

## OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Name of Governmental Body: State Council on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (SCAODA)		Date: 9/5/2025	Time Started: 9:35 a.m.	Time Ended: 11:00 a.m.	Attending: Council members: Autumn Lacy, Chris Wardlow, Coral Manning, Denise Johnson, Beth Collier, Kevin Florek, Mark Rather, Nichol Wienkes, Paul Krupski, Paula Jolly, Victoria Casola Ex-officio members: Audra Cohen-Plata, Chrissy Barnard, Elizabeth Salisbury-Afshar, Faith Price, Fil Clissa, Jenny Fahey, John Achter, Ritu Bhatnagar Guests: Amy Anderson, Christine Ullstrup, Connie Calderon, Danielle Long, Felice Borisy-Rudin, Kayla Neuman, Lakesha J, Maureen Busalacchi, Mike Christopherson, Sheila Weix Department of Health Services staff: Alison Elisius, Hannah Foley, Joannette Robertson, Katelyn Blatter, Michelle Haese, Michelle Streetman, Sarah Coyle, Tiffaney Nielson
Location: Virtual via Zoom					

### Minutes

#### 1. Call meeting to order

Kevin Florek, SCAODA Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. after quorum was established.

The council reviewed and approved the June 6, 2025, meeting minutes.

Chris Wardlow moved to accept the minutes.

Beth Collier seconded the motion.

Motion carried; minutes approved.

Wisconsin Council on Mental Health (WCMH) updates provided by Chrissy Barnard. The council met July 16, 2025, and nominated and voted in Nikyra McCann, who will serve as council vice chairperson. The council voted in Kimberlee Coronado as an ex-officio member. Starting in 2026, the council will change to a quarterly meeting structure with meetings on the third Wednesday of the month from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Meetings will be held in the months of February, May, August, and November. The fall tour will remain in the month of September.

WCMH committee updates included:

- The executive committee sent out two letters: one letter to federal legislators and one letter to state legislators regarding the "big beautiful bill" and the impact and concerns the bill would have regarding mental health services in Wisconsin.
- The children and youth committee updated their charter and made recommendations to help ensure fair reimbursement rates and practices for Wisconsin's mental health workforce.
- WCMH discussed ramifications of the potential Medicaid cuts and impact on people.
- WCMH discussed upcoming listening session in partnership with SCAODA at the Mental Health and Substance Use Recovery Conference.

K. Florek shared the upcoming SCAODA workshop on Thursday, October 16, 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the [Mental Health and Substance Use Recovery Conference](#). Visit the conference website for the full agenda including information on the listening session titled, "SCAODA....It's time for good trouble."

Public comment: no public comments were made.

## **2. Motion to amend diversity committee name to person-centered support committee - Bylaws, Article IV, Section 1.2**

Motion: SCAODA to amend the name of the diversity committee to person-centered support committee.

B. Collier moved to pass the motion.

C. Wardlow seconded the motion.

All in favor, none opposed.

Motion passed unanimously.

## **3. SCAODA committee updates and committee membership discussion**

Executive Committee (EC): K. Florek, chair, shared EC is need of a secretary. Refer to SCAODA by-laws, article II, section 3.3 for officer position description. You must be a member of the council to be eligible for secretary.

Person-Centered Support Committee (PCS): Denise Johnson, committee chair, shared the committee met on August 26, 2025, and had a strategic planning meeting where they discussed strategies and presented their focus of the strategies and plan. PCS is revising their mission statement to support neutral language by changing diverse populations to all populations. Johnson will be attending the upcoming conference in October. The next meeting will take place October 28, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Intervention and Treatment Committee (ITC): C. Wardlow, committee member, shared ITC requested EC endorse the board creation letter and to take action at today's council meeting as quorum was not reached at ITCs last committee meeting. The council discussed the need for a chair for the committee, and members were asked to consider serving in this role. ITC meets the second Tuesday of the month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on non-council meeting months. The next meeting will take place October 14, 2025.

Planning and Funding Committee (PFC): B. Collier, committee co-chair, shared the committee met August 20, 2025, and discussed the oversight process for recovery residences with the Division of Quality Assurance. PFC is hoping to learn more by inviting the Department of Administration to provide an overview of the recovery voucher program. PFC continued their review of Medicaid budget neutrality information provided by the Bureau of Fiscal Services (BFS) and developed additional questions for BFS. The next meeting will take place October 15 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. The committee will meet with guests from the Division of Medicaid Services regarding topics of budget neutrality, Comprehensive Community Services, and Opioid Treatment Programs.

Prevention Committee (PC): C. Wardlow, committee chair, shared the ad-hoc committee developed the SCAODA report on preventing youth access to hemp derived psychoactive cannabis products or delta 8 and its cousins. Wardlow along with Ashley Normington and the ad-hoc workgroup will present on the report at the Prevention Conference, September 10 and 11, in Wisconsin Dells. Wardlow will also facilitate a SCAODA listening session at the conference. In addition, PC is planning to convene an ad-hoc committee that will focus on primary prevention of substance use. This ad-hoc committee will explore the root causes of substance use, misuse, and substance use disorders, and identify proven upstream interventions for addressing these risk factors. The aim is to equip policymakers, funders, service providers, and community prevention partners, with a strong rationale for increasing the utilization of primary prevention in addressing the social and structural factors, fueling what we're seeing with our substance use crisis throughout the state. Wardlow asked Maureen Busalacchi, committee member, to share additional committee updates.

M. Busalacchi shared a bill is being developed by Wisconsin State Representative Donovan on hemp products. Next, the dietary guidelines are being updated with release in September, highlighting concerns about the lack of clarity around alcohol consumption. Busalacchi has been working with DHS, local health officers, coalitions, and preparing a resource toolkit to further the discussion around alcohol consumption and the updated dietary guidelines. According to a recent Gallup poll, there's been a shift in perception of alcohol and harm. More will be discussed at the next PC meeting.

Alcohol Age Compliance Checks (AACC) have been a core piece of work at the Wisconsin Alcohol Policy Project. The goal of compliance checks is to ensure youth are not able to buy alcohol. Increased frequency of checks is associated with lower rates of sales to underage individuals. Twenty-one communities are doing checks across the state. A new statewide

database, the Wisconsin Alcohol Inspector, has been introduced to record compliance check results and serve as a central resource for statewide data. Upcoming are trainings on AACC with law enforcement in September.

Beginning in October 2025, the 'place of last drink' data will be incorporated into the BadgerTrack system, enabling law enforcement to record where individuals had been drinking and identify locations with potential patterns of over-service.

The Wisconsin Public Health Association (WPHA) has established a substance use section to strengthen cross-sector collaboration, provide advocacy support, and create opportunities for education and engagement on substance use issues.

#### 4. Request board creation letter

ITC presented a drafted board creation letter to request for legislation to establish a dedicated oversight board for substance abuse counselors in Wisconsin. ITC identified a need for this, noting past incomplete actions during agency transitions and highlighting ongoing gaps and inconsistencies under the current structure. Council members reviewed the letter and made recommendations to ITC for revisions:

- Remove ITC specific representation on the board to read SCAODA representation.
- Use SCAODAs letterhead.
- Ensure final version edits are made, including review of grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

K. Florek requested ITC to prepare a final version of the letter incorporating the agreed-upon revisions. The finalized letter will be distributed to all council members in advance, allowing state-appointed agencies time to consider their position prior the council's formal vote on December 5, 2025.

#### 5. Agency reports

Department of Health Services (DHS) - Paul Krupski, Policy Director, DHS, provided department updates noting the department is monitoring and adapting to federal developments, distributing grant funds as they are awarded, and implementing updated guidelines and parameters as new notice of awards are received.

Department of Justice (DOJ) - Mark Rather provided an update on a leadership change at DOJ. M. Rather has been appointed as the administrator for Law Enforcement Services effective August 22, 2025. Additional updates included:

- DOJ manages about \$80 million annually in grants and is seeing a delay in notice of funding opportunities (NOFOs) causing them to be about six months behind schedule with their grant funding opportunities.
- In July 2025, the Wisconsin Attorney General joined 45 other states in a \$720 million settlement against eight opioid drug makers. This settlement will allow Wisconsin to receive about \$12 million over the next few years or in lieu of funds, could provide the state pharmaceutical products. See the press release [here](#).

Danielle Long, Drug Initiatives Advisor, DOJ, provided additional updates:

- Drug Take Back Day is scheduled for October 25, 2025. Law enforcement registration is open until September 26. DOJ partners with DHS, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Department of Military Affairs. In the last take back day in April, nearly 57,000 pounds was collected, resulting in the highest total collected in several years. Wisconsin is a leading state in drug take back collection. The [Dose of Reality website](#) contains more information including drug take back events. Permanent drug drop boxes are available for the public as well.
- DOJ has partnered with Department of Safety and Professional Services, DHS, and the Department of Transportation (DOT) on a suspected overdose report that the DOT is working on through their traffic and criminal software called TraCS. This report is partially funded by opioid settlement funds and will help fulfill the requirement of law enforcement to enter into the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which is a statutory requirement. This report will also populate into the Wisconsin Suspected Overdose Alerts for Rapid Response ([WISOARR](#)), which includes ambulance runs and emergency room entries.
- There is a new national requirement for drug manufacturers to provide drug disposal bags to pharmacies around the state. Pharmacies can request them from the manufacturers.

Opioid Settlement Initiatives – Michelle Haese, Director of Substance Use Initiatives, DHS, provided updates highlighting eight new manufacturer settlements since July 2025. As a reminder, [2021 Wis. Act 57](#) requires the 87 local governments that participated in Wisconsin's National Prescription Opiate Litigation receive 70% of the funds, with the state receiving 30% of the funds. DHS anticipates receiving \$1.5 million in state share (30%) from the newest distributor settlements. This is in addition to the approximately \$14.5 million that DHS anticipates for calendar year (CY) 2025 or what is called

fiscal year (FY) 2026. Haese noted planning for 2025 is still in progress and will be shared once finalized, with the plan influenced by the federal budget landscape, potential changes and impacts to federal funding streams, and restrictions tied to settlement funding. The [Dose of Reality website](#) is a resource for opioid settlement fund updates. Additional dollars are anticipated through a case in the final stages of settlement, with final amounts shared once available.

Haese shared funding opportunities that went out with CY 2024, FY 2025 settlement funds:

- Community based opioid prevention funding opportunity – four organizations have each received \$250,000 to be used for projects to prevent the non-medical use of opioids. The projects are focused on local needs.
- Peer service expansion in opioid treatment programs and office based opioid treatment programs across the state of Wisconsin - \$2 million funding opportunity closed in August with awards forthcoming. Within this funding opportunity was a funding allocation to support medication treatment, MAT, and mobile unit expansion.

Other agency updates – no updates were provided by other state agencies.

## 6. Bureau of Prevention Treatment and Recovery (BPTR) updates

Joanette Robertson, Director of BPTR, DHS, provided the following updates:

- Wisconsin DHS moved out of the 1 West Wilson building to 201 East Washington, known as the GEF 1 building.
- September is National Suicide Prevention Month, there will be a national observance to raise awareness about the 988 suicide and crisis lifeline. 988 answers over 14,000 contacts each month for individuals seeking support and assistance across substance use and mental health. Visit the [DHS website](#) to learn more.
- BPTR is working on the following administrative rules projects, you can track DHS administrative rules projects [here](#), including links to upcoming public hearings.
  - DHS 31, 105, and 107, Crisis Care Facilities (CCF)
  - DHS 33, Crisis Hostels
  - DHS 75, Community Substance Use Standards
  - DHS 72, Peer Recovery Coaches
  - Starting work on a new rule project for psychiatric residential treatment facilities for children
- BPTR continues to monitor funding at the federal level. Discretionary federal funding related to community based mental health and substance use services beginning October 1 has not yet been approved. This includes the mental health block grant, the substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery block grant, as well as the state opioid response grant. These together total about \$70 million in funding for community-based services.

## 7. Call for future SCAODA agenda items

- Motion to approve board creation letter
- State Opioid Response (SOR) presentation from BPTR
- "What's New? DHS 72! A new Administrative Rule Relating to Peer Recovery Service Providers and Reimbursement under the Medical Assistance Program" co-presentation from BPTR and Division of Medicaid Services

## 8. Adjourn

Coral Manning moved to adjourn.

B. Collier seconded the motion.

All in favor, none opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Prepared by: Alison Elisius on 9/5/2025.

Council reviewed and approved these minutes at its meeting on: 12/5/2025