



State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY  
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER  
Lt. Governor

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE  
PO Box 345  
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0345

NEIL VAN ESS  
Acting Chairman

CELINA LEVY  
Executive Director

**MINUTES**

**Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse**

**October 18, 2022**

**Attendance: Neil Van Ess (Chairman), Celina Levy (Executive Director), John Armato (Public Member), BettyAnn Cowling-Carson (Public Member), Donna DeStefano (Public Member), Eileen Fishman (Public Member), Moira Nelson (Public Member), Gisele Pemberton (Public Member), Jeff Carrick (DCF), Michelle Graham-Lyons (DCA), Adam Cortes (DOC), Lu Pereira (DOE), Lashunda Harden (DOH), Annette Riordan (DHS), Rebecca Glinn (DOL), Craig Sashihara (LPS), Allison Samay (NJ President's Council)**

**Call to Order**

The three hundred and sixty fourth regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Acting Chairman Neil Van Ess.

**Open Public Meetings Act Statement**

Mr. Van Ess announced that notice of this meeting was provided in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21). In addition, Mr. Van Ess stated that public comments were to be provided electronically, through the GCADA website contact portal between the hours of 10am and 1pm on the day of the meeting.

**Roll Call**

Katelyn Assenheimer called the roll. Members present and absent were noted for the record.

**Approval of Minutes**

After a brief discussion, the minutes for September were approved. (Y-13; N-0; ABS-4)

## **Chairman's Report**

Chairman Van Ess welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the members for attaining quorum. He shared that there were no resolutions to vote on, however he wanted to recognize that October 10<sup>th</sup> was World Mental Health Day and said it was wonderful to see the Alliances increasing their focus on mental health awareness.

## **Presentation: "Medications for OUD in Corrections, A Team Approach to the Shift, The NJ DOC Experience"**

Dr. Herbert Kaldany, Adam Cortes, and Dr. Krista Connelly of the NJ Department of Corrections gave an overview of how the Department of Corrections has shifted from prescribing opioids for pain management to addiction management in the prison system and how they are shifting the approach to addiction.

Narcotics were widely prescribed for pain management, however efforts to reduce their use began in 2015. Dr. Kaldany reviewed the effects of opioids and drug use on the brain and the influence on dopamine levels. With support through research, the Department of Corrections has embraced a medical model and currently prescribes Methadone, Buprenorphine and Naltrexone (Vivitrol injection) through their Medication Assisted Treatment program. This was an independent process until the Drug Courts also began the MAT program in 2017.

The Department of Corrections has made a cultural shift on how they approach addiction. Both uniform and civilian staff are trained together to learn how to treat the disorder of addiction and accompanied behavior shifts.

As a result of this presentation, a future collaboration was made between the Department of Health and the Department of Corrections.

## **Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director Celina Levy reminded the Council members that the State is providing a public comment period for how the opioid settlement funds should be spent until October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Ms. Levy also shared the S190 legislation overview which would require federal funding to be made available to GCADA to support the Alliance Program if needed to offset unanticipated decreases in dedicated revenues.

Ms. Levy and Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro had a call with the Governor's office last week and continue to explore all options for long-term sustainability that include the Cannabis Regulatory Commission, Opioid Settlement Funds, and federal prevention funds.

Ms. Levy also shared that October 10<sup>th</sup> was World Mental Health Day with the theme being "Make Mental Health and Well-Being for all a Global Priority". She stated that she was very

pleased that so many Alliances across the state are focusing on mental health awareness and also embracing programs such as Mental Health First Aid.

Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro shared that Knock Out Opioid Abuse Day (KOOAD) took place on October 6<sup>th</sup>. 25,000 pharmacy bags were distributed with a KOOAD message about safe disposal and Project Medicine Drop, in coordination with NJ Cares. A webinar featuring Dr. Andrew Kolodny was held on October 6<sup>th</sup> with welcome comments from John Butler and Jenn Fearon of Governor Murphy's office. There was a big outreach by the Alliances, with special recognition to Jenna Hogate, Salem County Alliance Coordinator. Numerous KOOAD proclamations were issued on both the county and municipal levels. This year the Super Football Conference adopted KOOAD as their event.

Director of Prevention and Planning, Sara Thode thanked the Council members who volunteered to judge this year's Volunteer of the Year submissions. The VOY ceremony will take place on December 13<sup>th</sup>. She also shared that phase one of AGATE testing has been completed with expected rollout in early 2023. She also informed the members that the PTTC will be offering webinars on November 9<sup>th</sup> and December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Levy thanked the Council members for their input and support, the County Coordinators and Alliances for their good work despite the continued challenges and GCADA staff for their strong work ethic, and to Neil Van Ess for his ongoing leadership.

### **Adjournment**

Chairman Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 12:18.