

## Durham Joins Together Taskforce Meeting Report

<b>Committee</b>	Treatment and Harm Reduction Committee
<b>Committee Chair or Co-Chairs</b>	Tremaine Sawyer, Durham County Justice Services Department Lacie Scofield, Durham County Department of Public Health
<b>Date</b>	April 13, 2026

### 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; Renée Shaw, DCo JSD; Zandra Joiner, Milestone Healthcare Services; Kim Chansen, RI; Michele Easter, Duke Psychiatry; LA Cuttler, Hope Centre for Advancement; Meredith Niess, Duke Outpatient Clinic; Chenelle McInnis, Duke University Hospital; Sarah Sterling, Duke University Hospital; Noel Ivey, Duke University Hospital; Anjni Joiner, DCo EMS; Jesse Battle, TROSA; Lisa Finley, TROSA; Kristen Patterson, DCoDPH; Lindsey Bickers-Bock, DCoDPH; Jaeson Smith, DCoDPH; Kay Sanford, NCHRC; Loftin Wilson, NCHRC; Quanesha Archer, DCoDPH; Anna Gaddy, BAART; Paula Harrington, Oxford Houses; Irving Hewett, Oxford Houses; David Crispell, Jubilee Home; Timeka Harper-Purcell, Freedom House; Micheal Edge, New Season Treatment Center; Nichole Shackelford, Hayti Reborn Justice Movement; and others.

### Current Activities:

#### **December 2025 Meeting**

Committee members heard presentations on 1) tobacco use and substance use disorder treatment and 2) the connection between substance use and brain injury. Committee co-chair Lacie Scofield introduced the committee’s new Community Supply Inventory. Dr. LA Cuttler presented the idea for this inventory at the October committee meeting, and Nichole Shackelford volunteered to lead the project. Members received an email from Nichole with the link to the inventory survey. Members were asked to complete the survey on behalf of their organization and record supplies that are needed and supplies that can be donated to other community organizations. Nichole and Lacie are facilitating connections and exchanges between organizations in need of supplies with organizations that can donate those supplies.

#### **January 2026 Meeting**

Committee members heard presentations on 1) the Unshame NC Campaign, a statewide SUD anti-stigma initiative and 2) the Day Shelter and Services Center Pilot Program funded by the county, which will be implemented at Urban Ministries of Durham. Committee members discussed partnership opportunities with both Unshame NC and the new day center program.

The CLC Peer Support Program partnered with the detention center to initiate peer-led recovery WRAP classes for STARR participants. Durham County Dept. of Public Health (DCoDPH) made updates to the housing guide for individuals with substance use disorder, including changes to provider contact information, rent/cost increases, updates to MOUD restrictions, addition of new housing agencies that recently opened, and removal of housing agencies that have closed. Information on naloxone availability at each housing agency was also added to the guide.

Committee members from DCoDPH and EMS partnered to provide free naloxone kits to housing agencies that did not have any on site. The updated housing guide can be accessed here: <https://dconc.gov/substanceuseresources>.

### **February 2026 Meeting**

Committee members were updated on the status of the Community Supply Inventory. In February, approximately 25 organizations had completed the survey. The inventory tracks the needs of organizations across several categories, including harm reduction supplies, clothing items, hygiene supplies, food items, and other resources. Survey responses showed a higher demand for supplies than available donations. DCoDPH's Harm Reduction program was able to supply many of the harm reduction items needed by each organization.

Members from Duke University Hospital and Freedom House discussed challenges in placing patients in sober living homes and residential treatment programs. Members from Alliance Health provided updates regarding funding challenges for buprenorphine treatment for uninsured individuals. Current funding for medication access is running low and long-acting injectable medications (e.g., Sublocade, Vivitrol) will now be limited. Uninsured patients may only receive the first injection dose followed by oral medications. Other forms of buprenorphine will continue to be available but there are some restrictions. The committee discussed potential solutions including: 1) seeking support from opioid settlement funds, 2) encouraging providers to enroll all eligible patients in Medicaid, especially following Medicaid expansion, and 3) continuing advocacy to maintain access to medications for uninsured individuals.

### **March 2026 Meeting**

Dr. Jennifer Carroll presented a study that she authored on mandatory work requirements at residential substance use treatment providers in North Carolina. There is no strong evidence that work itself improves treatment outcomes for SUD, but many residential treatment providers require participants to work. Discussion focused on labor exploitation risks and ethical concerns, limited access to evidence-based treatment (e.g. MOUD), gaps in research on structured vs. unstructured time and relapse outcomes, stigma reinforcement, framing addiction as a moral failure corrected through labor, and the need for greater oversight and transparency among residential providers.

DCoDPH announced the launch of a new free naloxone vending machine at St. Joseph's Episcopal Church. SouthLight Healthcare discussed services offered at its Durham location, including Substance Use Intensive Outpatient Program (SAIOP) and the Housing and Outpatient Treatment (HOT) Program. The HOT Program is a partnership between Southlight Healthcare and Oxford Houses that provides 90-day rental assistance for SAIOP participants.

### **On-going Activities:**

- Foster collaboration and communication among substance use treatment and harm reduction providers in Durham.
- Discuss community resources and ways to increase access to treatment, peer support, and harm reduction for people with SUD.
- 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.

### **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:**

- Provide status updates on Durham County's Opioid Settlement funding decision process.
- Presentations on: 1) Hayti Reborn Justice Movement's resources and referral processes, 2) Morse Clinic's mobile treatment services, 3) Efforts to establish LEAD Programs in NC counties, including Durham
- Continue to promote the Community Supply Inventory and facilitate exchanges of needed supplies among member organizations.
- Expand the Oxford House rental assistance program funded by Alliance Health.

**Next Meetings:**

Tuesday, April 14th and May 12th from 3:00-4:30 PM via Zoom