



ANOKA COUNTY OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

Opioid Advisory Council

Minutes

Friday, May 9, 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: Patti Constant, Chris McCook, Katherine Cole, Susan Ferron, Peggy McNabb, Carrie Wood, Krista Johnson, Troy Friesen, Derek Schuldt, Lacey Towe, Tim Kizer, Megan Schueller, Randi Prebil, Ryan George, Christina Lefkowich, Justin McNeal, George Borrell Nicholas Warnke, Quita Curtis, Reysel Castillo

Absent: Molly Nee, Melissa Olsen, Lori Lachner, Nancy Norman, Joe Amerman, Joshua VanHeuveln, Corey Kohan, Musab Adam, Diana Hoffman, Jess VanKuyk, Samantha Guthman

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

- Patti welcomed everyone to today's meeting of the Opioid Advisory Council. It's great to have all of you here.
- 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. We are all here for a very important reason.
- A reminder from Patti: Every single person in this room brings a unique piece of knowledge, information, and experience. Everyone has a unique role. 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.





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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.

- Motion to approve the April 11, 2025, Advisory Council meeting minutes by Ryan George. Second by Nick Warnke. Motion carried.
- Motion to approve the May 9, 2025, Advisory Council meeting agenda by Lacey Towe. Second by Ryan George. Motion carried.

2. One Year of ACOSI Advisory Committee – Highlights and Accomplishments

Patti acknowledged today as a one-year celebration of the ACOSI Advisory Council, noting we all came together one year ago. Some of us had never met. Others had. Patti highlighted some Advisory Council accomplishments over the past year:

- Prioritization Process – a four-month process that determined naloxone and prevention as our two top priorities.
- As of this morning, seven RFP funding contracts have been signed, so we will be getting money out into the community over the next couple weeks.
- Anoka County has increased its NAPs from five to 20, including our Anoka County Library sites, with two additional being established in the next weeks. Patti shared a story of how a local teenager's life was recently saved because her family had picked up a naloxone kit at an Anoka County Library just a few days before their teenager's overdose.
- Over 300 naloxone doses have been distributed at community events.
- Hosted a November 2nd Spotlight on Opioids and Overdose community event in Columbia Heights, with attendance at over 200 people.
- We have seven community groups receiving funding for prevention work.
- Connection has been made with the Midwest Medical Examiner's Office for us to see ODMAP / OD death numbers within months rather than years.
- Improved/expanded our community and network of supports – learned more about each other. People are working together in new ways.
- Will soon have naloxone in multiple community-facing AEDs as well as an ability to offer leave behind.
- Anoka County Parks will have naloxone in their AEDs and park service vehicles.
- Increased naloxone education within CPR and Stop the Bleed classes, which provides more assurance EMTs are aware of naloxone and available training.

Patti acknowledged being grateful for all we have accomplished in one year.

Self-introductions were made, along with member thoughts on a most significant achievement and/or what they are grateful for over the past year, and what they are hoping to accomplish in year two.





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3. 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? What do we need to know?
 - Carrie Wood
 - Hennepin County is developing harm reduction education / naloxone buy-in training specific for correctional staff. More to come.
 - Continuing her work on potentially establishing a NAP in the jail reception area.
 - Has successfully connected to the DHS naloxone portal. Sheriff's Office allocation is two cases per month (12 kits per case / 2 doses per kit). Kits can be distributed outside of the department as long as outside distribution is tracked.
 - Continuing to work with Corey on naloxone kit distribution as inmates are released back into the community. Currently working to identify inmate distribution criteria. Also looking at replicating a Hennepin County brochure to include in our naloxone distribution kits. Patti suggested posting the Hennepin County brochure on Basecamp for members to review.

Patti added she and Randi are meeting with MDH/DHS today to discuss expanding portal access eligibility to include local public health.

- Patti's Updates:
 - Following a discussion on the Advisory Council being in need of a lived experience member, and member thoughts on whether a lived experience member should be someone (a parent) who has lost a someone (a child) to opioids, there was agreement that there is value in having a parental perspective participating on the council. Patti spoke on the importance of being at the right place in their "loss" journey and having the capacity to be able to give concretely to our group. Group also discussed that it could potentially be a parent with a child in active use, that it is the parent perspective that is most important.

Post-meeting, Patti emailed Advisory Council member application link to members asking them to quickly provide it to anyone they think may be a good lived experience member on our council. Goal is to have new lived experience member on board for our June 13 meeting.

4. RFP Announcements and Discussion

Patti presented a PowerPoint overview of the RFPs awards and asked members to offer thoughts on potential collaboration, integration, and when would be most appropriate to bring in each recipient to report on their activities and accomplishments.

Faces of Hope / Triumph Pictures, LLC

Documentary filmmakers and journalists whose prevention project key initiatives include a 15 to 20-minute educational documentary featuring community leaders and members; short video snippets for social media or other educational efforts; an eight-episode podcast featuring deeper dive conversations; and a "Hope Hub" website offering community access to information

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and video resources. Patti suggested Googling Triumph Pictures to see their excellent work.

There was commentary on the many different demographics to be featured, given so many people dealing with opioid issues for different reasons. Not just users. Many groups across our community. People in recovery. People who have lost a loved one. People who got started by way of their doctor's office. Disproportionate community. George Borrell, given his broad knowledge.

Additional commentary:

- Nick Warnke offered to share his story (life experience, saved by naloxone and using it to save others).
- Suggestion to play out / re-enact a scenario of an OD event and EMTs response, for example.
- Clips from a user's perspective and family perspective. Capture real emotions/multiple perspectives.
- Symptoms of someone overdosing, along with other things you can do if you do not have naloxone.

There was agreement to schedule a time for Faces of Hope to meet with the council early on.

Neighborhood Health Source (NHS)

Reysel Castillo presented NHS Clinic's prevention project that will establish a MOUD program in Coon Rapids that will offer low-barrier access to treatment for the community and expand Peer Recovery Services, including outreach, naloxone training, and resources for individuals in recovery.

Reysel emphasized they are working hard to identify potential recovery session or support group locations where there is the highest need. Among outreach suggestions were law enforcement (embedded social workers), Columbia Heights Library, Justin McNeal, 911 call locations roster / Troy Freisen contact (similar to OD maps).

Thrive! Family Recovery Resources

A recovery community organization whose key prevention work initiatives include a family-centered primary prevention initiative through hosting a Family Peer Recovery Specialist primarily at Recovery Café, Zion Lutheran Church, Anoka, and equipping families with tools to prevent substance misuse, mitigate further harm, and build recovery-supportive environments.

Brief conversation:

- Thrive's prevention and recovery work with the whole family unit.
- Suggestion to connect Thrive! to a family shelter and resources.

Minnesota Recovery Connection (MRC)

MRC will work to extend harm reduction education within the Anoka County Correctional Facility by providing weekly education classes in the jail and to provide harm reduction education through a partnership with Allina Health, Fridley. Carrie





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suggested scheduling MRC to meet with the council once increased jail sessions are occurring.

Georgia Panopoulos

Susan Ferron reported on her collaborative project with Georgia Panopoulos that will provide continuing education modules to health care providers and the public based on best practices for opioid prescribing. Focus will be on optimal pain management and responsible opioid use/prescribing. Education to minimize risk of opioid use disorder development. Susan noted the potential overlap with the Faces of Hope project and potential common contacts who could be featured in her modules. Susan asked members to email her with their ideas, stories, or potential contacts as that is her starting point.

Fentanyl Free Communities

An advocacy and harm prevention organization whose funding will go to hosting three three-hour events in Anoka County over two years. Events will include vendors, advertising, handouts, panelists, food, and technology. Schedule will be Fall 2025 and Spring and Fall 2026.

Patti noted their good work at a couple events she has attended. Opportunities for multiple generations to learn more about this issue. Suggested contacts for potential panel participants -- Fridley schools, Spring Lake Park schools, and the Anoka County Children and Family Council.

Empower Therapeutic Support Services

A strength-based mental health organization serving youth and their families whose key project initiatives include healing circles, peer mentorship, cognitive behavioral therapy, and/or dialectical behavioral therapy with at least three schools, the Anoka County Juvenile Center, and culturally specific community leaders. Suggested best connections – The Anoka County Children and Family Council; Jennifer Crotteau, Anoka County Social Services; and Nate Parker, Anoka County Juvenile Center.

Patti is also scheduling meetings wherein she will meet with each recipient to kick-off the funding and prevention work of each organization.

Member input on potential gaps, identified strengths, or next prioritizations:

- Are youth targeted in any of the RFPs?
- Suggestion to include professional athletes and public figures in video recordings. Post on social media. High impact.

Connecting with Schools / Patti Constant

- Patti is continuing to meet with schools to work on how the ACOSI can support the work of our schools.
- New work group to address how we can best support our schools.
- Working to ensure cannabis curriculum requirement will be met.





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5. 2024 Numbers

Patti reported our numbers did start to go down a bit. Will share details next month.

6. Closing

- Thank you all for this past year. I appreciate you. It is a commitment and takes time and energy to be here. It is helpful for me to hear that you are learning by serving on the council. I am always open to your thoughts. Let's make this council as useful as possible.
- Next Meeting -- Friday, June 13, 2025, 9-11:00 am, Blaine Human Service Center, Room 2402.

Adjourn 11:05 am

Patti Constant
Senior Program Specialist

Randi Prebil
Health Promotion and Planning Manager
PHES

Peggy McNabb
Administrative Services Supervisor

Approved: 6-13-2025





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May 2025

Opioid Prevention RFPs Awarded



Respectful. Innovative. Fiscally Responsible.

Faces of Hope (Triumph Pictures LLC)

About:

Group of documentary filmmakers, journalists, marketing experts, and web designers who create meaningful and educational content

Timeline:

- › Filming July-Aug
- › Post-production Aug-Jan
- › Screenings Q1/Q2 2026
- › Podcasts after post-production
- › Website TBD based on County needs

Key Initiatives:

- › Create a 15–20-minute documentary featuring community leaders and members
- › Short video snippets for social media or other educational efforts
- › 8-episode podcast featuring deeper dive conversations
- › Website “Hope Hub” as a place for the community to access info and video resources

Questions:

- › Who to feature as community leaders?
- › Who to feature as lived experience?
- › What are key messages we want to promote/avoid?
- › When to have them come here?



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Neighborhood Health Source (NHS)

About:

NHS is a Federally Qualified Health Center committed to reducing health disparities and improving access to essential healthcare services with one location in Anoka County.

Timeline:

- › Oct/Nov Provider trained and getting appointments scheduled
- › Peer Recovery Services initiated June
- › Partnership with Mercy July/Aug

Key Initiatives:

- › Establish a MOUD program in Coon Rapids - offering low-barrier access to treatment for the community.
- › Expand Peer Recovery Services including outreach, Naloxone training, and resources for individuals in recovery
- › Develop a referral relationship with Mercy Hospital to increase access to MOUD care

Questions:

- › Locations in county for outreach?
- › Good locations for trainings/groups?
- › When to have them present here?



Thrive! Family Recovery Resources

About:

Thrive! Is a recovery community organization that brings hope, help, and healing to families of loved ones struggling with substance use disorder. Their program focuses on whole-family healing.

Timeline:

- › Presence at Recovery Café Anoka with a Family Peer Recovery Specialist in July
- › Provide ongoing routine family centered services, groups by October

Key Initiatives:

- › Family-centered primary prevention initiative through hosting a Family Peer Recovery Specialist (FPRS) primarily at Recovery Cafe
- › Equip families with tools to prevent substance misuse, mitigate further harm, and build recovery-supportive environments

Questions:

- › When to have them present here?
- › Ways our group can support/refer/encourage?



PLEASE NOTE:

The next contracts are contingent upon final approval from our legal council –
No expected changes....



Minnesota Recovery Connection (MRC)

About:

MRC is a nationally accredited Recovery Community Organization. They work to strengthen the recovery community through peer-to-peer support, public education, and advocacy.

Timeline:

- › Start weekly jail sessions in June
- › 6 Harm reduction sessions in jail within 2 years
- › Start Peer Support Services in collaboration with Allina in June
- › Group harm reduction with Allina by Nov

Key Initiatives:

- › Extend harm reduction education within Anoka County Correctional Facility by providing weekly education classes in the jail
- › Provide harm reduction education through a partnership with Allina Health, Fridley

Questions:

- › When to have them present here?



Georgia Panopoulos

About:

Dr. Panopoulos and Dr. Ferron of Riverway Pain Clinic will collaborate with Triumph Pictures to develop continuing education modules tailored for various health care providers. These modules will also be accessible to the general public, offering valuable information on pain management, opioid use disorder, and the intersection of the two.

Timeline:

- › Completion of modules by July 2026

Key Initiatives:

- › Provide CMEs to providers on evidenced based best practices for opioid prescribing
- › Focus on optimal management of pain and responsible opioid use/prescribing
- › Educate to minimize risk of development of opioid use disorder

Questions:

- › When to have them present here?
- › Thoughts on how to encourage provider participation in the modules?



Fentanyl Free Communities

About:

FFC is an advocacy and harm prevention organization with a mission to safeguard the well-being and futures of Minnesota families by continually educating and advocating for comprehensive measures to combat the devastating impact of fentanyl.

Key Initiatives:

- › Host 3 3-Hour community events in Anoka County over 2 Years
- › Events includes vendors, advertising, handouts, panelists, food, and technology
- › Initial event in fall, 2nd spring...

Questions:

- › When to have them present here?
- › Who to encourage on panel and as a vendor?
- › Recommended schools/locations?



Empower Therapeutic Support Services

About:

A strength-based mental health organization serving youth and their families offering prevention and education initiatives to equip justice-involved youth and their families with knowledge, skills, and resources to prevent opioid use and address opioid use disorder

Timeline:

- › Cohorts School Healing Circles & Youth Detention Center
 - › 3 6-month cohorts
 - › Pre/post surveys
- › Family Harm Reduction Program
 - › 3 6-month cohorts
 - › 6 Quarterly naloxone and chest compression trainings

Key Initiatives:

- › Offer healing circles, peer mentorship, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), and/or dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) with at least 3 schools, the Juvenile Detention Center, and culturally specific community leaders .
- › Train individuals in naloxone administration and chest compression

Questions:

- › When to have them present here?
- › What schools to partner with?
- › Partner with African American, Native American, African born community leaders for family referral – Who/where?

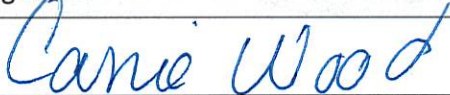

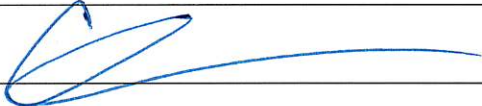





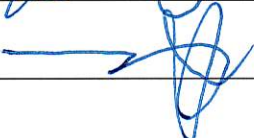

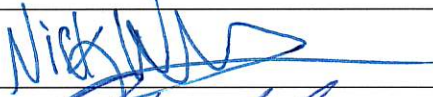
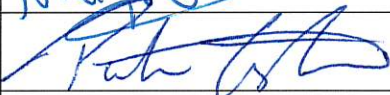


Thoughts?

- › Gaps?
- › Strengths?
- › Initial thoughts on where this leaves us for next steps, efforts, future prioritization?
- › What do we want to know from them all?
- › How do we want to engage with them as a Council?



Anoka County Opioid Advisory Council Meeting Sign-In / May 9, 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
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
Patti Constant		Opioid Prevention Specialist, Anoka County Public Health
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Opioid Advisory Council

Agenda

Friday, May 9, 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**
 - 4-11-2025 Meeting Minutes
 - 5-9-2025 Meeting Agenda
2. **One Year of ACOSI – Highlights and Accomplishments**
3. **Community Updates**
4. **RFP Announcements and Discussion**
5. **2024 Numbers**
6. **Closing**

