



Durham Joins Together Taskforce Meeting Report

Committee	Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment Committee
Committee Chair or Co-Chairs	Tremaine Sawyer, Durham County Justice Services Department Lacie Scofield, Durham County Department of Public Health
Date	January 22, 2025

Committee members:

Carlyle Johnson, Alliance Health; Sheriff Clarence Birkhead, DCSO; Rodney Jenkins, DCoDPH; Cindy Haynes, Duke Population Health; Donna Rosser, DCoDPH; Helen Tripp, DCo EMS; Carolynn Crowder, Lincoln CCHC; Arthur Payne, Morse Clinic; Eric Morse, Morse Clinic; Marc Strange, DCo JSD; Roshanna Parker, DCo JSD; Zandra Joiner, Milestone Healthcare Services; Kim Chansen, RII; Michele Easter, Duke Psychiatry; Tammy Vaughan, DCSO; LA Cuttler, Hope Centre for Advancement; Lawrence Greenblatt, Duke Population Health; Anjni Joiner, DCo EMS; Jesse Battle, TROSA; Kristen Patterson, DCoDPH; Lindsey Bickers-Bock, DCoDPH; Kay Sanford, NCHRC; Loftin Wilson, NCHRC; Pablo Silva, El Futuro; Fred Johnson, Duke; Quanesha Archer, DCoDPH; Anna Gaddy, BAART; Monica Washington, Oxford House; Paula Harrington, Oxford House; David Crispell, Jubilee Home; Timeka Harper-Purcell, Freedom House; Dee Gray, Freedom House; Micheal Edge, New Season Treatment Center; Jennette Mehta, Housing for New Hope; and others.

Current Activities:

November 2024 Meeting

Speaker: Millie Evonlah, Duke Pre-Medicine Student – Free Phone Distribution Programs Fact Sheet

Millie Evonlah is Michele Easter’s student intern at the Wilson Center for Science and Justice at Duke Law. Millie is working on creating a fact sheet on free phone distribution programs at the request of the committee co-chairs. She researched existing phone distribution programs to create a draft of the fact sheet, which she presented to the committee. The idea for this fact sheet came out of the strategic planning discussion that occurred at the July meeting. Some treatment providers on the committee expressed interest in establishing free phone distribution programs, and the fact sheet will be a helpful starting point. Free phones can assist clients with communicating with providers, keeping up with appointments, accessing emergency services, and facilitating transportation services. After Millie’s presentation, committee members gave her helpful feedback which she will incorporate into the final draft of the fact sheet.

Strategic Planning Survey: Co-Chair Lacie Scofield presented the results of the strategic planning survey which 25 committee members completed. The majority of survey respondents cited lack of housing for people with SUD as the most important challenge and health insurance issues as the second most important challenge encountered by treatment providers. The top three action items that respondents wanted to pursue as a group were: 1) create a day shelter, 2) expand the Oxford House rental assistance program funded by Alliance Health, and 3) apply for a grant to fund more long-term recovery housing. The action item that most people would be willing to volunteer for was distributing hygiene kits with naloxone, followed by expanding the Oxford House rental assistance program. Survey respondents also expressed interest in partnering with Fresh Start Durham and/or Durham Tech’s mobile health van (MAPs Program).

January 2024 Meeting

Speakers: Maddie Metcalf, Durham County Department of Public Health; Lacie Scofield, Durham County Department of Public Health; and Michele Easter, Duke University School of Medicine and Wilson Center for Science and Justice, Duke University School of Law

Maddie, Lacie, and Michele presented data from the 2024 Data Report for the Community Linkages to Care (CLC) Peer Support Program. The CLC Data team also includes Ryan Bell and Dr. Stephanie Eucker, who is the Principal Investigator. Staff at RI's Durham Recovery Response Center - Kim Chansen, Catherine Whelan, and the CLC peer support specialists, Toni Edmondson, Keith Collins, and Katrina Williams - contributed by collecting much of the data included in the report.

The report contains nearly 5 years of process, survey, and medical records data from individuals who enrolled in the CLC program from its start in December 2019 through August 31, 2024. It also contains a summary of in-depth qualitative interviews conducted with selected enrollees over the past year. Highlights from the report include the following:

- Duke medical records data were obtained that show fewer people experienced an opioid overdose and fewer people had Emergency Dept. visits in the 12 months after enrolling in the CLC Program compared to the 12 months before enrolling in the CLC program.
- Qualitative interview participants were satisfied with their peer support and outpatient experience with 100% of respondents suggesting that they would recommend the CLC program to friends or family. All participants discussed how they found it helpful to receive support and connections to community resources from peer support staff with lived experiences.

Housing Subcommittee – The Housing Subcommittee continues to meet monthly. The subcommittee has started to discuss the logistics of expanding the Oxford House rental assistance program, which was identified as a priority in the MHSUD Tx committee's strategic planning survey. Subcommittee members are also continuing efforts to reach out to housing providers in Durham that restrict MOUD. The most recent meeting occurred with the director of Love and Respect Recovery. By the end of the meeting, he indicated that he was open to the idea of allowing residents who take MOUD to live in one of the Love and Respect recovery housing units. Members of the subcommittee are also still working with Durham Rescue Mission (DRM) to provide information on MOUD and connection to treatment and recovery housing for residents who are leaving the shelter. Helen Tripp recently delivered a number of print materials to DRM, including Freedom House brochures, Morse Clinic brochures, EMS Community Paramedics information cards, and substance use resource guides produced by the Durham County Dept. of Public Health. These will be distributed to shelter residents.

MOUD Providers Subcommittee – Timeka Harper and LA Cuttler have volunteered to create and co-chair a new subcommittee specifically for MOUD providers. The subcommittee will allow MOUD providers to meet in a smaller group to address funding, insurance coverage, and other challenges. Meetings will occur in person and virtually to allow for candid discussions.

On-going activities:

- Provide status updates on Durham County's National Opioid Settlement funding decision process.
- Discuss ways to increase access to peer support for SUD and to provide a support network for Peer Support Specialists.
- Develop ideas and actions to address barriers to treatment and housing for people with SUD and justice-involved populations.
- Updates from committee members on all programs and agencies as available.
- Updates from the Housing Subcommittee and the MOUD Providers Subcommittee.

Metrics/Measures:

CLC Program – Program numbers and survey data reports

Detention Center - MAT program numbers

EMS - Opioid-related calls and buprenorphine induction numbers

Next Steps:

- Presentations/discussions on the following topics: 1) efforts to address racial disparities in SUD treatment access, 2) survey data from the CLC Peer Support Program, 3) Fresh Start and other local efforts to provide basic necessities to people in the community, 4) 1115 Medicaid Waiver, 5) Project COMET
- Planning and organizing the new MOUD Providers Subcommittee
- Work on increasing housing options for people with SUD, including expanding the Oxford House rental assistance program funded by Alliance Health

Next Meeting & Location:

February 11, 2025 from 3:00-4:30 PM via Zoom