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It is my privilege to chair the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Advisory Council and to present our [priorities for the year](#). Members of each subcommittee identified focus areas aligned with our charge per the Montgomery County Charter, primarily: prevention, advising, and outreach. Within those areas, members identified goals and strategies to utilize our collective experience and expertise to reduce substance use related illnesses and deaths. *Our primary focus this year is to quantify the need for substance use disorder treatment and recovery options for Montgomery County youth and families, and to support efforts to ensure resources are available that meet the need effectively.*

Prevention Committee (includes harm reduction):

- Advocate for mandatory naloxone training for bus/transit drivers/operators with naloxone in all vehicles.
- Reduce substance use disorder stigma throughout county guided by NIDA's Words Matter to include the charter, agency/department/BCC names, and communications.
- Support the Prevention Alliance's Youth Ambassador program in partnership with MCPS.
- Promote screening for substance use in pre-adolescents and teens by pediatricians & primary doctors.
- Implement [Handle With Care](#) in partnership with MCPS.

Treatment and Recovery Committee:

- Work with the Chamber of Commerce to promote naloxone training attendance by business owners and staff, and encourage them to stock naloxone to be replaced by EMS units who respond at the scene of an overdose.
- Expand harm reduction efforts including fentanyl test strip distribution and syringe exchange with WRAP services.
- Elevate the use of Peer Recovery Specialists and Family Support Specialists.
- Improve access to and acceptance around medication assisted treatment (MAT) programs.

Legislative Committee:

- Support enforcement of the [Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act](#), including Non-Quantitative Treatment Limitations (NQTLs), in the county, state, and nationally.
- Advocate to expand the Screening and Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder in Correctional Settings (House Bill 116, 2019 Maryland General Assembly session) to include state prisons.
- Improve the effectiveness of the annual legislative retreat through collaboration with agencies and BCCs, to identify and track legislation more efficiently and in a timely manner.

Sincerely,



Laura Mitchell, M.B.A. (She/Her)  
AODAAC Chair