

**Alcohol and Other Drug Addiction Advisory Council**  
**AODAAC**  
**November 14, 2024 (Virtual)**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Voting Members:** Elyse Grossman (Chair), Margaret Mattson (Co-Vice Chair), Isabelle Raquin (Co- Vice Chair), Laura Mitchell, Nick Borowski, Irene Gumico, Michelle Scarlett, Thomas Chu, Malliga Iyer, Ed “Bunny Rich”, Denyse Dillion & John Sidhom

**Non-Voting Members:** Monica Martin (DHHS Chief), Sara Rose (LBHA Director), Socrates YiaUouras, Lt. Pete Davidov, Madison Ruppenthal.

**Subcommittee meeting discussion:** Laura presented a focus for the 2025 Spring Forum held annually in May. As previous forums were virtual due to COVID; thus, limiting the number of speakers. The thought to have the forum in person. Laura reports the community requests more family forums on fentanyl topics. Proposed educational outreach sessions, many organizations would partner. Sessions time frame 9am-12pm with various educational topics, and to be offered in English and Spanish. AODAAC members present are in support, however this must be discussed and agreed upon by MHAC members. More to come.

**Guest Speaker:** Melissa Cunningham.

Elyse called meeting to order at 7:01pm. Quorum was present (11 at start of meeting) Welcomed everyone. October 10, 2024 Minutes approved with no changes. Motion for approval was made and seconded.

**Chair Updates & Discussion:**

Feedback collected on the October 10, 2024 in person /hybrid meeting experience. In-person attendees enjoyed the interaction. Some virtual attendees reported varying sound quality issues. ***Suggestions for future meetings:*** Consider hybrid format for more meetings. ***Proposal to hold hybrid meetings every other month, starting with December meeting to be hybrid.*** January 2025 will be virtual due to Legislative retreat. Laura suggested using MCPS facilities for better audio-visual setup. Need feedback on locations and audio quality. Laura to check feasibility of using MCPS's new space. ***Members voted in favor of Hybrid meeting for the December 12, 2024, meeting.***

**Newsletter Update:** Inaugural newsletter was disseminated. Its on the AODAAC website. Looks great! Future newsletters planned, aiming for 2-3 per year. Community to be engaged with content for next edition.

**Priorities Meeting Highlights held October 17, 2024:** Highlighted the issue of stigma.

Collaborated effectively with MHAC. Addressed concerns about testimony writing limitations. Deaths due to substance use have decreased but are still at an all-time high. Discussion about the letter regarding MCPS and the Chief Medical Officer. Mentioned the 20th anniversary of drug court and the opening of Mountain Manor. Cannabis report sent out. Council Member Sayles expressed interest in stigma trainings. Importance of addressing DUI issues across jurisdictions highlighted by the Council. Collaborative spirit emphasized at the Priorities meeting, with a desire for more. Fentanyl and Vaping Issues discussed. Council Member Luedtke noted fentanyl is a major issue. EMS reports students going into shock from vaping THC mentioned. The need for healthy peer messaging in schools discussed. Testimony and Advocacy: Council Member Albarnaz unaware of issues regarding the ability to testify. Suggestions made to inform BCCs about the importance of being included in discussions to ensure voices are heard.

**Guest Speaker introduced by Isabelle:** Melissa Cunningham, Director of The Dual Track Reentry Program partnership with the American job center network is aimed at helping unemployed or underemployed individuals find employment. Melissa's spoke about her own recovery journey and commitment to helping others. PPT was presented and emailed to membership,

### **County Reports:**

**DHHS:** Sara Rose (LBHA Director) & Monica Martin (DHHS Chief).

Sara provided LBHA updates: Carmela George was appointed as Operations Manager of LBHA. Carmela oversees operational and programmatic sections, including Quality Assurance; working closely with MCPS on asset mapping and needs assessment. Data specialist to present findings to Mental Health Advisory committees. Mount Manor youth residential treatment facility recently reopened. Currently accepting admissions; flyers available in English and Spanish

Monica provided DHHS updates: HHS Crisis Stabilization Services Crisis stabilization services have been operational for over a year. Average referrals and admissions for FY24: 30 referrals and 22 admissions per month as of October. Average monthly utilization so far in FY25 has doubled from FY24. Received 69 referrals and 55 admissions in October.

Top Referral Sources: 63% Crisis Center (walk-in/MCOT); 21% hospitals (Shady Grove/Suburban); 16% EMS (drop off expanding from EMS teams county-wide) 70% of Sept & Oct referrals identified as homeless, 67% male, and approx. half report substance use. Of those reporting substance use – the #1 substance reported is alcohol, followed by polysubstance use. **Please see full report at the end of the minutes; full report was also emailed to members.**

**Police Department:** Lt Davidov provided verbal report. New overdose investigation unit established in the Special Investigations Division with the focus on overdose cases headed by Sergeant James Matthews with nearly 20 years of experience in complex criminal investigations.

**Police Department cont.:**

There's Legislative concerns regarding accountability in fentanyl cases. Collaboration with State Legislature and U.S. Attorney's office. Positive statistics reported on overdoses. Non-fatal overdoses down 64% and fatal overdoses down 57% since 2003. Youth overdoses down 71%. Ongoing concerns about the current drug laws. Regions, like on the Eastern Shore and Western Maryland, are prosecuting Placing emphasis on differentiating between serious dealers and casual users. The term "kingpin" is debated; focus is on dedicated dealers. Recent high-profile cases involving schools highlight the issue. Personal connections to individuals affected by drug use and dealing. U.S. Attorney's office is focused on higher-level drug trafficking. Interest is in prosecuting significant sources of drugs rather than casual.

**Alcohol Beverage Services:** Socrates reporting for Roddy Aguirre. ABS facilitates wholesale distribution to over 1000 licensed establishments. Compliance rates for alcohol sales are high. **Over 85%** compliance rate reported during checks with underage students. Upcoming initiatives and campaigns planned. Hosting webinars for licensees on alcohol responsibility during events. Launching a holiday pledge campaign to promote safe alcohol consumption. Funding secured for the "Keeping It Safe" student video contest. Focus on creating PSAs about the dangers of alcohol consumption. Please see full report at the end of the minutes. Full report emailed to members.

**Montgomery County Public Schools:** Not present

**Correction & Rehabilitation:** No representation

**HHS Substance Use prevention & Harm Reduction:** Not present.

**Board of License Commissioners:** Not present

**Mental Health Advisory Committee:** Celia reporting. Priorities discussed at the November 5, 2024, meeting. Focus on school refusal as a significant issue. Chronic absenteeism identified as a problem needing attention. Data from the LBHA will be presented in upcoming meetings. Invitation to AODAAC members for virtual subcommittee meetings. Next meeting scheduled for November 19, 3:30 to 4:30 PM. MHAC meeting scheduled for January 7, 2025, 7 to 9 pm. Hybrid format with dinner for in-person attendees. Guest speaker Nicole Grainer to discuss State Legislative efforts. Invitation sent to AODAAC members.

**Commission on Health:** No representation.

Information: (Monica) OIT is no longer active; it has been replaced by the Overdose Prevention Team; OPT is a required entity. The committee also oversees the use of opioid restitution funds. The OPT facilitates prioritization and recommendations for opioid abatement funds. AODAAC is encouraged to make recommendations for allocation of opioid abatement funding. Written recommendations are accepted until December 11th.

Concern raised about the Mountain Manor's availability and criteria by a member. (Sara addressed) The program is currently only open for detoxification services. Eligibility for care is based on meeting medical necessity criteria. Individuals must be at risk of withdrawal symptoms to qualify. Current services are limited to male adolescents until renovations are complete. Full services for all adolescents expected to be available by early 2025.

**New Business:**

Laura would like a list of all groups in the County working on substance use. “Too many groups cause gaps”.

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjourn:** 8:58pm.

**Please see full Ex-Officio Reports below:**

**Montgomery County  
Alcohol and Other Drug Addiction Advisory  
Council Ex-Officio Member Report**

**AODAAC Meeting Date:** November 14, 2024

**Department/Agency Reporting: Ex-Officio  
Member Name:**

Roddy Aguirre, Community Outreach Manager

**Agency Mission (particularly as it relates to AODAAC):**

As a control jurisdiction, ABS facilitates the alcohol wholesale distribution to over 1,000 licensed establishments in the county. Along with the sale and distribution of a controlled substance comes a responsibility to educate and support the establishments served.

The Community Outreach Office works with license holders to ensure compliance. Helping communities flourish through the promotion of alcohol laws, public awareness and responsible hospitality practices are priorities.

**Relevant data (i.e., overdose statistics/trends, substance use incidents in schools, etc.):**

Current compliance rate holds above 85%.

**Relevant data (i.e., overdose statistics/trends, substance use incidents in schools, etc.):**

None currently.

**Current or potential collaborations with AODAAC:**

ABS is working on hosting webinars for licensees who are hosting events. Webinars will help to inform the licensees of their responsibility during events where alcohol is sold, and people are allowed to walk with an open container within the events' boundaries. In addition, ABS has launched a "Holiday Pledge" campaign that will focus on gathering pledges from business owners and community members to make a conscious effort to have consume alcohol in a safe manner and/or serve alcohol in a responsible manner. Pledges will be collected online, and pledgees will receive information about ABS' efforts to deter under-21 alcohol consumption. ABS is also waiting for funds for the Keeping It Safe Student Video Contest that focuses on having high schoolers and middle schoolers creating a 30-second PSA on the dangers of alcohol consumption.

Montgomery County Alcohol and Other Drug Addiction Advisory Council MHAC Ex-Officio Member Report 1 AODAAC Meeting

Date: November 14, 2024 Department/Agency Reporting: Mental Health Advisory Committee (MHAC) Ex-Officio Member

Name: Celia Serkin, MHAC Liaison to AODAAC Agency Mission (particularly as it relates to AODAAC): MHAC was established to advise the Montgomery County Executive and the County Council on matters concerning mental health. MHAC's work includes providing citizen oversight to all state-funded mental health agencies serving Montgomery County and serving as an advocate for a comprehensive mental health system for persons of all ages.

The Committee helps to ensure that publicly funded mental health services are responsive to local needs, accountable to the citizenry, and accessible to those in need. Relevant data (i.e., overdose statistics/trends, substance use incidents in schools, etc.): MHAC had a meeting on November 5, 2024. At the beginning of the meeting, there was a discussion on subcommittees. • CAYAS Subcommittee – Celia Serkin and Michelle Grigsby-Hackett, CAYAS Subcommittee Co-Chairs, have continued to hold meetings. For this fiscal year, the CAYAS Subcommittee is focusing on school refusal. Representatives from the Commission on Juvenile Justice will attend

the upcoming CAYAS Subcommittee meeting scheduled to take place virtually on November 19, 3:30 – 4:30 pm. • MHAC members discussed establishing other subcommittees to advance MHAC’s priorities. o Crisis Response Sequential Intercept Model o Medicaid Coverage for Mental Health Services in Schools and Communities, including Crisis Response o MHAC has other priorities that they are supporting through membership, e.g., Suicide Prevention Coalition. • Legislative Subcommittee – MHAC approved a motion to have an Ad Hoc Legislative Subcommittee. Updates given during the MHAC meeting included: • Update on the meeting with HHS Committee of County Council • Letter from Silver Spring Justice Coalition • LBHA Update • AODAAC • Montgomery County Goes Purple • Suicide Prevention Coalition • CAYAS Subcommittee Vacancy Notice for the MHAC – Interviews will be held in November. MHAC does not hold meetings in December. MHAC will have an in-person meeting on January 7, 2025, from 7:00 - 9:00 pm, at 401 Hungerford Drive, 1st floor Conference Room, Rockville, MD. Nicole Graner, LCSW, Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy, Community Behavioral Health Association of Maryland, will be the guest speaker. She will discuss state legislative efforts. MHAC invites AODAAC to come to this meeting. An invitation will be sent to AODAAC members inviting them to attend the MHAC meeting. Spring Forum – The Suicide Prevention Coalition would like to partner with MHAC and AODAAC to plan the Spring Forum. Relevant data (i.e., overdose statistics/trends, substance use incidents in schools, etc.): Current or potential collaborations with AODAAC: MHAC and AODAAC will continue to collaborate on various advocacy efforts and events.

**Montgomery County  
Alcohol and Other Drug Addiction Advisory Council Ex-Officio Member Report**

**AODAAC meeting date:** 11/14/2024  
**Department/Agency Reporting:** Health & Human Services  
**Ex-Officio Member Name:** Monica A. Martin, LCSW-C, Chief, Behavioral Health & Crisis Services

**Agency Mission (particularly as it relates to AODAAC):**  
 The mission of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is to promote and ensure the health and safety of the residents of Montgomery County and to build individual and family strength and self-sufficiency. The Behavioral Health and Crisis Services (BHCS) service area of HHS is committed to addressing the specialized Behavioral Health needs of Montgomery County.

- Actions/updates since last report:**
- HHS Crisis Stabilization Services @ 1301 Piccard Dr.
    - o Average monthly utilization so far in FY25 has doubled from FY24. Received 69 referrals and 55 admissions in October.
    - o Top Referral Sources: 63% Crisis Center (walk-in/MCOT); 21% hospitals (Shady Grove/Suburban); 16% EMS (drop off expanding from EMS teams county-wide)
    - o 70% of Sept & Oct referrals identified as homeless, 67% male, and approx. half report substance use. Of those reporting substance use – the #1 substance reported is alcohol, followed by polysubstance use.

- Exploring options with judiciary to increase collaboration for youth involved in the juvenile justice system.
- The Youth Safety Initiative, facilitated by the Office of the Chief Health Officer, is utilizing a public health framing approach to identify the root causes of mental health, substance use and victimization, with a goal of identifying key recommendations to address youth safety from a public health lens.
  - Working groups have been established to discuss priority topics that address youth case management, safe spaces for youth, youth data and youth engagement. Community partners have been participating in generating ideas and breaking down “5 whys” on problems impacting youth, and emerging themes by frequency related to substance use include: 1) the inadequate availability of services and 2) lack of supportive/holistic care.
  - The initiative held three youth engagement sessions to discuss challenges youth face in the community on the three themes, review data provided by County Stat and provide solutions on how to improve these challenges. Emerging themes from youth voices include:
    - Most Important:
      - Family therapy and interventions like parent education on drug use and the risks of taking drugs.
      - Free rehab and access to therapy.
    - Easy to Implement:
      - Inform community about substance use data.
      - K9 dogs smelling for substances.
    - Biggest Impact:
      - Inform community about substance use data (*overlap with “easy to implement”*)
      - Punitive consequences for those who sell to kids.

**Relevant data (i.e. overdose statistics/trends, substance use incidents in schools, etc.):**

- While 2024 has seen a significant decrease in opioid related overdoses and fatalities in youth, it is important to note that these decreases are being driven by reductions in White youth, while Black and Hispanic/Latino youth have seen no change or a slight increase.

**Current or potential collaborations with AODAAC:**

- As convener and facility of the Montgomery County Overdose Prevention Team (OPT), BHCS is seeking AODAAC’s recommendations into the County’s ongoing allocation of Opioid Abatement Funds. The OPT is adhering to the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health’s national recognized [Principles for the Use of Funds from the Opioid Litigation | JHSPH](#), and welcomes the opportunity to present and/or receive more information in this regard in an upcoming AODAAC meeting.

**END**