



PHILIP D. MURPHY  
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State of New Jersey  
GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE  
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NEIL VAN ESS  
*Acting Chairman*

CELINA LEVY  
*Acting Executive Director*

## **MINUTES**

### **Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse**

**July 16, 2019**

#### **Call to Order**

The three hundred and thirty fifth regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Acting Chairman Neil Van Ess.

#### **Open Public Meetings Act Statement**

Mr. Van Ess announced that notice of this meeting was provided in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21).

#### **Roll Call**

Katelyn Assenheimer called the roll. Members present and absent were noted for the record. Mr. Van Ess informed the Council that this meeting would be for informational purposes only due to the lack of quorum.

#### **Chairman's Report**

Chairman Van Ess welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mr. Van Ess said that at this time the primary focus of GCADA is preparation for the new grant cycle and the Prevention Collaborative. He welcomed Sara Thode, the new GCADA Director of Prevention and Planning, the position previously held by Kevin Sullivan and also Kristin Boniface, the new GCADA State Alliance Coordinator, who is refilling the position previously held by Sean Campbell. He also welcomed back Viktoria Kremper from maternity leave.

Mr. Van Ess also shared that Governor Murphy had signed three pieces of legislation addressing the opioid crisis. A3292, A4744 and SJR35 will strengthen opioid prescription label requirements, ensure greater access to Medicated-Assisted Treatment (MAT) benefits for Medicaid recipients and spread awareness of opioid abuse through the designation of October 6<sup>th</sup> as "Knock Out Opioid Abuse Day".

### **International Overdose Awareness Day Resolution**

Acting Executive Director Celina Levy read a resolution recognizing August 31<sup>st</sup> as International Overdose Awareness Day. This resolution will be voted on at the next meeting.

### **Presentation: “An Overview of Opioid-Related Initiatives by the State of New Jersey, Department of Law and Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General**

Kelly Levy, Deputy Attorney General from the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety gave an overview of some of the initiatives currently underway by the Office of the Attorney General.

The Office of the New Jersey Coordinator of Addiction Response and Enforcement Strategies (NJ CARES) is responsible for overseeing addiction fighting-efforts across the Department and building partnerships with other agencies that are also committed to identifying and implementing solutions to the opioid crisis. Real-time information on the opioid epidemic is available on the NJ CARES website with plans for expansion to include more information including addiction resources and educational materials for the public.

The Integrated Drug Awareness Dashboard (IDAD) is a private user-based computerized, information sharing “dashboard” to exchange opioid-related data including data from the Prescription Monitoring Program and New Jersey State Police, between state agencies over a secure platform.

Opioid Response Teams (ORTs) are crisis intervention teams that operate 24/7 to assist individuals suffering from opioid abuse. Team members are made up of local law enforcement, Emergency Medical Services and Substance Abuse Recovery Advocates and each receive specialized training. Team members are called by local police or EMS to assist individuals at the scene of a crisis and provide support, information and/or access to opioid treatment services.

Operation Helping Hand (OHH) started in Bergen County. Over a course of several days, a team of law enforcement officers arrest individuals buying heroin or other narcotics at known open air drug markets. When the individual is brought into the police station for processing, recovery specialists and mental health professionals then connect them with treatment or recovery support services. The charges are not dropped, however every effort is made to place that person on the path to recovery and if treatment is completed, this information is passed on to the sentencing court for their consideration.

### **Acting Executive Director’s Report**

Acting Executive Director Celina Levy again welcomed Sara Thode and Kristin Boniface to the GCADA staff and Viktoria Kremper back from maternity leave and stated that GCADA was now fully staffed.

Ms. Levy shared that on July 12<sup>th</sup>, GCADA in partnership with Rutgers and the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) held a kickoff for the Needs Assessment portion of the Prevention Collaborative was held. Members in attendance included the County Coordinators and Regional Coalitions.

Ms. Levy continues to represent GCADA on the Adult Suicide Prevention Advisory Council and the Suicide Prevention Conference Planning Committee. The next Suicide Prevention Advisory Council meeting takes place in July and the Suicide Prevention Conference is scheduled for September 10<sup>th</sup> at the War Memorial in Trenton. Ms. Levy will provide more details as the date gets closer.

Ms. Levy thanked the Council members for their support, the County Alliance coordinators and Alliance members for their important prevention efforts, GCADA staff for being gracious and supportive during the period of being critically short staffed and to Mr. Van Ess for supporting all of GCADA's efforts.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:30.