



ANOKA COUNTY OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

Opioid Advisory Council

Minutes

Friday, December 12, 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 by Patti Constant at 9:05am

Present: Joe Amerman, Patti Constant, Troy Friesen, Mariah Gatzow, Diana Hoffman, Krista Johnson, Corey Kohan, Lori Lachner, Christina Lefkowich, Samantha Martinez, Nancy Norman, Zamzam Salad, Megan Schueller, Derek Schuldt, Joshua VanHeuveln, Miriam Ward, Nicholas Warnke

Absent: Musab Adam, Amanda Amundson, George Borrell, Katherine Cole, Quita Curtis, Susan Ferron, Ryan George, Samantha Guthman, Tim Kizer, Peggy McNabb, Molly Nee, Melissa Olsen, Randi Prebil, Lacey Towe, Jess VanKuyk, Carrie Wood, Latieva Wyatt

Guests: Janessa Hubbard, PHES Sr Administrative Assistant, Minute Taker

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

- 11-14-2025 Meeting Minutes
 - Motion to approve the November 14, 2025, Advisory Council meeting minutes by Nicholas Warnke. Second by Joshua VanHeuveln. Motion carried.
- 12-12-2025 Meeting Agenda
 - Motion to approve the December 12, 2025, Advisory Council meeting agenda by Nicholas Warnke. Second by Krista Johnson. Motion carried.
- Today's meeting will focus around wrapping up the 2025 ACOSI year with reflections on what this team has accomplished, what worked well and what we could have done more of or differently. In 2026, we will note important actions and events coming up, how we can be thoughtful with budgeting, and our visions and intentions.
- Introducing our newest members, Zamzam Salad is from the Uplift Treatment



Center and Mariah Gatzow who will be Nancy Norman's backfill when she retires.

2. Community and County Updates

- County Updates:
 - Starting in 2026, we will no longer meet at the Blaine Human Service Center. We will conduct our meeting at the Anoka County Government Center on the 2nd floor in conference room 238 going forward. Parking passes for the ramp will be available for meetings and a map to locate the room will be sent with the meeting invitations.
 - Please see attached PowerPoint.
 - 2025 Numbers as of Dec. 8th, 2025: Death certificate certifications were paused due to the shutdown, so data could result in more cases for substance involved deaths.
 - 2025 Non-fatal Overdose Data: OD Maps did change; that when someone visits an emergency room for Substance use, it will update in the OD Maps systems.
- Community Updates:
 - Krista Johnson noted that members of the Minnesota Teen Challenge are doing a Christmas concert this weekend in Eden Prairie.
 - Corey Kohan reported that the Corrections Department added a Naloxone box at the probation offices where they do drug testing. Anticipating it will be utilized. Countertop Naloxone boxes are also located in the Juvenile Detention Center. They receive and go through about 6 - 8 cases a month.
 - Krista noted that they are supporting more street outreach work. She also reported that some methamphetamine users are finding Fentanyl in their drugs more often.
 - Derek Schuldt reported that with the Southern boarder being locked down, drugs coming in haven't increased too much. Seized 200lbs of methamphetamine through the mail. About 65-70% of drugs that are tested have fentanyl in them.



3. 2025 Recap

- Please see attached PowerPoint.

- **RFPs**
 - RFP Grantee Recaps: Fentanyl Free Communities, plan is for 3 community events around Fentanyl with panel, resource tables, etc.
 - Neighborhood Health Source (NHS): Open to providing information and resources at other community locations in a means to increase referrals.
 - Hope to have RFP grantees begin to join some of our meetings to share details about their efforts. We want them up and running before having them come to the council to present. We have a two-year contract with all of them, which will be concluding at the end of June 2027.

- **Naloxone**
 - Started with 5 locations and are now up to 29. Still have gaps to fill within the county but are close to completing. How do we increase the hours of availability for the community to access Naloxone? Discussion for next step/year efforts.
 - Over 200 locations so far for leave behind kits in AEDs in Anoka Co. The list Troy is working from is not a “complete and done” list. If you know of any locations that the community could benefit from, please reach out to Patti.
 - Nicholas Warnke asked if police departments are using drones to assist in overdose calls? A system for overdose calls which deploy a drone to dispatch through AI and drop off Naloxone.
 - Derek Schuldt replies that drones will be a part of a technology wide upgrade within the County. Brooklyn Park has been using them already in calls to overlook the situation before police arrive. This helps the department determine how many resources are needed.
 - Hoping in January or February, that Anoka County Community Social Services and Behavioral Health Department staff will be Naloxone trained and then able to carry and provide Naloxone to appropriate ‘clients’.

- **Other Efforts**
 - Our biggest challenge will be getting the word out of all the efforts that have already taken place.
 - St. Louis County heard about our Naloxone efforts and want to “piggyback” on what Anoka County is doing.



- **Finance Update**
 - Reminder that our funding can only go towards Opioid initiatives.
 - Anoka County's approach is to be thoughtful but financially responsible by putting funds into the right hands. Where do we go next with funding and how do we allocate that?

- **Up Next – 'Survey'**
 - Advisory Survey: will be sent next week to members. Please complete by Tuesday December 30, 2025. This is based on the 'Pre-Survey' that began our prioritization process. We are really hoping that by having Advisors input on this survey will allow us to see how far we have come as well as to see if it highlights any significant areas of need/upcoming focus. The results will help guide our next prioritization and efforts. We hope to cover the results at the next advisory meeting. Thanks ahead of time for your time on this!

4. Media RFP Ideas / Discussion

- Reminder that we don't want to create fear base messaging.

- Questions to Discuss:
 - **Do you think Naloxone is a good place to focus our messages?**
 - Krista mentions that people still aren't aware of NAPs and that families and people in active addiction do not know where to get Naloxone. People end up ordering them from Amazon for a lot of money and or they can't find any locations open late or through the night.

 - Clever thoughts and ideas the group had were sending people to the Faces of Hope and Steve Rummmler website, and Naloxone information displayed on movie theater ads. If the group has any more ideas, please send them over to Patti.

 - Miriam Ward noted that it would be necessary to identify the scope of audience for particular ads. Those who are searching have the awareness but the families sitting around have no clue. What audience do you want to reach or target.

 - Zamzam Salad agrees that targeting your audience is important and with social media, you are forced to watch ads that come on during a video. This could target the younger audience while brining awareness to the families. Possibility of promoting the NAP locations, especially those available after hours.



- **Thoughts on messaging?**
 - Krista suggested messaging like “Carry Naloxone; Save a Life.” Overall, we want to encourage anyone and everyone to carry Naloxone. Never know where you will be when a life needs saving. Reduce the stigma of having it on you and in your home. Naloxone should be an item you just have in your first aid kit like a Band-Aid.
 - Troy Friesen mentioned that when going to events, he tried to encourage others to carry Naloxone, and they still respond with “I don’t need this” and informs them that it is not for you but to possibly save a life around them.

- **Images to lean towards/stay away from?**
 - Nancy mentioned helping educate the community including topics like what does overdosing look like, the stigmas around substance use, approaching those in an overdose and what to expect after using Naloxone. These moments can happen while walking down the street, parents unaware of their children using, and would like Anoka County to promote community awareness.
 - Nicholas Warnke agreed that those coming out of an overdose can be immediately sick and angered and see why some would be hesitant to approach.

- **Places/methods to focus**
 - Krista: Locations like bathroom stalls in bars, restaurants, retail stores like Walmart, grocery stores, and sport centers.
 - Nancy: Gas station restrooms and possibly a NAP box?
 - Troy states that gas stations are resistant, with fear of possible loitering.
 - Zamzam: Pharmacies that are open 24/7.
 - Patti mentions there could be a conflict of interest because they are selling Naloxone but can reach out to confirm and if so, provide information if nothing more.
 - Joe Amerman: The two news stations that cover Anoka County, QCTV News and North Metro TV. They do not have a website but are hungry for content and will cover what seems like anything. Their audience is local with some watching the county board meetings.
 - Krista mentions the news pushing out Faces of Hope



information. Patti did reach out to Kare 11 and others and has an interview with The Pheonix Spirit newspaper that's specific to SUD. Our contract with Beehive will also help push information out as well.

- Christina Lefkowich: A social media launch to plug in information here and there. Anoka County does have Instagram or twitter which could reach the younger audience and make it appealing. Possibility of memes as people screenshot all the time.
- Lori Lachner: When a pharmacist provides medications, they normally provide a warning from those medications and maybe we can have them attach a leave behind to those.
 - Troy would like to see pharmacists ideally selling a Naloxone with any Opioid medication.
- Nick: Does the Faces of Hope website have a chat bot? It could be programmed with AI to include NAP locations and resources to links. Maybe a QR code that brings up a chat bot to cut down on the resources of promoting.

5. Faces of Hope Podcast Ideas / Discussion

- Nick: Personal testimonies can weave together a lot of different aspects such as where someone could find housing and where to receive treatment. Along with their testimonies, they can expand on where THEY got help and the resources they actually used within the community.
- Krista: Families of youth are the ones that really need help and still have a lot of stigma. If we get to this aspect, explaining topics like what these items look like, how to talk to their youth about it, what to do and resources provided. The "tough love" message has gone to the wayside it seems, and this is how we love those fighting with addiction. Include conversations that need to be had with Anoka County parents and what we are seeing in the community. With eight Podcasts, can also look into long term recovery and families of youth in preparedness and active stages.
- Corey: Target a specific audience and depending on what the target is, may be what we decide to advertise for that specific content.
- Zamzam: National Public Radio (NPR) does have health sections as well as local topics. Possible discussions on how opioids are easily reversible, etc.
- Christina: How Can We Support Our Community and Reduce Stigma.



- Nick: Getting someone from professional sports or musicians that the youth look up to. Role models who are willing to participate in sharing their experiences. There are athletes that do speak at these types of events.
 - Zamzam: Blaine is big on soccer and have a lot of MN United soccer players who come in to speak with students.
- Joshua VanHeuveln: HazelFest event through Love First Intervention.
 - They may not have had an event since COVID but a great resource to check out.
- Please bring any further ideas to Patti.

6. Mail Back Meds Discussion

- Want to ensure upstream prevention efforts than just Naloxone with interest in medication disposal efforts. We want unused medications in the house out and to be distributed correctly. Seeing at high risk or immobile family members taken advantage of from those that know they carry such medications.
- Encourage the community and motivate people to participate in medication drop off sites. Eau Claire has a successful program around this initiative.
- Disposable medication bags with anonymous labeling to be filled with medications, shipped back, and can be tracked to see which ones have been used. The bags are being sent back to be incinerated. This also supports our Public Health efforts with environmental impacts and avoids meds in the water supply or landfills.
- Purchased 250 bags to be intentionally and thoughtfully distributed. Ideas to distribute:
 - Patti: For events, we can have a sample on display with messaging such as, 'do you have unused medications/opioids?' Do you know about our medical drop off sites? Washington County provided disposable site flyers. We will create similar materials. Want the med bags to go out but want it to be thoughtful and for those most likely to use it.
 - Magan Schueller: Placed in specific program/department areas at Anoka County. Those that work with the elderly community and/or if staff know they have a client with such medications can sit down and educate them on these matters.
 - Nick: Can produce a 60 second reel: If you need to safely dispose your medications we have safe disposal sites here. Can add a visual of them being disposed of and could essentially use the reel anywhere.



- Nancy: Collaborate with the Public Health Recycling & Resource Solutions (R&RS) team. Use the team as a way to get information out there.
- Krista: Have worked with two people who were given opioids for surgeries and that they only prescribe so much at first that if you need more, you must call for more. Have witnessed individuals intentionally target the elderly and come to a house where they knew opioids were at. Having proper awareness around storage of medications is huge.
- Zamzam: DEA pharmacies take open and unused medications to get them out of the individual's hands. Even Codeine cough and cold medications are addictive.

7. Closing

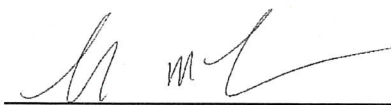
- What does this next RFP year look like? Please reach out to Patti with thoughts and ideas on what was discussed today and where we go next.
- Will come back to the next meeting with survey results so please take the time to complete!
- Reminder that our meetings going forward will now take place at the Anoka County Government Center in conference room 238.

Adjourn at 10:55am

Next Meeting Friday January, 9 2026 from 9-11am @ **Anoka County Govt Center Room 238**



Patti Constant
Senior Program Specialist



Randi Prebil
Assistant Director



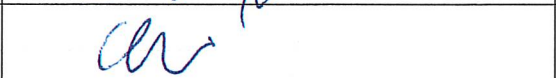

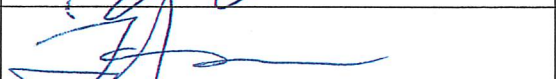
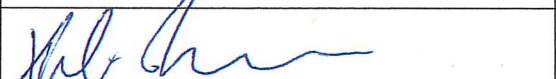
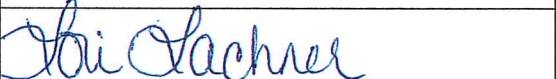
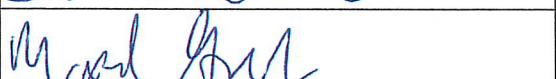

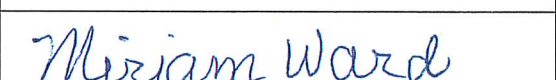




Janessa Hubbard
Sr Administrative Assistant

Approved: 12-22-2025



Anoka County Opioid Advisory Council Meeting Sign-In / December 12, 2025

Name	Signature	Representing
Amanda Amundson		Recovery Navigator, Begin Anew Recovery
Carrie Wood		Operations Lieutenant, Anoka County Jail / Sheriff's Office
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
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
Lativea Wyatt		Harm Reduction LPN, Neighborhood Health Source
Lori Lachner		Community Member
Mariah Gatzow		Anoka County Attorney's Office
Megan Schueller		Supervisor, Anoka County Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder
Melissa Olsen		Treatment Director Specialized Treatment Services, Inc.
Miriam Ward		Community Member
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



ANOKA COUNTY OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

Opioid Advisory Council

Agenda

Friday, December 12, 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**
 - 11-14-2025 Meeting Minutes
 - 12-12-2025 Meeting Agenda
2. **Community and County Updates**
3. **2025 Recap**
 - RFPs
 - Naloxone
 - Other Efforts
 - Finance Update
 - Up Next – ‘Survey’
4. **Media RFP Ideas / Discussion**
5. **Faces of Hope Podcast Ideas / Discussion**
6. **Mail Back Meda Discussion**
7. **Closing**

Next Meeting Friday Jan, 9 2026 9-11 @ **Anoka County Govt Center Room 238**



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ANOKA COUNTY OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

2025 ACOSI Highlights/Efforts

December 12, 2025



Respectful. Innovative. Fiscally Responsible.

Moment of Grounding

We will begin our meeting with a moment of silence 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.

INTRODUCTIONS

- › Name
- › Agency/Role
- › What do you see as the biggest WIN involving opioids in Anoka Co for 2025?

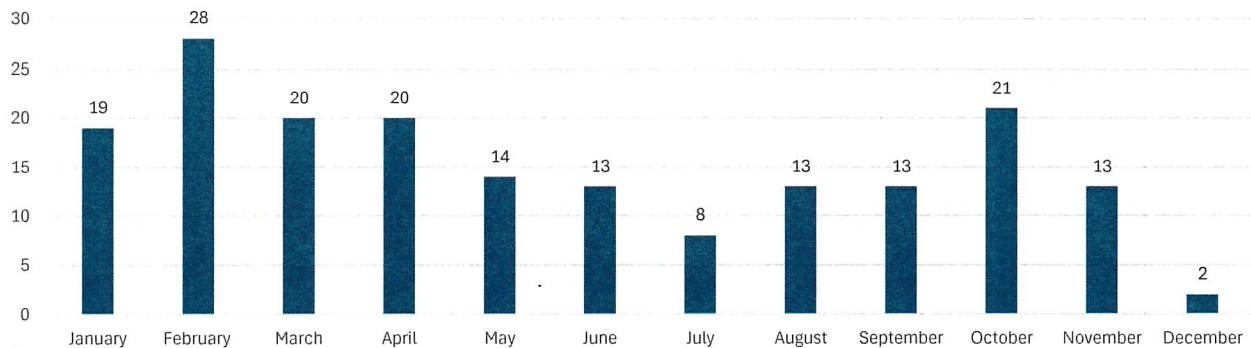
2025 NUMBERS as of Dec 8, 2025

- 52 substance involved deaths in Anoka County so far in 2025. (This might be more, because death certificate certification was paused during the shutdown). (MedEx data). In 2024, we had 46 substance involved deaths for the entire year, so we will have more deaths in 2025 than 2024.
- Substances involved
 - > 26 Opioids
 - > 27 Fentanyl (all that had Opioids also had Fentanyl in their system)
 - > 10 Prescription opioids
 - > 10 Alcohol
 - > 2 Heroin
 - > 2 Benzodiazepine
 - > 9 Cocaine
 - > 22 Methamphetamine
 - > 2 Carfentanil

2025 Non-fatal overdose data

› Per OD Maps – estimated 866 nonfatal ODs in 2025

Number of hospital-treated non-fatal opioid overdoses of Anoka County Residents, by month in 2025 (as of 12-9-25)



RFP Grantee Recaps

- › Faces Of Hope/Triumph Pictures
 - Tentative screening event Feb 3, Lyric Theatre
 - Website over 1.5 k views, 924 visits and 827 unique visitors
 - Contract extension with Beehive to do promotion/awareness
- › Dr.'s Panopolous/Ferron - CME Trainings
 - On track for summer release
- › Fentanyl Free Communities
 - Struggling to find school locations
- › Empower Therapeutic
 - One community chest compression/naloxone training
 - Connected with Columbia Heights –making plans now
 - Providing family supports through Recovery Cafe
- › Thrive Family Recovery
 - Staff change – more to come soon
 - Looking for more places to connect with families
- › MN Recovery Connections
 - Weekly jail sessions going great
- › Neighborhood Health Source
 - MOUD clinic 1x week – trying to increase referrals
 - Doing weekly outreach – open to other ideas/locations.

2025 Naloxone Recap

- › Up to 29 NAPs – SRHN (through Sept) sent out 558 Nasal, 725 IM, 825 FTS, had 8 trainings and taught 108 people...
- › At least 4 other sites offering portal naloxone: jail, JDC, Corrections, Transformation House
- › Given out OVER 650 PORTAL doses: AEDs, schools, events, fire/police, jail, JDC, events
- › Over 600 SRHN doses at over 20 different community event and to community partners: Parks, CPR instructors, high 911 call businesses/apartments
- › Leave Behind Efforts expanding: Coon Rapids, Fridley, AC Employees (Jan??)
- › AED – Over 170 in county – Columbia Heights, Fridley, most of Coon Rapids
- › Promoting NAPS, FOH & Know the Dangers websites, Posters, Banners, Flyers at church food programs, flyers at higher incident apartments



Finance Update

- › Over 7 mil in our account gaining interest
- › Guaranteed 12.7 million more over next 16 years
- › 3 more potential settlements that we are aware of

UP NEXT FOR Advisory – SURVEY

- › Effort to help clarify our next steps and assess our progress and needs –
- › ‘PRE-SURVEY’ that initial advisors and more completed
- › Assessed perceived buy-in for 9 core abatement strategies
- › Assessed familiarity with current efforts within county –
 - What IS happening and how well...
- › Next week you will receive a survey – PLEASE COMPLETE –

Naloxone Media Awareness RFP

- › Often hear lack of knowledge of what it is, where to find it
- › Interested in a longer-term education/awareness campaign.
- › One company create messaging, coordinate with variety of vendors/providers: restroom ads, billboards, social media, radio etc
- › Include Fentanyl awareness? “One pill can kill/one dose can save’ type messaging???
- › Questions to discuss:
 - Naloxone a good place to focus our messages?
 - Thoughts on messaging?
 - Images to lean towards/stay away from?
 - Places/methods to focus on/avoid?



Faces of Hope Podcast ideas/discussion

› 8 session podcast ideas

- Focus on Anoka – people on the frontline
 - › Meraki, MMEO, Substance Navigation, Unhoused/high risk pops
 - › Our RFP grantees to promote/educate?
- Stories of Recovery in Anoka
 - › Similar to documentary (Nick/Lori)
 - › Journey, how did it evolve and change, resources, advice to others
- Lessons for Anoka
 - › Bigger picture – those outside Anoka and then tie back to how it is in Anoka
 - Rummler, MN Addiction Recovery Director, D. Wellstone, Legislator, B.Ray/Researcher... etc
- Combination of above?

Mail Back Meds Discussion

- › Need some upstream Prevention
- › Medication Drop off sites
 - how to promote/educate
- › Medication disposal bags for select populations
 - Intentional/Thoughtful means of distribution
 - Can track what actually gets used
 - Events
 - Other Ideas: Sr Centers, Meals on Wheels, Hospice, Funeral Homes, Home Health Agencies, newsletters, PTA/schools, specific clinics, pharmacies, SUD Supports (NA/AA Etc...), Public Housing...
 - THOUGHTS?



NEXT MEETING

- › FRI January 9 (MY B-Day!)
- › AT ANOKA CO GOVERNMENT CENTER
- › Room 238
- › Can park in ramp – will provide parking pass for way out