



AIAN Opioid Response Workgroup (ORW)

Minutes

American Indian Health Commission

4/8/2025 3:00 PMPDT

@ Virtual

Attendance

Present:

Members: Ofi Brown (remote), Dylan Gonzales (remote), Lucy Hill (remote), Steve Kutz (remote), Linda Lauch (remote), Marilyn Scott (remote), Julia Ortiz (remote), Dayna Seymour (remote), Sarah Sullivan (remote)

Guests: Jade Waits (remote), Andrea (remote), Rebecca Hunter (remote), Laura Monico (remote), Rob O'Claire (remote)

AIHC: Kathryn Akeah (remote), Cindy Gamble (remote), Heather Holzer (remote), LAura Kluever (remote), Vicki Lowe (remote), Maria Ness (remote), Jen Olson (remote), Pam Priest (remote), Wendy Stevens (remote), Lisa Rey Thomas (remote), Faith Turk (remote)

DCYF: Bob Smith (remote)

DH: Megan Mills (remote)

DOH: Amber Arndt (remote)

HCA: Nakia DeMiero (remote), Lucilla Mendoza (remote), Lena Nachland (remote), Aren Sparck (remote)

OIC: Larry Robinette (remote)

OSPI: Rebecca Purser (remote)

WSP: Emily Main (remote)

I. Welcome/Introductions

Facilitators: Vicki Lowe, Lisa Rey Thomas, Lucilla Mendoza, Nakia DeMiero

Blessing: Vicki Lowe

Introductions to include Updates and Upcoming Opportunities - All

II. WA Tribal Opioid and Fentanyl Taskforce Updates

Presenter: Vicki Lowe

A. 3rd Tribal Opioid Response Summit Updates

Summit Dates: May 20 - 22, 2025 at ilani Resort of the Cowlitz Tribe.

Registration Link: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/etf6njr/lp/2630bf69-5eab-4e1a-8a0f-cff2fdaf9c96>

Please make sure to also reserve your hotel room. This needs to be done separately from the event registration. Both links are within the link above.

B. Subcommittee Updates

Link to the Opioid Response page on the AIHC website: [Opioid Response - American Indian Health Commission](#). Resources are linked here.

 [WA State Tribal Opioid Fentanyl Taskforce SubCommittees.pdf](#)

- C. Task Force Report - Policy/Legislative Needs - Review priorities from Summit and identify Leg changes needed

Link to the [Continuum of Care Priorities](#) which Vicki reviewed with the group and updated with feedback.

III. Boulder Care Overview & Patient Experience (Guests: Jade Waits)

Laura Monico, Director of Research presented on Boulder Care, a harm reduction based telehealth clinic providing low barrier access for treatment of Opioid Use Disorder, including buprenorphine. They were awarded a grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse to create and evaluate linkages to opioid use disorder among some of their local communities. They would like the opportunity to partner with a Tribal Nation community site connected to any of the folks on this call in a collaborative effort. They did not present the slides attached below but Jade described the patient journey through their care model and some of the built-in supports that are in place, since they are virtual. Andrea provided an overview of the 2-phased study, with the goal to bring Boulder services to 5 different sites. And Rob related his experience as someone with lived experience, in long-term recovery, provides peer support and has been on buprenorphine.

Questions/Comments:

Emily Main asked if if Boulder Care has resource to connect someone who needs medical clearance before detox/treatment. Laura responded yes. They do have providers that provide low barrier access to buprenorphine as well as determine if medically stable however there are limitations because they are virtual. They can bridge the gap after detox discharge and getting into some sort of housing program, for instance with letters of reference or support. They can do agency specific assessments when appropriate.

Is Boulder Care connected the Care teams who are walking among people experiencing homelessness on the Olympic Peninsula or Seattle area? Jade responded that they are not, but the info is super helpful, and she will follow up.

Lisa asked about what is done when it is found through a urine screening that the drug being prescribed is not in their system? Jade responded that urine testing is a sensitive topic and they will look at the person as a whole, case by case with involvement with a peer support. They will never discharge someone based on a urine screening. It's going to be a conversation.

Has Boulder Care partnered with a Tribal nation in research before? Laura Monico responded that she believes so in a limited way.

 [Boulder Care Overview & Patient Experience Sept 2024.pdf](#)

IV. Updates from HCA

Presenters: Lucilla Mendoza, Nakia DeMiero, Aren Sparck

HCA is waiting for the Budget to be determined as well as gearing up for contracts and other projects.

- HCA found more funds available for Tribes. There is an additional \$3225 per Tribe and UIP's for participation in the Task Force monthly meetings, Task Force monthly subcommittees, and attendance at the upcoming Wa Tribal Opioid Fentanyl Summit. Nakia reviewed the Amendment to Statement of Work. There will be a comprehensive summary report required. They are not quite ready to send the amendments out but are very close.
- Budget - Aren Sparck. He reported the Opioid Settlement Fund is still a work in progress and still needs to be appropriated. The budget is still not finalized. Vicki said it looked like the same

language as last year with the amount being a little more. Refer to page 180. Aren added it is an annual authorization from the legislature.

- Roundtable re INA Restatement tomorrow 4.9.25. This covers a lot of the funding that flows through the HCA to Tribes. Consultation will follow on the 17th. They are also looking at renaming to Sovereign Nation Agreement. Aren added that HCA does not know the ARPA piece affects the INA given what is happening at the Federal level. Let HCA know who your Tribe is being impacted so they can catalog.

Questions/Comments:

Vicki asked if there were any updates on the SAMHSA funds and injunction? Aren reported the temporary restraining order was granted. Over the weekend, the Supreme Court allowed the Dept of Education vs State of California to keep their portals closed during the litigation which was odd news. HCA is in a holding mode to see if they still move on the restraining order as it moves to permanent status. It is important for **everyone to get your invoice in.**

- V. Agenda item for Upcoming Meetings and Wrap Up
- VI. Closing