



**Governor's Opioid Overdose Prevention and Recovery Steering Committee**

Juliana Stratton – Lieutenant Governor  
 Dr. Ngozi Ezike – Director, Department of Public Health  
 Grace Hou – Secretary, Department of Human Services

**Date & Time**

Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
 9:30AM-11:00AM

**Meeting Location**

Video/Teleconference

**Dial-In Information**

Videoconference	Teleconference
Videoconference info shared with Council members separately	Conference Number:
	Access Code:

**Agenda**

- I. Call to Order
  - a. Lieutenant Governor calls meeting to order at 9:32AM.
- II. Roll Call

Name	Organization	Present	Absent
Grace Hou	DHS	X	
Ngozi Ezike	DPH	X	
Theresa Eagleson	DHFS	X	
Brendan Kelly	ISP	X	
Sherie Arriazola	Council Committee Chair	X	
Rob Jeffreys	DOC		X
Jason Stamps	ICJIA		X
Heidi Mueller	IDJJ	X	
Mark Smith	CFS	X	
Dan Rabbit	Public Member	X	
Luke Thomsha	Public Member	X	

Jessica Riechart			X
Debbie Joy		X	
Juliana Harms			X
Danielle Kirby	DHS	X	
Jenny Epstein	DPH	X	
Maria Bruny			X
Arvin Goyle		X	
Anthony Kellner			X
Julianna Stratton	Lieutenant Governor	X	
Robert Mannis	Office of the Lieutenant Governor	X	
Narciso Perez	Office of the Lieutenant Governor	X	

- a. Quorum has been established.
- b. Approval of Agenda
  - i. Motion to accept May 26<sup>th</sup> 2020 made by Grace Hou. Sherie seconds motion.

III. Chairperson's Remarks

- a. We are meeting virtually to follow the Governor's stay at home order. I'm grateful to all of you for your leadership during this time. I also want to begin by saying I hope all of you are well. I know all of you are continuing to show continuous leadership. Governor Pritzker signed the executive order creating this steering committee because he is committed to make real substantive change. Both Rural and Urban communities and all races suffer. The Illinois Opioid Coping Advisory Council has been working on this problem for years and now we are going to be helping contribute to their work. I want us to look at these issues through an equity lens. Offer the floor to Ngozi Ezike.
- b. Ngozi Ezike: Thank you LG Stratton, your leadership is crucial during this time. While we are in the middle of this pandemic, we must not forget prior issues that are hitting our populations. This pandemic has led to stressors to people's lives while limiting resources people would need to cope with those stressors. Looking forward to moving into phase 3 of the Restore Illinois plan. Addiction obviously is a relationship between a person and a substance and we're currently seeing disruptions between people. We were optimistic that our overdose numbers were going to be declining but it looks like there will be a 0.5% increase from 2018. The impact from this pandemic is being felt in our more vulnerable communities. Non-Hispanic blacks are dying 2x the rate as non-Hispanic whites. In Illinois we are so lucky to have a great champion to lead these initiatives such as needle and syringe service program. Access to safer drug use and safer product leads to protection from overdoses. Media campaign to let those that are affected know

they are not alone. IDPH continues to provide people with Opioid data through a Opioid dashboard. This shows trend of opioid overdoses by gender and race. The dashboard also has the locations of life saving drugs like Naloxone. Thank you again Lieutenant Governor for shining a light on this problem.

- c. Grace Hou- Good morning everyone. Want to quickly thank Danny, Jenny and Bobby who have been working close together to make this happen. As director Ezike shared, there is a greater need now than ever to support Illinoisans now and in the future. So please to work with the Lieutenant Governor again. Race plays a critical role in this and it's important we address this problem. We provide services for some of the most vulnerable populations (cash relief, rehab, food services, etc.) Today, you're going to hear an update on states progress on access to care and life saving drugs like Naloxone. We like to tell people if they are using drugs to use them in the company of others so someone can apply Naloxone in the case of an overdose. Many people can not access online services. There is a real need for human contact. COVID is causing depression, fear, anxiety and in-turn, people are turning to drugs to cope. DHS, we look forward to working with our sister and brother state agencies.
- IV. Current status on Opioid crisis, Steering committee goals, Next Steps presentation
- a. Danielle and Jennifer:
  - b. Danielle: There was a task force established in a prior executive order, but the task force no longer is. They did help develop the scope. Prevention, Treatment and Recovery, and Response were the three pillars.
    - i. Opioid Crisis Response Advisory Council
      1. 200 members (Across state agencies, people in recovery, etc.)
      2. 6 committees
      3. Meets every month (around 100 people every call)
      4. Children and family committee, Criminal Justice committee, Medication Assisted Recovery Committee (MAR), Opioid Social Equity Committee, Prescribing practices committee, Public education and awareness committee
  - c. Jenny: We had seen a 1.6 % decrease in overall deaths last year but we've seen an increase. Something that we want to focus on are the severe disparities in fatal vs. non-fatal overdoses. Disparity is growing over time between races in fatal and non-overdoses.
  - d. Danielle: MAR -Reviews opioid overdosing medication slide- 629 Illinoisans that live in county with no medication assisted recovery. Very Rural counties that have limited services are the ones with no MAR. We're looking at increasing telehealth in these areas. In terms of COVID, we're seeing disparities. Sent out guidelines for take home opioid medication. Expanding telehealth across Illinois state agencies.
  - e. Jenny: Executive Order and Why now?
    - i. Growing disparity in opioid overdoses. We want to look at what to do next. People aren't getting to the point of treatment. Executive order

consolidates councils and committees input and I think in the next steps we're looking to create a new State Opioid Action Plan.

- f. Questions or Comments:
  - i. Lieutenant Governor: Where are we collecting racial and ethnicity-based data for these programs? If that information can be provided at some point, that would be very helpful to me.
  - ii. Luke- How is language being handled?
    - 1. Danny: We have to say heroin in some of our messaging instead of just opioids because some people say they have no opioid problem but have a heroin problem.
    - 2. Jenny: Engaging community agencies to ensure they are addressing these issues. Luke I can include you on that discussion.
  - iii. Grace: Echo earlier comments on this concise presentation. One of the key pieces is around data gathering. What are those areas of information that we need to begin gathering?
  - iv. Arvin - I think we need to dedicate some time on strategy to focus on communities of colors. Distribution of Naloxone, once the overdose has occurred will be a challenge. Limited quantity of Naloxone could prove to be an issue as well. I would like to discuss more the public availability of Naloxone such as public availabilities of AED's.
  - v. Dan Rather (Heatland): Rates at which the black community uses medication assisted recovery as opposed to the rate at which the white community uses MAR there is a big disparity there. I don't know why, but that may be worthwhile to look into. Looking at the rates of use in MAR from a racial lens would also be helpful. Looking at state investment, seeing where those dollars go and what communities are supported (deeper than just county level).
  - vi. Sherie- Safer foundation is working with IDOC for people being released early from prison because of COVID. Issues faced by those communities are continuing and now people are facing those issues along with the issues present with Pandemic. These folks are looking at potentially going back to selling these substances. Our strategy needs to incorporate all the other issues present during this pandemic. How can we incentivize them to decrease their use. Working with SAMSHA to use employment as an incentive.
- V. Next Steps:
  - a. Bobby: We're looking to have 3 more meetings this calendar year.
- VI. Member update:
  - a. None
- VII. Public Comment:
  - a. None
- VIII. Adjournment:
  - a. Motion to adjourn meeting at 10:49 AM made by Grace Hou.

