

Oklahoma Commission on Opioid Abuse 09.02.2022

The Oklahoma Commission on Opioid Abuse held a regular meeting at 1:30PM on September 2, 2022 at the Oklahoma Attorney General's Office, 313 N.E. 21st St, Oklahoma City, OK. The agenda was posted on the Attorney General's website and outside the meeting room 24 hours in advance in accordance with 25 O.S. § 311. The meeting notice was sent to the office of the Oklahoma Secretary of State, also pursuant to 25 O.S. § 311.

Members present were: Attorney General John O'Connor, Beau Ratke, Bob Howard, Nicole Nash, Dr. Scott Anthony, Dr. Ed Braly, DA Chris Boring, Senator Roger Thompson, Jennifer Schmitt, Shonda Lassiter.

Call to Order

Attorney General John O'Connor called the meeting to order and welcomed the members.

Roll Call

Director of Legislative Affairs Emma Sherry called roll. Deputy General Counsel Thomas Schneider recognized a quorum and noted that the meeting notice and agenda were posted in accordance with the applicable Oklahoma statute Open Meetings Act.

Approve Minutes from previous meeting

Dr. Braly moved to approve the minutes from the Council's last meeting on June 3, 2022. Nicole Nash seconded the motion. It was passed unanimously by the members.

Presentation from Oklahoma State University Research Center

Dr. Jonny Stevens presented an update to the group on the national center for wellness and recovery. He stated a lot of the work being done in Tulsa is around medical center expansion. ARPA proposal for a biotech R&D laboratory in Tulsa with broad neuroscience capabilities aimed at pain and addiction solutions. He stated in the Purdue litigation OSU was a recipient of drug molecules that came from Purdue Pharma. This will be transformational on all of Oklahoma as it leverages NCWR assets of bio samples and novel molecules, Private partnerships forming for collaboration, pursuing federal grants.

Dr. Stevens announced approximately a year ago, the partnership with the University of Arizona Health Sciences. Oklahoma has the novel samples, drug molecules and Arizona having a large addiction research already started, it partners up perfectly for both research Universities. OSU is activity working on a joint proposal submitted to the NIH this Fall. He states the grant will allow for research at both UA and OSU to partner up with expertise. As fentanyl has become more well-known and being seen, there will be a huge focus and ongoing research with UA to combat fentanyl crisis, discover opioid replacements.

He mentioned a new asset in Tulsa is the Hardesty Center for Clinical Research and Neuroscience. There is state of the art medical equipment such as a functional MRI that is the best in the region. The Center is also a clinical trial unit around not only opioid addiction, but childhood adversity.

He highlighted other research programs such as Rural Veterans Health Access Program - improving access to mental health and substance use disorder services via Project ECHO, HRSA Rural Opioid Response Program Projects - work with local coalitions to address substance use in their communities, Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Use – Division of Prevention Services and others.

Dr. Stevens closed with all the great things coming and including the University of Arizona partnership. There are two primary focuses to leave with including: The research and advancement of what is the latest and newest drug to help move the crisis forward around addiction and the treatment component to expand around the National Center.

Presentation from Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics

Chief Agent Beau Ratke stated that he is presenting on the emerging fentanyl threat to Oklahoma. He stated that Oklahoma is in the midst of a drug abuse and overdose epidemic and drug overdose deaths far exceed vehicular and firearm fatalities being on of the top 10 causes of death in the state. This epidemic began with the over-prescribing of prescription opioids and following that fueled illicit opioid abuse. He gave statistics that opioid abuse has led to over 1,300 overdose deaths in the last five years which include 500 being fentanyl related.

Chief Agent Ratke showed pharmaceutical forms of fentanyl and mentioned it was very rare to have a medial overdose. Illicit fentanyl may be in the following forms: powder, liquid, or pills that mimic other medication. Today, fentanyl is the second most common drug and the most common opioid drug involved in overdose deaths. He stated that the important thing to remember is that the potency is unknown because you do not know where it is at or the purity.

He mentioned that a majority of fentanyl is being manufactured in China, shipped to Mexico and smuggled across the southwest border.

He highlighted the Oklahoma trends that OBN is seeing including Fentanyl is being pressed into pharmaceuticals and included in other drugs. Fentanyl included in other drugs are Heroin, Cocaine, Methamphetamine, and Ketamine. In 2018, OBN seized 0.3 liters of fentanyl the entire year and begin to see an increase come 2021 and in 2022 thus far, there has been 105 pounds seized.

Chief Agent Ratke closed with highlighting the great strides in addressing the opioid epidemic from the pharmaceutical side. Now, drug overdoses from fentanyl are not limited to those where opioids are their drug of choice and Fentanyl is being seen in almost every drug available.

Litigation Update

Attorney General O'Connor updated the group on office litigation. He stated that recent there was a memo signed for a claim against distributors that will bring in approximately 308 million dollars over 18 years. And that will be divided between the state and political subdivisions with the state receiving 22 million dollars. He mentioned that all cities and counties litigating, and non-litigating must sign on receiving the funds for the state to receive the full amount.

AG O'Connor educated the group on the Opioid Abatement Board that is responsible for allocating funds among political subdivisions.

Brad Beckworth, outside Counsel for the Attorney General Office, explained the way the settlement works is if all settlement releases are signed by participating participants by the end of

September there should be a payment of one and two in the first year before the end of the year totaling around 25 million.

Legislative Update

Attorney General O'Connor opened up discussion on future legislative agenda items that would be a result of the Commission.

Mr. Bob Howard raised attention on a bill allows Physician Assistant to prescribe opioid prescriptions. He stated that there are over 2,000 PA's in Oklahoma and believes that it would not be beneficial to give that prescribing authority since there has been so much improvement to the opioid epidemic. He does not want there to be excess prescribing authority that could potentially allow for an increase in the opioid epidemic and unregulate authority.

Ms. Jennifer Schmitt, CRNA, gave input on provided clarity from her perspective on how Physician Assistants prescribe. She states that PA's have historically had permission to write schedule 2 narcotics with an OBNDD license. The language was changed with how the practice changes but not their prescribing authority. She wanted to make clear that there was no adding of prescribing writing authority, they have always had that.

Tyler Powell introduced himself to the group as a guest and contract lobbyist for the Oklahoma Academy for Physician Assistants. Mr. Powell educated the group on the prescriptive authority for a PA and the confusion. In the PA Act 59 OS 519.6 subsection e was fixed this last session. He stated that it did two things 1) law states that PA have schedule two prescribing authority. OBNDD last October as registrants, went through and changed the limitations for PAs. It was SB 1322 and will take effect November 1.

Attorney General O'Connor states that the group would not recommend a discussion as such with it not being an action item. He gave the option to add it to the agenda next meeting and wanted to know the value of the discussion at the current moment.

Patt Hall introduced himself as a guest and lobbyist for OSMA. He mentioned they have been working on opioid reform with multiple agencies. Mr. Hall wanted to emphasize that they want to stop the overprescribing of opioid prescriptions and adding more people to prescribe. He stated that Mr. Howard wanted the board to be aware of the ongoing issue.

Attorney General O'Connor emphasized that this is an ongoing issue and welcomed input for it to be on the next agenda, if raised. He thanked all parties for their input on the discussion.

Upcoming Meeting Announcement

Attorney General O'Connor announced the next meeting will be on November 4 at 1:30PM.

Adjournment

Senator Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting. Jennifer Schmitt seconded. The meeting was adjourned.