

# COORDINATION AND COOPERATION TASK FORCE

## Meeting Minutes

November 10, 2023 9:30 - 11:00 am

Hybrid: In-person at the Community Health Institute/JSI and virtually on Zoom

### Attendance

Name	Attendance
<b>Task Force Members</b>	
Steve Ahnen	In person
Helen Hanks	Absent
Carol Furlong	In Person
Lauren Chambers	In Person
Suzanne Thistle	In Person
Kara Morse	In Person
Meghan Marcucci	Zoom
Jake Berry	Absent
Peter Ames	In Person
Phoebe Axtman	In Person
Ashley Lewis	Absent
Thomas Donovan	Absent
Dan Wargo	Absent
<b>Public</b>	
Harold Rosen	In Person
Carol Robidoux	Zoom
<b>Liaison(s)/ Subject Matter Experts/ Invited Guests</b>	
<b>Center for Excellence on Addiction/JSI Staff</b>	
Amy Daniels	In Person
Olivia Skaltsis	In Person
Lauren Ferridge	In Person

# COORDINATION AND COOPERATION TASK FORCE

## Welcome & Introductions

All participants introduced themselves.

## Review and approve 9/8/23 minutes

It was noted that a correction be made on the first page in the Attendance record that "Phoebe Axeman" be changed to "Phoebe Axtman".

Steve requested approval of the 9/8/23 meeting minutes as amended. Carol Furlong made the motion to approve. Kara Morse seconded. All in favor, no abstentions.

## Discussion on the Public Forum Data Brief

Amy Daniels provided context to the methods and creation of the data brief and shared its goal of summarizing public desires for FY25 funding recommendations. 85 complete responses to the online survey and comments from 25 individuals who attended the public hearing session were analyzed for the data brief. Amy shared the goal of the Task Force meeting which would be to review and elevate the information in the data brief to form FY25 funding recommendations to bring to the Budget Task Force meeting the following week (11/17/23).

The Task Force asked Amy Daniels and Olivia Skaltsis questions on the data brief to fully understand how quotes and examples were collected. There followed a discussion on the accuracy of the quotes and questions of data that back them up, and it was acknowledged one of the limitations of this data is that none of the responses have been verified for accuracy; they are simply public input. Amy and Olivia distributed the raw data of responses to the Task Force to increase their understanding of the data.

The Task Force recognized several main themes that arose within the data brief and discussed them in depth as follows:

- The report reveals lots of systemic issues from a business perspective. There is burnout in nurses and other healthcare workers and Medicaid support is not extensive enough to support business costs. As such both sides should be considered.
- More consideration and support should be directed towards behavioral health and health integration. Currently the healthcare system is disjointed which hinders treatment and care connectivity. More research and support is needed for behavioral health.

# COORDINATION AND COOPERATION TASK FORCE

- Stigma is overwhelming. It influences how people interact with care, especially harm reduction services.
- Need for public education on what services are available to them. This will contribute to sustainable change over time. More outreach to interact with the public is needed here. Education will also be effective in reducing stigma.
- There exists a need for increased housing support and transitional living support as they contribute to stigma and inaccessibility of care. Basic human health needs (including housing) must be supported and addressed.
- More programming is required for teenagers. There is a need to refocus resources for teenagers from detention-based reform to behavioral health focused programs that support skill building.

After this discussion, the Task Force recalled their goal of the meeting, to identify needs and holes, then craft recommendations for funding areas based on their observations. With this in mind they ranked the previously mentioned themes by priority to decide on their formal recommendation. Based on their discussion, the Task Force prioritized stigma and harm reduction as the most important issues requiring funding for the following fiscal year. This is supported by the Task Force and a discussion followed about how education unites both stigma and harm reduction but is not effective as a recommendation on its own, rather as a method to reducing stigma and increasing support for harm reduction.

Phoebe Axtman made the motion for the Governor's Commission to prioritize stigma and harm reduction in funding considerations for fiscal year 2025. Peter Ames and Lauren Chambers seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the recommendation, with, no abstentions.

## **Reflections on the Year (2023)**

The Task Force reflected on meetings of the past year and discussed areas to improve on for the following year. It was suggested that microphones be brought into the conference room to increase audio clarity and overall accessibility for Task Force members joining over Zoom. The group recommended to recall their duties of a Task Force to guide their goals for the coming year. JSI welcomed feedback from the Task Force.

## **Public Comment**

Harold Rosen addressed the Task Force as a concerned individual to share his proposal to create a Drug Abuse and Environmental Task Force.

# COORDINATION AND COOPERATION TASK FORCE

Carol Robidoux, a news publisher with Manchester Abe Lincoln Granite State News Collaborative, addressed the Task Force to encourage them to be more public facing in their procedures and decisions. She hopes, as a journalist, to build bridges and bring information and solutions to the public. To that end, she suggested press conferences or more frequent updates to inform the public on Governor's Commission procedural events and decisions directing funding. She supported increasing transparency and building a relationship with the media and public to help reduce stigma towards harm reduction and reverse public miseducation surrounding substance use disorders.

## Recommendations Made

1. An amendment to the 9/8/23 Coordination & Cooperation Task Force Meeting Minutes will be made to correct the misspelling of a Task Force member's name.
2. Phoebe Axtman made the motion for the Governor's Commission to prioritize stigma and harm reduction in funding considerations for fiscal year 2025. Peter Ames and Lauren Chambers seconded the motion. Members were polled and unanimously approved.

## Next Steps

- Next C&C Task Force meeting: Not yet decided
- JSI to schedule meetings for 2024 year and share with the C&C Task Force