you would like to help ACOSI broaden prevention efforts, please contact Patti Constant, Senior Program Specialist—Opioid Prevention, Anoka County Public Health & Environmental Services.

patti.constant@anokacountymn.gov | 763-324-4334





2025 ACTION PLAN: Enriching Prevention Strategies

ACTIVITY	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	OUTPUTS
<p>Request for Proposals</p> <p>Release a request for proposals (RFP) for partners' proposed approaches to preventing substance misuse and preventing overdose.</p>	Community partners, non-profit organizations, and schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of proposals received • Number of initiatives funded • Planned reach of funded initiatives (e.g., age groups, geographic scope within the county)
<p>Awareness and Education</p> <p>Launch a media campaign to raise awareness of and how to prevent opioid misuse and overdose.</p>	Media vendor, community partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of messages • Number of media outlets • Number of engagements
<p>Supporting schools, provider organizations, and pharmacies</p>		
<p>Assess the needs and interests of health care provider organizations and pharmacies related to education and training on safe prescribing practices and preventing prescription drug misuse.</p>	ACOSI Advisory Council members, health care provider organizations, pharmacies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of meetings with provider organizations and pharmacies • Number of provider and pharmacy partners expressing interest in training and resources
<p>Assess the unique needs and interests of schools related to evidence-based and promising school-based prevention programming.</p>	ACOSI Advisory Council members, Anoka County schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of meetings with schools • Number of schools expressing interest in prevention programs and resources



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Spend the money to save lives • Use evidence to guide spending • Invest in youth prevention
Focus on equity • Develop a transparent process for deciding how to spend funds



STRATEGY OVERVIEW: Broaden Access to Naloxone



Anoka County received opioid settlement funding that will be distributed within the community over the course of 18 years to save lives and address the opioid epidemic. Communities have been asked to use evidence and research to guide spending, focus on equity, and develop a fair and transparent process for deciding where and how to spend funding. The Anoka County Opioid Solutions Initiative (ACOSI) Advisory Council is leading the strategic planning process.



WHAT: ACOSI staff and partners prioritized broadening access to and awareness of naloxone in Anoka County.



WHEN: Initial activities will be implemented in 2025. ACOSI staff will evaluate these initial efforts and determine which activities to sustain, expand, or enhance over time.



WHY: Research shows that increasing the number of people who carry and know how to use naloxone, especially those at risk, their loved ones, and community members, can save lives.



HOW: Activities will include increasing awareness of the importance of using naloxone to reverse overdoses, training more community members on how to use naloxone, and increasing access to naloxone throughout Anoka County.



WHAT WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE

- Increase awareness and offerings of trainings.
- Increase naloxone access points in the county.

Short-term Outcomes



- Increase the number of people trained and carrying naloxone.
- Increase knowledge and awareness of naloxone distribution and use.

Mid-term Outcomes



- Reduce opioid overdose deaths.
- Reduce stigma related to naloxone distribution and use.

Long-term Outcomes



If you would like to help ACOSI broaden access to naloxone, please contact Patti Constant, Senior Program Specialist—Opioid Prevention, Anoka County Public Health & Environmental Services.

patti.constant@anokacountymn.gov | 763-324-4334





**2025 ACTION PLAN:
Broaden Access to Naloxone**


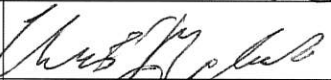

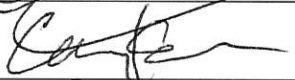



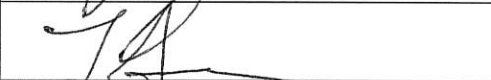
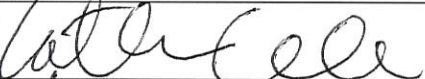



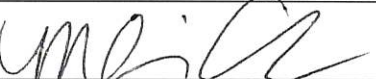

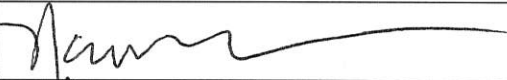
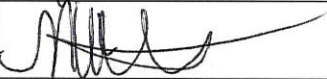
ACTIVITY	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	OUTPUTS
Training		
Increase naloxone training opportunities (e.g., embed naloxone training into CPR and Stop the Bleed trainings, offer training to workplaces through SHIP)	Any community partners currently or willing to offer naloxone training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of partners providing naloxone training • Number of trainings offered/people trained • Number of naloxone kits given to trainees
Expand and promote PulsePoint, a 911-connected app that allows trained citizens to view and receive alerts on calls being responded to by first responders	911 dispatch, University of Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of active PulsePoint users • Number of PulsePoint users trained • Number of PulsePoint users carrying
Distribution		
Purchase nasal naloxone in bulk	Steve Rummler Hope Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of naloxone kits distributed
Increase the number of naloxone access points in the county (e.g., libraries, community organizations, businesses)	ACOSI Advisory Council members, community businesses and organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of access points
Equip trained professionals (e.g., EMS, police) with naloxone they can “leave behind” with at-risk individuals	Anoka County first responders, social services staff at non-profit organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of partners engaged in leave behind • Number of naloxone kits “left behind”
Awareness		
Develop educational materials on naloxone’s benefits, training opportunities, and access points to distribute at events (e.g., Night to Unite, county fair)	ACOSI Advisory Council members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of community partners distributing materials • Number of community engagement opportunities
Hire a marketing firm to design a media campaign and establish branding for ACOSI educational materials	marketing agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread awareness campaign launched • Number of views/impressions • Number of interactions (e.g., likes, shares)

The ACOSI Advisory Council also identified longer-term opportunities for addressing potential gaps. These include:



- Accessing the unique needs and interest of health care provider organizations and pharmacies related to staff training, naloxone prescribing practices, training and resources for patients, and any other needs related to naloxone.
- Assessing the unique needs and interests of schools related to staff training, distribution of nasal naloxone, resources for parents, and any other needs related to naloxone.

Anoka County Opioid Advisory Council Meeting Sign-In / March 14, 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
Melissa Olsen		Treatment Director Specialized Treatment Services, Inc.
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
	CONTINUED	



ANOKA COUNTY OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

Opioid Advisory Council

Agenda

Friday, March 14, 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)**
 - 2-14-2025 Meeting Minutes
 - 3-14-2025 Meeting Agenda
2. **County and Community Updates (9:15 to 9:30)**
3. **Presentation by Alicia House, Steve Rummler HOPE Network (9:30 to 11)**
Naloxone basics, Harm Reduction, and Stigma
4. **Closing**

There will be an optional Naloxone 'How To' for those interested

