



Durham Joins Together to Save Lives Minutes

Thursday, January 25, 2024 (5:30PM-7:00PM)

Via Zoom

Co – Chairs: Dr. Wanda Boone, CEO of Together for Resilient Youth (TRY) & Wendy Jacobs, Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)

Attending: Wendy Jacobs-DCo BOCC; Dr. Wanda Boone-Director, Together for Resilient Youth (TRY); Alecia Johnson, Dr. B.A. Burch-TRY; Rod Jenkins-Director, DCo Department of Public Health (DCoDPH); Lindsey Bickers-Bock, Lacie Scofield, Donna Rosser-DCoDPH; Lois Harvin-Ravin-Director, Durham County Veteran Services; Paula Harrington-Oxford House/Freedom House; Breana van Velzen-Director, Durham Congregations in Action (DCIA); Dwane Brinson-ACM for Community Safety, DCo Government; Capt. Helen Tripp- DCo EMS MIH; Dr. Logan Adams-Duke Addiction Medicine; Megan Moore- Wilson Center for Science and Justice at Duke Law; Russell Pierce-Housing for New Hope; Kay Sanford-NC Harm Reduction Coalition; Dedreana Freeman-Citizen

AGENDA ITEMS	MAJOR DISCUSSION POINTS
<p>Welcome and Introductions 5:30 pm - 5:35 pm</p>	<p>Commissioner Wendy Jacobs, Task Force Co-Chair</p> <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioner Jacobs introduced herself and welcomed everyone to the January 2024, Quarterly Meeting of the Durham Joins Together to Save Lives Task Force. • In the interest of time, she asked that everyone put their names and agencies/organizations they represent in the chat. • She introduced Dr. Boone with the next agenda item.
<p>Presentation/Discussion</p>	

5:35 pm - 5:45 pm

- NC IVP Branch Durham County Overdose Report - Dr. Wanda Boone, Task Force Co-Chair

NOTES:

Dr. Boone shared the following:

- More overdoses amongst Black residents than white in Durham County.
- Durham is the only NC county that bears that sad distinction.
- According to data from December 2023, looks like there are slight changes as follows:
 - Increasing amongst ages 25-34
 - Significant jump amongst ages 25-35
 - Decrease in ages 25-34
 - Decrease in ages 35-44
 - Decrease in ages 45-54
 - Decrease in ages 55-64
 - Slight increase in ages 65 and up
- In touch with epidemiologist with the state to discuss what is happening in Durham County.
- Dr. Boone and epidemiologist reported findings in detail during previous DJT Quarterly Task Force meetings.
- Issue with Blacks in Durham determined to be the use of opioids and alcohol together
- Prevention efforts are focused on this issue
- Developed a factsheet and list of efforts used in addressing this challenge. Hopes meeting attendees will consider joining these efforts
- The National Opioid Overdose Coalition, funded by SAMHSA asked Dr. Boone to provide technical assistance on strategies to prevent substance use by the collective impact model among grassroots residents.
 - Data to measure progress is from National IVP Branch
 - CDC will visit TRY in April for a first-hand look at what TRY is doing to prevent substance use and opioid overdose in Durham.
- Dr. Boone asked if any comments or questions.
 - Commissioner Jacobs asked about numbers of fatalities.
 - Dr. Boone said:
 - Commonly prescribed opioids=5
 - Fentanyl and unspecified narcotics=3
 - Lacie asked if these are overdose ED visits.
 - Dr. Boone said yes.
 - Lacie said NC DHHS also tracks mortality, but Helen says usually delayed by a year.
 - Dr. Boone said she has been working with DHHS over several years and has access to mortality data and will report on them at the next meeting.
 - Kay said all numbers for the last 6 months of 2023 are either estimates or we haven't gotten EMS or mortality data yet. Even though EMS data is much closer to on time, mortality data are almost always a couple months behind. Even so, they represent reasonable estimates.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Boone said she has the data because she has been in discussion and working with the Injury Prevention Branch to drill down data for Durham County. Looking for comments specifically about challenges in Durham
5:45 pm - 6:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TRY Community Health Ambassador Program– Dr. Wanda Boone, Task Force Co-Chair and Alicia Johnson, CHW <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dr. Boone shared that TRY has a Health Ambassador Leadership Program, specifically designed to engage individuals in public housing with tools so that Community Health Worker Ambassadors can assist with prevention efforts. She introduced Alisha Johnson to say something about the program. ● Alisha shared that the Health Ambassador Leadership program was “an eye opener.” She said the group was educated on the number of communities and individuals affected by opioid use. Alicia recalled sharing her fears about using Narcan with Dr. Boone, and how the education she received put her fears to rest. Alicia shared an account in which she needed to use Narcan, and emotions connected to that experience. She also expressed her gratitude to Dr. Boone for the Health Ambassador Leadership Program and for Dr. Boone’s work with TRY. ● Dr. Boone added that individuals completing this program have an opportunity to go to Durham Tech, free of charge, to get a CHW certification. They are also mentored throughout the program at Durham Tech.
6:00 pm – 6:05 pm	<p>Discussion / Q&A</p> <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kay reinforced Alicia’s comments about how emotionally traumatic it can be to use Narcan to save someone’s life. She said it is one of the most life-altering experiences and that saving someone’s life is something that many of us will never get to do. She commended Alisha for being: 1) able to use the Narcan, 2) recognize the emotional trauma caused by doing so, and 3) seek help for herself and for the persons whose lives she saved. ● Dr. Boone said that several other participants have used Narcan to revive individuals who were overdosing. They provide Narcan but tell participants to share with others where they can get Narcan for free. ● Donna asked how long the Health Ambassadors program is. ● Dr. Boone said the program is 4 weeks long, and 1 hour/week. The program is free, participants receive a stipend, and the certification at Durham Tech is also free. ● Paula Harrington said she previously took the class and found it beneficial. She would like to take it again. ● Dr. Boone said they should be offering another class in mid-February. Also offering a short course for youth and young adults that is about 2 weeks long. ● Commissioner Jacobs thanked Alicia for her bravery. Also asked when the next cohort starts so that we can share it out. Said Russ is coming from another meeting and suggested moving on to the next agenda item until he arrives.
6:05 pm – 6:20 pm	<p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing Subcommittee Update and the Housing and MAT Fact Sheet – Lacie Scofield, Overdose Prevention and Response Projects Manager, Durham County Department of Public Health and Kay Sanford, Volunteer, NC Harm Reduction Coalition

NOTES:

- Lacie Scofield introduced herself as representing DCoDPH and as Co-Chair of MH SUD Tx. Committee and part of the Housing Subcommittee, made up of a smaller group interested in housing issues.
- Main goal of the Housing Subcommittee: To address and reduce barriers to housing experienced by people with substance use disorder and justice involved populations.
- Lacie shared the history of the Subcommittee. Formed in 2021, the first activity was to create a program to provide financial assistance for people with SUD seeking recovery housing. Subcommittee efforts resulted in a contract between Alliance Health and Oxford House to assist people with rent and deposit money.
- Now working on the barrier of housing restrictions for individuals on MAT, or certain types of MAT. The Housing Subcommittee is setting up in person meetings with housing providers in Durham that do not accept residents taking MAT to discuss barriers, provide education, and hopefully, change minds.
- Small teams of subcommittee members have met with TROSA and Cub Creek Sober Living. The director of Cub Creek will be opening a new house soon and is now considering allowing residents to take MAT due to subcommittee efforts.
- The Housing Subcommittee is also working with Freedom House Recovery Center to implement an option for residents to take methadone if indicated. Currently, residents are offered only buprenorphine.
- Subcommittee members created talking points for the meetings with housing agencies and turned those points into a fact sheet. Lacie said that Kay Sanford would be presenting slides on the fact sheet next.
- See Lacie's slides for additional details on work of the Housing Subcommittee. Lacie gave a shoutout to Alicia Smith, Communications and PR Manager for DCoDPH, for formatting the factsheet and designing the first official logo for the DJT Task Force.
- The logo has been approved by DJT Task Force Co-Chairs, Commissioner Wendy Jacobs, and Dr. Wanda Boone.
- Kay Thanked Lacie for the introduction and encouraged everyone to read the factsheet at their own leisure.
- She shared a list of Housing Subcommittee members and the diverse agencies that they represent, including treatment providers, housing providers, and government agencies,
- The Housing Subcommittee wants to work with housing agencies, to help them avoid potential class action suits, by providing them the evidence-based facts they need to support access to housing for people who use MAT.
- Shared information about the factsheet as follows:
 - Described the document as "A simple and easy to understand factsheet that identifies and addresses the myths about MAT, and housing, and provides the references that we used to refute these myths."
 - Introduction reinforces premise that housing is a vital component of substance use treatment
 - States categorically that people on MAT face stigma
 - Reminds us that MAT is the medically accepted standard treatment for OUD.
 - Introduces the reality that federal discrimination laws make it illegal for most housing agencies to deny people on MAT, housing
 - The factsheet addresses 12 myths.
- See Kay's slides for additional details on the factsheet.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioner Jacobs thanked Kay and Lacie for their presentation, and asked if there were any questions or comments.
6:20 pm - 6:25 pm	<p>Discussion / Q&A</p> <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kay suggested that everyone take time to read the document and come back with questions. Says we hear each of these myths every day. To come up with compelling arguments for why we should move beyond them is going to take patience, persistence, tactfulness and a coalition of experts willing to work with each agency to make changes in policies. Dr. Boone said that she thinks the development of the factsheet is tremendous and believes that so many people will benefit from it. When she speaks with Black and Brown people in the community, they are not comfortable with the concept of MAT. She would like to have a conversation about why some Black and Brown people feel uncomfortable, why there may be a disconnect with peer support, and helping the community to understand MAT. Would like to look at the possibility of developing a document for the community, to help them understand our work. Reiterated that she loves the document and thinks that it is great. Kay agreed with Dr. Boone. She added that the factsheet was developed for a specific audience in the community. She encouraged development of talking points, visuals, and presentations targeted to other groups in the community. Dr. Boone offered the network of community health workers, and people on the ground to help in that regard. Lacie asked if Dr. Boone wanted to recommend someone from the network of CHWs that she could invite to join the Housing Subcommittee. Added that when members of the Housing Subcommittee meet with housing agencies, it is a “down-to-earth” conversation. The 4 to 5 person groups who attend the in-person meetings are also diverse. Commissioner Jacobs thanked Dr. Boone for her offer and said that this is really about partnership and education, and a great area for collaboration. She commended the Housing Subcommittee for their approach to build relationships with housing agencies, that proved to work in helping them to move on their positions. Asked Donna to share the factsheet again.
6:25 pm – 6:40 pm	<p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on Supportive Housing Expansion at Carver Creek: City and County Involvement and How the Needs of People with SUD Will be Addressed - Commissioner Wendy Jacobs and Russ Pierce, Director, Housing for New Hope <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioner Jacobs introduced Russ Pierce, with Housing for New Hope, to present on Carver Creek Campus for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). Has mentioned previously that this is housing for individuals in recovery and having complex medical needs. Also highlighted that substance use is often a major factor in why individuals are living unhoused. Russ is with Housing for New Hope, which is one of the three original rental providers of rapid rehousing in NC. Began by providing background, particularly from a homeless services perspective. He provided key definitions as follows:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) - Deeply affordable housing option that links housing with targeted supportive services, to increase long-term housing stability. ○ For those who work with homeless services, there tends to be a particular definition, especially if HUD funding through the continuum of care is involved. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chronic homelessness, or documentable homelessness for a year, and must have a disabling condition. ▪ Must either be 1 solid year, or ▪ Four episodes accumulating to a year, in a 3 year span. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If PSH in the HUD definition, folks pay 30% of their income towards rent. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sixty percent of referrals to Housing for New Hope have a persistent mental health issue, with a substance use issue wrapped around it, most times due to self-medicating, prior to access to good medical care. ○ Seldom see folks with physical disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russ shared additional information on Housing for New Hope as follows: ○ Connects people to agencies with supports that help them meet their goals. ○ Have staff that help with goal setting, case management, etc. ○ Has partnerships with other agencies that work on goals ○ Operates the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Williams Square – 24 units on the corner of Carver and Roxboro. ▪ Streets to Home – Community based supportive housing, working with network of private landlords ▪ Familiar Faces Initiative – Efforts to track individuals who frequently use emergency shelters, Hospital ED, and jails as temporary shelter ▪ Carver Creek – Formerly 48-units of senior affordable housing, right next to Williams Square. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing for New Hope partnered with Durham City and County to purchase Carver Creek, which is located next to Williams Square, for PSH. Behind the two properties is enough land to build an additional 45-50 units, and more office space. • Carver Creek - Vision: To create a supportive housing campus of more than 100 units ○ Maintain commitment to allow seniors already living at Carver Creek to stay ○ Provide 3-6 months stable place to stay, with supportive services, if needed ○ Offer more traditional HUD defined supportive housing ○ Flexibility to allow someone in under rapid rehousing, transition to scattered sites, and go to a housing voucher, without ever leaving the space they're in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allow justice involved access to supportive housing ○ Partners: Alliance, Duke and Duke Health, HEART Team, Durham City and County, Durham Homeless Care Transition, Justice Resource Center, and Empowerment Fund ○ Working to find other partners who can provide needed support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Russ's slides for additional details.
6:40 pm - 6:45 pm	Discussion / Q&A NOTES:

	<p>Kay said that after working in this field for over 50 years, what she finds astounding is Russ' description of how the unsheltered deal with getting warm at night, is no different than it was 50 years ago. She hopes that with local government representatives like Commissioner Jacobs, agencies like Housing for New Hope, and other groups working on this issue, we can finally solve a problem that should never have existed in the first place. She thanked Russ for his work.</p> <p>Commissioner Jacobs said the fact that the Carver Creek Campus exists is a testament that we are doing something and moving forward. She added that The City and County contributed \$6.5 million to acquire the property and took less than 1 year to do it.</p> <p>Kay asked Russ if they accept individuals on MAT?</p> <p>Russ said that individuals are not required to be sober to qualify for housing. Because of the increase in number of housing units, looking forward to attracting more partners in the area to bring substance use treatment and other services to the campus.</p> <p>Commissioner Jacobs agreed, and said the goal is to remove the barriers.</p>
6:45 pm - 6:55 pm	<p>Update on NCACC One More Thing Committee and the New Harm Reduction Program at Public Health – Commissioner Wendy Jacobs, Task Force Co-Chair</p> <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioner Jacobs is serving on the NCACC One More Thing Committee. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initiative from the President of the NC Association of County Commissioners to prevent overdose ○ Personal due to his losing a son to overdose ○ Looking forward to what they can do statewide, to address stigma, educate people about myths associated with MAT, and barriers • The next meeting will be in Durham, and Commissioner Jacobs thinks it is because of all that has come out of Durham Joins Together. • Will table discussion about DCo Department of Public Health's new harm reduction program until the April meeting.
6:55 pm - 7:00pm	<p>Updates from Meeting Participants/Discussion</p> <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Boone asked if there were any comments from meeting attendees. • Helen Tripp announced that her program is sponsoring a Recovery Coach Academy, which is similar to Certified Peer Support. Helps people who want more tools to work with persons who have substance use disorders, or mental health problems. Held a class last September and will hold another in April 2024. The training is free for attendees. However, lunch will not be provided. Can have up to 20 participants. Please share the registration form with your networks.
Updates and Closing 7:00 pm	<p>Dr. Wanda Boone, Task Force Co-Chair</p> <p>NOTES:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Boone asked that everyone look at the bottom of the meeting agenda for a list of task force committees and meeting times. • Announced the date and time for the next quarterly meeting, and wished everyone a good night
Next Meeting	Thursday, April 25, 2024 Location: Zoom

Schedule for Durham Joins Together Committees:

- Prevention/Education – 2nd Wednesday 10:30 AM Virtual
- Mental Health SUD/Treatment and Data – 2nd Tuesdays 3:00 PM Virtual
- Policy – To be determined

Committee Chairs:

- Prevention & Education – Dr. Wanda Boone
- Mental Health Substance Use Disorder Treatment –Tremaine Sawyer & Lacie Scofield