

# **Maine Substance Use Disorders Services Commission**

**Prevention**

**Intervention**

**Treatment**

**Recovery**

**Presentation to the  
Legislative Joint Committee on Health and Human Services  
Feb 11, 2021**

**Bruce Campbell, LCSW  
Acting Chair**

**Public Law Chapter 432**  
**An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the Substance Use**  
**Disorders Services Commission**  
approved by the Governor on June 20, 2019

**With the support of the DHSS Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) The Commission shall serve as an *advocate* and *resource* for the State on substance use disorder prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery.**

- **The Commission shall *review* and *evaluate* on a continuing basis state and federal policies and programs relating to substance use disorders.**
- **The Commission, based on its activities pursuant to this subsection, shall *make recommendations* relating to substance use disorders to the Department and the Governor.**
- **The Commission shall *report annually* to the joint standing committees of Health and Human Services and Appropriations. The report must include *developments and needs* related to substance use disorders prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery in the State.**

# **Commission Meetings**

**Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed of the month 9am –noon  
Open to the public**

- **Sen Kim Rosen (R) Dist 8**
- **Sen Chloe Maxmim (D) Dist 13**
- **Rep Anne Perry (D) Dist 140**
- **Rep Dick Pickett (R) Dist 116**
- **Ron Springel, MD - Medical profession**
- **Joseph Bennett - Elementary education**
- **Vacant - Secondary education**
- **John Yasengjak - Post secondary education**
- **Sheriff Shawn Gillen - Criminal justice system**
- **Leslie Clark - Statewide recovery coalition**
- **Jamie Comstock - Prevention**
- **Bill Lowenstein - Intervention**
- **Tim Cheney - Treatment**
- **Bruce Campbell – Recovery (Acting Chair)**
- **Malory Shaugnessey – Co-occurring services**
- **Dean Staffieri, Private Sector labor**
- **Joanna Russell - Employment services**
- **Courtney Allen - Recovery community**

**Commission meetings are also attended by 6-10 regular members from the public**

# The Coronavirus Pandemic

- Despite the considerable accomplishments over the past two years in responding to substance use and opioid use, COVID-19 has taken a terrible toll on the individuals and families **already vulnerable with substance use disorders.**
- The impact of **isolation, chronic stress and lifestyle disruption** can be seen in the **rising use of alcohol** and **upward trajectory of opioid overdose deaths.**
- The notable **increased use of alcohol** to deal with the chronic stress associated with the pandemic will have a debris field of its own.
- And sadly, **Maine's opioid overdose deaths in 2020 are projected to exceed well over 500**, the highest number of deaths recorded yet.
- Like everything else, COVID 19 has altered how we do business for all time through the use of **tele-health, virtual platforms, and public health consciousness.**

**With the opposite of addiction being connection.**

**The biggest loss is the loss of connection.**

# Administrative Leadership

## Executive Orders to Address the Opioid Crisis

- Established the **Governor's Prevention and Recovery Cabinet** providing essential cross sector planning and collaboration.
- she appointed **Gordon Smith as the Director of Opioid Response.**
- This led to the development of the **Maine Opioid Response Strategic Plan**, with the goal “to reduce the negative health and economic impacts of substance use disorder and opioid use disorder on individuals, families, and communities in Maine,” The plan articulated 5 focus areas, 9 priorities, 20 strategies targeted at this single goal.
- For the very first time, there is significant appreciation for **substance use recovery** as a process to be supported at all levels.

## Annual Opioid Summits

- On July 15, 2019, Governor Janet Mills convened a summit at the Augusta Civic Center entitled “**Turning the Tide: Maine's Path Forward in Addressing the Opioid Crisis.**” More than a thousand people attended.
- The following year, in the midst of the pandemic, Governor Janet Mills convened the second annual Opioid Response Summit virtually on July 23, 2020 with over 700 in attendance.
- At the end of the virtual summit, the date for the third Summit was announced, scheduled for July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

***The substance use and opioid epidemic never went away; COVID 19 simply bumped it off the front page. We cannot forget alcohol and other drugs. Marijuana is now legal, and there has been an increase in cocaine and methamphetamine use.***

# **Maximizing Federal and State Cross Sector Resources**

- **Implementing Medicaid expansion that expands access to treatment resources.**
- **Maximizing federal grants and state funds such as the State Opioid Response (SOR, STEM-SOR), the Fund for a Healthy Maine, Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA), the Strategic Prevention Framework and block grants.**
- **Expanding collaborative efforts across state government departments to maximize program efficiency.**
- **Developing cross system data capacity for tracking opioid overdose tracking and response.**
- **Developing a treatment locator system.**

# Prevention

The prevention programs formerly administered by the Office of Substance Use (now Office of Behavioral Health), were transferred to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) during the previous administration. The CDC Substance Use Prevention makes regular reports to the Commission and further collaborates with the Department on substance use prevention efforts. Highlights of some of these prevention efforts include:

- Developing **vaping media campaigns** for youth, parents and adults to increase knowledge and awareness about the dangers of vaping.
- Creating a **Marijuana Prevention Toolkit** to assist in community wide education efforts.
- Relaunching the **“Good to Know” marijuana prevention campaign** to educate about the law, underage use and high-risk misuse.
- Supporting the implementation of **Second Step, a social emotional learning program**, for students pre-k to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. (65 schools).
- At OBH, hiring a Coordinator for **helping new parents to protect their infants from the effects of substance use.**
- Supporting **Suicide Prevention, Restorative Practices, and Community Outreach Programs.**
- Most recently, Maine CDC is developing a three-year **Statewide Substance Use Prevention Plan** (to be completed by May 2021).

# Intervention/Harm Reduction

- **Expansion of **safe syringe distribution** in underserved areas.**
- **Wide distribution of NARCAN statewide**; this has resulted in over 1.600 reversals by emergency personnel. Distribution of NARCAN to end users or supporters also resulted in many additional, but unquantified, overdose reversals.
- **Most recently, initial implementation of the post-opioid overdose response program, **Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach Naloxone and Safety (OPTIONS)**.**

**Please check out the website:**

**[knowyouroptions.me](http://knowyouroptions.me)**



# Treatment

- **Expanding access** to medication assisted treatment (MAT), in addition to outpatient and intensive outpatient services.
- **Rapid induction** of MAT in the Emergency Departments (20 out of 33 EDs statewide).
- **Low Barrier MAT** targeting individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Introducing a **pilot program to coordinate treatment access in rural areas** (Washington County).
- Expanding access to **MAT treatment in jails and prisons.**

# Recovery Support

## Recovery Community Centers

- **Establishing a network of 13 recovery community centers, coordinated through a central hub, with additional recovery center support developing in underserved areas.**
- **The Department is working to support additional recovery community centers in Millinocket, Lewiston, Rumford, and Lincoln.**

## Recovery coaching

- **Expanded the recovery coaching program statewide and certification development.**
- **Established a program for recovery coaches in the Emergency Departments.**

## Recovery Residences

- **Supported the Maine Association of Recovery Residences program, increasing the number of Maine certified homes to national standards from 28 to 50 within the past year.**
- **Collaborating with Maine State Housing Authority to support a network of recovery residences to include the recovery housing grant from the federal Housing and Urban Development.**

## Recovery employment support

- **Through a 6.2M grant to the Department of Labor, the workforce system is investing in career training and support activities to support the reemployment of individuals impacted by the crisis, and creating temporary employment opportunities for individuals in communities impacted by the crisis.**
- **Through the Department of Labor, the workforce system is providing training and skills development for the workforce in professions of substance use treatment, mental health, and pain management.**
- **Supporting the Maine Recovery Fund which provides supportive services to people who are in recovery from substance use disorder, re-entering the workforce and society in general, such as employment starter kits and transportation.**

# Recommendations

- **The Commission joins the Department in its public health campaigns in its calls for action resulting in behavior change related to **reducing stigma and discrimination** for persons with substance use disorders.**
- **Continue to maximize federal resources to mitigate the impact of resource restrictions at the State level and expand collaborative efforts across state government departments to maximize program efficiency.**
- **Continue implementing Medicaid expansion and expanding access to all FDA-approved medications for treatment of substance use disorders, including alcohol and nicotine use dependence.**
- **Remove any remaining barriers to naloxone distribution.**
- **Support and continue to develop cross system data capacity for tracking opioid overdose tracking and response.**
- **Support and implement the recommended Fatal Overdose Review Panel that was introduced last session.**
- **Support and continue to develop and implement a treatment locator system.**
- **Address **unmet residential treatment needs**, specifically additional detox centers and residential treatment programs.**
- **Now approved, implement **MaineCare's 1115 Waiver to expand residential SUD treatment capacity.****
- **Develop policies and procedures that **reduce biased hiring practices for persons in recovery.****
- **Support and expand recovery support services to establish **recovery community centers in every county** in the State of Maine.**
- **Finalize and publish the findings for the current report being developed on the Economic Impact of Substance Use in Maine, the last of which was published in 2010.**

**Questions**

**Thank You**