

Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Courts and Justice-Involved Populations Subcommittee Tuesday, June 3, 2025, Approved

Attendees:

Subcommittee Members Attending: Misty Adams (Patrick Mirandy proxy), Stephanie Bond, Candace Facemyer, Sam Hess, Judge Rowe, Stephanie Thornton (Chair)

Guests Attending: Tahnee Bryant (Youth Subcommittee representative), Josh Vanbibber

Subcommittee Members Not Attending: Amber Blankenship, Cindy Hill, Tom Plymale

Office of Drug Control Policy Staff: Dr. Stephen Loyd, Justin Smith

Marshall University: Rachel Bledsoe and Bradley McCoy

Special Guest Speakers from AETNA: Jaime Cantley, Kathy Szafran, Jeremy Truman

Opening:

Stephanie Thornton (Chair) provided welcome and opening remarks of this meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, Courts and Justice-Involved Populations Subcommittee. The meeting was called to order on Tuesday, June 3, 2025, and was conducted by Zoom conference. A quorum was present to approve May 2025 minutes. Judge Rowe proposed a motion to approve the minutes. Sam Hess seconded the motion. Stephanie Bond corrected the minutes from May 2025 to reflect a removed statistic, and that Sam Hess asked about who was working with juvenile drug courts, but he is not working with them himself. The minutes were approved with all in favor, and none opposed. The purpose of today's meeting is for Aetna's guest speakers to identify the gaps in care for juveniles with substance use disorder (SUD) and what services are available for their treatment.

Agenda Items:

Guest Speakers (Aetna)

- Jaime Cantley is the Recovery and Resiliency Administrator for Aetna Better Health.
- Jeremy Truman works with the Community Management division for Aetna.
- Kathy Szafran is an Executive Director of Mountain Health Promise at Aetna.

2024 Youth Treatment Survey Presentation

- The survey was sent to all enrolled providers who offer mental health and SUD services and was also presented to the WV Behavior Health Association.
- Aetna received 51 total responses while using SKIP logic and had a 71% completion rate.
- All counties in West Virginia were represented.
- The survey covered adolescents ages 13-17 with 86% of providers giving services to adolescents.

Which of the Following Services does the agency provide?

- 96.88% of responses stated Mental Health services provided.

- 96.88% of responses also provided Behavioral Health services.
- Only 59.38% of responses provided substance use disorder services.
- 62.5% of responses offered these treatments in concurrence.
- 9.38% offered other treatments.

What would Incentivize the Agency to expand adolescent services:

- 87.10% of respondents answered higher reimbursement rates would incentivize providers to expand services.
- Other factors included were staff training, state compliance and registration, and increased referral options.
- Aetna also cited that staff trainings (no cost to the agency) and state compliance and regulation changes could be incentivizing.

Evidence-Based Practice (Currently Commonly Used Treatments)

- Respondents were asked what evidence-based treatment models they provide and many answers given were forms of therapy or forms of care, but not evidence-based treatment models.
- Children with Serious Emotional Disorder (CSED) is a program that offers wraparound care but is not an evidence-based treatment model. It is not a single treatment for SUD but more case management.
- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT) is a tool, but not a model.
- Other programs and tools listed that are not evidence-based practices were: play therapy, motivational interviewing (MI), family therapy, Safe Talk, SMART (Self-Management and Recovery Training), Medical Assisted Treatment (MAT) for ages 16 and up, Teen Drug Court, Alcoholics Anonymous/Narcotics Anonymous, and Strengthening Families programs.
- The Seven Challenges, the Matrix Model, and Living in Balance were the only evidence-based treatment models listed by respondents.
- The hiring standards for many treatment centers' staff only require a broad BA or MA educational degree in psychology, social work, etc. without a specific focus in SUD. Substance use disorder continuing education can be added later.
- California Evidence Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (CEBC) is a database that helps identify and disseminate information regarding evidence-based practices. Each program has a program rating (1-5) and levels of care for program implementation.
 - Website for CEBC is www.cebc4cw.org
 - Training materials range from \$46 per set to \$1600 for on-site training. The adolescent toolkit training is \$145 per person along with an option to add on CEs.
- In searching the database, Aetna made the following evidence-based treatment model recommendations that are feasible to implement in West Virginia:
 - Seeking Safety-Adolescent Version
 - Matrix Model for Teens & Young Adults
 - The Seven Challenges
- Aetna provided a cost breakdown for the Seeking Safety training books, manuals, and training videos.
- The Matrix Model for Teens and Young Adults is targeted at adolescents aged 13-17 years old with a history of substance use. This model uses relapse prevention groups, educational groups (for both child and parent), and individual therapy combined with family and social support

groups. The Matrix is designed for both inpatient and outpatient treatment over a 16-week period. The cost for the Matrix Model is \$1595 online.

- The Seven Challenges method is a programmatic approach which allows adolescents to observe what is happening in their lives. They learn to recognize what is going well and what is problematic. This technique is beneficial in school settings as well as justice-involved and community settings. The cost is an initial three-day leader training that costs \$595 and journals and manuals that cost between \$45 and \$100.

Barriers or Challenges Agencies Face when Providing Treatment to Adolescents

- 77.42% respondents replied that the reimbursement rates are a main barrier.
- 64.52% respondents cited workforce issues which rely on gaining additional licensure or implementing programs to maintain licensure.
- Other challenges agencies face includes self-training/expertise, lack of time training, compliance and regulations, and start-up funding.

West Virginia Certification Board for Addiction and Prevention Professionals (WVCCAPP)

- Their mission is to certify the qualifications and competence of professionals engaged in SUD treatment and prevention services in West Virginia.
- The key certifications for WVCBAPP include:
 - Alcohol and drug counselor
 - Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor
 - Certified Criminal Justice Professional
 - Prevention Specialist
 - Peer Recovery Support Specialist- Substance Use or Mental Health
- Many people across the state working in behavioral health are not licensed or trained in SUD treatment, the certification board works with the state to provide these certifications.

Additional Discussion

- Where do most of the referrals go? Many providers send referrals to the Emergency Room (ER) and then youths are sent to other programs or treatment centers.
- 13% of youth with severe SUD are being sent out of state. By learning to train upstream, there can be a reduction in the number of referrals sent out of state. If a child meets the level of care for residential treatment, it is very hard to find them placement in the state. Programs with the infrastructure do exist, but they need to be more competent in their training.
- When working with adolescents, there also needs to be consideration for pre-treatment education. Many times, a youth does not present a SUD, but they have underlying mental disorders or families where this behavior is normal.
- Certification can help with employment retention. There is a need for juveniles to have aftercare when they return. The state is reliant on their workforce to carry out these programs.

Key Performance Indicator Updates and Quarter 2 Progress Report

- Stephanie Thornton is inviting Ashley Payne to the July meeting to discuss second chance hiring.
- Stephanie remained on the call to provide Bradley McCoy with the completion percentages and information for the Quarter 2 Progress Report.

Adjournment:

Stephanne closed the meeting by thanking all Subcommittee members for their attendance and participation. The Subcommittee will meet on July 8, 2025, at 10:00 AM.