



Onondaga County Legislature

JAMIE McNAMARA
Clerk

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Chairman

TAMMY BARBER
Deputy Clerk

401 Montgomery Street • Court House • Room 407 • Syracuse, New York 13202
Phone: 315.435.2070 • Fax: 315.435.8434 • www.ongov.net/legislature

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES – JANUARY 17, 2023 **COLLEEN GUNNIP, CHAIR**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Chase, Ms. Kuhn, Dr. Kelly, Mr. Bush

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Rowley, Mr. Ryan, Mrs. Ervin, Ms. Cody; also see attached

Chair Gunnip called the meeting to order at 10:37 a.m. *The minutes of the previous meeting had been distributed, and there were no objections to waiving the reading. There were no corrections to the minutes, and the minutes were approved.*

- Great job to Dr. Chase on all the great work done on the Health & Human Services Committee (H&HS) in 2022
- The Legislature received \$3.7M in opioid settlement money in 2022
- As a result of the opioid settlement, the County Executive put together a Committee to review proposals

- 1. CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES:** Jennifer Parmalee, Deputy Commissioner, Mental Health Services
 - a. INFORMATIONAL:** Opioid Settlement Contract

Opioid Settlement Response Onondaga County (OSROC)

RFP #22-8300-001

Background from RFP:

Onondaga County has not been immune to the opioid crisis. In 2020 individuals visiting emergency departments in Onondaga County for opioid overdose significantly exceeded the rates of those in the rest of the state, excluding New York City. From 2012 to 2021 our County has experienced a more than 300% increase in unintended opioid related deaths. We know that the pandemic exacerbated the problem by increasing stress, isolation, feelings of loneliness and other factors that lead to substance use and reducing access to treatment.

Many states and municipalities have filed lawsuits arguing that pharmaceutical companies have culpability in the crisis. As multi-billion-dollar settlements are reached, funds are being distributed as outlined in the National Opioid Settlement. Pursuant to amendments in NYS Finance Law, Mental Hygiene Law, and Executive Law, the Opioid Settlement Fund (OSF) was established to manage New York State's share. These funds are being distributed by geographic region, as outlined in the New York Distribution Sharing Agreement (Exhibit N of the National Opioid Settlement).

Onondaga County recently received its first disbursement of more than \$3.7 million, to support prevention, treatment, recovery, and systemic strategies related to addressing the opioid crisis in our community. The goal of this RFP is to use these funds as a catalyst for systemic, innovative, and evidence-based approaches to change: addressing both the root causes of the crisis and supporting with dignity our community members living with and/or recovering from substance use disorders.

Total Available Funds: \$3,771,991

Total # of Applications: 14

Total Amount of Requests: \$11,096,781

Notes:

- All awardees are receiving a partial award of their total request.
- Contracts will be slated to start January 1, 2023.
- \$400,000 of funds were reserved for a special investigator in the District Attorney's Office related specifically to addressing the source of fentanyl entering and spreading in our community.

Awardees (6):

ARISE, Inc. (Outpatient Mental Health Services for Co-occurring Disorders)

- receiving \$90,000 of the \$147,400 requested

Support of existing prescribers becoming Data 2000 Waivered prescribers to add Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) as an option for patients with Substance Use Disorder (SUD). Training of staff related to the evidence-based treatment of SUD. Increased treatment for co-occurring disorders.

Catholic Charities of Onondaga County (Harm Reduction and Recovery Support Program)

- receiving \$750,000 of the \$941,450 requested

Increase harm reduction efforts through staff training and the hiring of specialized staff with a focus on providing harm reduction tools and strategies to the population currently living in shelters and permanent supportive housing. Commission a feasibility study related to the possibility of an Overdose Prevention Center in Onondaga County.

Crouse Hospital, Inc. (Addiction Treatment Services)

- receiving \$450,000 of the \$496,992 requested

Implement train the trainer of Stop and Flow (a tai chi program) and staff training in family engagement and working with incarcerated populations. Become a certified CEU provider for Social Workers and Mental Health professionals. Support the work of 1 FTE of a Certified Recovery Peer Advocate, covering the cost of the non-billable portions of this essential work.

Justice Innovation Inc, dba Center for Court Innovation (Westside Community First)

- receiving \$500,000 of the \$1,602,032 requested

Pilot a version of the agency's Community First model in our community. With a focus on utilizing Peer Support workers, meeting people where they are congregating, for substance use, in open spaces in our community. Key purposes are to reduce overdosing death and injury and to streamline referrals to treatment and recovery supports.

Onondaga County Health Department (Mental Health and Substance Use Initiatives)

- receiving \$1,281,991 of the \$1,687,341 requested

Increase delivery of PAX Good Behavior Game. This is an evidence-based practice targeting different school aged populations. Increase overdose prevention training and the distribution of harm reduction tools such as naloxone, fentanyl test strips and provide a syringe services program. Provide case management for high needs individuals, supporting treatment and recovery. Increase capacity for drug testing in the Medical Examiner's office through the purchase of additional equipment.

Red House Performing Arts Center, Inc. (Opioid Awareness Curriculum Tour)

- receiving \$300,000 of the \$642,850 requested

Through partnership with Le Moyne College develop a prevention education curriculum for elementary aged students that will be delivered through live stage performances at schools throughout the county. Work towards the possibility of being deemed an evidence-based prevention curriculum.

District Attorney's Office

A set aside separate from the RFP: \$400,000 to fund a special investigator and/or prosecutor over three years

- Still in negotiations but close to finalizing contracts. Current state of negotiations are clarifying language around outcomes. Department focusing on results based accountability with the end in mind as it relates to the contracts
- 6 awardees include:
 - Arise
 - State has worked to reduce the “silos” put in place depending on area of concern; mental health, substance use, or developmental disability
 - For example, individuals being treated for mental health issues are not immune to substance use disorders
 - Goal is to increase treatment for individuals with co-occurring disorders (i.e. mental health and substance abuse) by breaking down these “silos” by allowing to treat the individual holistically
 - Catholic Charities
 - Works with the homeless and highly at risk individuals for substance use challenges
 - Will be increasing harm reduction efforts within that population, increasing supportive housing opportunities and commissioning a feasibility study to see if community would benefit from an Overdose Prevention Center
 - Crouse Hospital
 - Gets back to evidence based practices on how to support individuals with substance use challenges
 - Allows family engagement of incarcerated population
 - Looking to become a training hub for mental health professionals specifically for substance use disorder
 - Will be hiring a certified peer recovery coach to work with individuals with substance use disorder
 - Office of Addiction Supports and Services – done a great job allowing for billable services for peers within treatment setting
 - Many services peers can and need to be providing that are not billable; this proposal allows to provide that
 - Justice for Innovation
 - Westside Community First pilot program modeling around harm reduction utilizing peer support workers
 - Supporting the startup of the pilot
 - County Health Department
 - Increase delivery of PAX Good Behavior Game
 - PAX is a school related, evidence based practice shown to reduce substance use in youth focusing on social emotional regulation with teacher and children in the classroom
 - PAX is a game played within the classroom to help increase ability to focus and stay emotionally regulated
 - Data shows that children learning the ability to self-regulate use substances at a much lesser rate in teenage years
 - Red House
 - Partnering with LeMoyne College to develop an evidence based curriculum for elementary aged children to reduce opioid usage through live stage performances throughout the county
 - District Attorney's office
 - Special investigator to address issues at all ends; treatment, prevention, systemic implementation

Questions/Comments from the Committee

- It sounds like the PAX Good Behavior Game has been looked at from a longitudinal basis where they see benefits outside the realm of just that year in the classroom.
 - Yes, they have done a good job with research over many years
 - Implementing and supporting PAX in East Syracuse Minoa and Syracuse City School District
 - This would expand those opportunities in classrooms

- Done in partnership with Contact Community Services
- The Health Department will be looking at how they can expand supports and services
- What schools will PAX be going into?
 - Schools are not yet known
- Is PAX through the county Mental Health Department?
 - No, it is through the county Health Department
- Will the teachers be doing the game? Is there a training component for teachers to get trained in PAX?
 - Teachers will be doing the game and receive one to two days of training at the beginning of the year
 - They will also have coach support throughout the year, which includes the coach collecting data to share with teachers to see if the program is working or not
- What age range is the PAX game for (talking about overdose, fentanyl test strips, and syringes)?
 - PAX is separate; Fentanyl test strips, syringe services program and other harm reduction pieces are building out the harm reduction work the Department of Health is doing
- PAX is just a good behavior game? How is PAX related to addiction?
 - Evidence has shown that young people who are more likely to experience risky behaviors such as substance use disorder and other risky pieces show that one of the major root causes is emotional regulation challenges
 - Not being able to regulate their emotions or able to identify their emotions or being able to find support to manage their emotions
 - PAX provides an opportunity in a general group setting so all children are focusing on learning how to regulate their emotions
 - Children are learning these skills through the PAX game every day in the classroom
 - From a neurological perspective, children are building skills and these skills are staying with them
- How many classrooms in the school will be participating with the PAX game?
 - Will need to get back to you with age groups and number of classrooms the county is participating in
- Is there a capacity to do a longitudinal study over time with a small group of students to determine if PAX should be part of a curriculum instead of a grant?
 - Typically looked at within a year of the contract
 - 1) what they do
 - 2) how well they do it
 - 3) who is better off
 - Will find out from the Health Department if there have been any discussions with the institution that puts the PAX game together to see if there are any studies or surveys that show the benefits
 - The Good Behavior Game is implemented to K-12 students
- These contracts are supposed to be awarded January 1, 2023. Where are contracts in the process?
 - Very close, have agreed on scopes and what is going to be delivered
 - Need to finalize: 1) what are they going to do, 2) how well they are going to do it; and 3) who is better off
- With something specific to a school district. If the program is started soon, semesters will be divided up. Are they missing something?
 - The program will be implemented February through August by meeting with school districts and determining what specific age groups and classrooms will be focused on as well as planning how and when to train the teachers. September would be the start date for the children in the classroom
- Is there an end date to spending the money?
 - 3 years
- How did you come up with the dollar amounts awarded?

- Many applications were received - Committee prioritized each application by identifying the components that would have the greatest impact on the community
- The budget was then aligned to those priorities
- Will the county be doing this every year?
 - It depends when the county gets the money
 - May get another \$4.9M between 2023-2038; then, in 2025-2030 another \$3.2M
 - These are numbers the Legislature has not received yet, but there are other settlements going on right now
- The groups are committed to 3 years?
 - Not every piece is a 3 year commitment; they have up to 3 years based on the way the funding is awarded
- Of the 6 that were awarded, where is the service area centered? The list is very urban centered. Problems exist in rural and suburban areas as well as urban. Sometimes the entire reach of the county is not considered
 - There are challenges all around the county, not just city
 - Arise main office is on James Street, but they have school based clinics across the county
 - Crouse Hospital main hub on Erie Boulevard, and will support any individual that comes to them
 - Health Department is working to be in every corner of the county
 - The harm reduction work and syringe service program is happening in many sites outside the urban setting
 - There is whole component of independent schools, religious based schools, and home schools that need to be included in the outreach
 - School Day Initiative started in urban setting; since April 2021 in all public schools throughout the county
 - At this point, focus on the public setting
 - Request to increase awareness to non-public schools
- Of the 14 applicants who did not receive funding, what percentage of applicants are existing programs that were looking for additional support, and which applicants were looking to get new programs started?
 - There were a number that were expanding current programming and some new ideas as well
 - Some ideas did not provide enough to support in the grant to be successful
 - If one can start something new and invest in it, assistance can be granted if successful
 - One of the applications had plenty of resources to do what was needed

Request: Have Ms. Parmalee come back at a time when she can report on some of the outcomes

- Under the Health Department budget, are there any other forms of opioid or addiction related dollars?
 - There is a mental health and substance use program manager position in the Health Department that partners with CFS Mental Health Department
 - The two departments formed a county based harm reduction and outreach team which benefits both peer teams
 - Together they started a syringe services program and play a leadership role in the community
- The county does not fund any of this kind of treatment or education in this area for the Justice Center or Jamesville. They recently received a grant for \$1.7 or \$1.9M
 - The Sheriff has a contract with Wellpath who provides mental health services and some substance use services
 - CFS has a contract with Crouse because there is jail treatment funding that is stating what was received from Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS)
 - In the last 3 years the jails have implemented more Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services such as methadone treatment, substance use and substance use transitional services
 - There are treatment services that are occurring right now
 - The Governor sent a request to every county asking to share their plan on how they are providing MAT and substance use services within their detentions centers; Onondaga County plan is complete
 - Have a good foundation with Wellpath at the Justice Center, Hillbrook and Jamesville
- Crouse is providing services as well
 - Crouse is required to support the identification of individuals who may be experiencing substance use challenges, engaging with Crouse to support a plan and provide any sort of mental health treatment

- Was that in addition to this contract?
 - Ms. Buck from the Sheriff's office will have to indicate the level of increased responsibility
 - Feeling positive and hopeful with the new partner and relationship with Crouse
 - There is no change in what Crouse is expecting to provide
- Suggestion to have a joint committee meeting with H&HS, Public Safety and Wellpath to describe exactly what their contract entails
 - The Health Department has no oversight in what goes on, health wise, at the jail
- Dr. Anderson will share the annual survey results for all of their programs when they are ready
- Judge Neri has negated the mandated COVID immunization for healthcare workers

The meeting was adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Barber

TAMMY BARBER, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

DATE: **JANUARY 17, 2023**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
<i>Tammy Barber</i>	<i>Leg</i>
<i>Jim Beebe</i>	<i> </i>
<i>John DeSantis</i>	<i> </i>
<i>Tim Frateschi</i>	<i>Counsel</i>