

Treatment and Harm Reduction (THR) Committee

Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2026 – 3:00-4:30 PM

Attendance

Tremaine Sawyer (DCoJSD), Lacie Scofield (DCoDPH), Lee Morales (DCoJSD), Kim Chansen (RI), Carlyle Johnson (Alliance Health), Eric Morse (Morse Clinics), Arthur Payne (Morse Clinics), Jennifer Carroll (NC State University), Reid Getty (NCHRC), Jackie Hodges (Duke University), Vera Reinstein (Alliance Health), Courtney Myers (Alliance Health), Von Chreiman (Fishing Point), Dominique Nowell (Fishing Point), Jennifer Cabe (Fishing Point), Jaeson Smith (DCoDPH), Kristen Patterson (DCoDPH), Amy O'Regan (NCDHHS), Lisa Finley (TROSA), Irving Hewitt (Oxford Houses), Shahonda Pittman (RREPS), Quanesha Archer (DCoDPH), Erin Mays (DCoDPH), Dennis Hamlet (DCoDPH), Renee Shaw (DCoJSD), LA Cuttler (Hope Centre for Advancement)

Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

- Meeting opened by Co-Chair Lacie Scofield.
- April and May minutes were both reviewed.
- Motion made by Dr. Cuttler to approve the April and May meeting minutes; seconded by Shahonda Pittman.
- Motion carried unanimously; April and May minutes approved.

Announcements

Community Supply Inventory Survey:

- Members were encouraged to complete the Community Supply Inventory Survey even if they have completed it in the past. Lacie sent the link in an email to all committee members.
- Purpose: identify available supplies for donation and organizational needs across Durham County.
- Survey helps connect organizations with available resources.
- Members can fill out the survey more than once if their supply needs change.

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Healing Transitions Tour:

- The planned tour of the women's campus at Healing Transitions in Raleigh was postponed. It will be tentatively rescheduled for August or September.
- Participants will also have an opportunity to tour the Morse Clinics mobile OTP unit.
- Members were asked to complete the Rally scheduling poll. Lacie sent an email with the link.

TROSA Resource Availability:

- Lisa Finlay said that TROSA is able to donate supplies to other organizations but cannot list the items available.
- If you are interested in obtaining supplies for your organization, please contact Lisa Finlay at lfinlay@trosainc.org and let her know what you need.
- She will then check whether TROSA can donate the supplies.

Presentation – Community-Based Drug Checking in Durham County

Presenters:

- Reid Getty – Outreach Worker, NC Harm Reduction Coalition (NCHRC)
- Dr. Jennifer Carroll – Associate Professor of Anthropology, North Carolina State University

The presenters provided an overview of Durham's mobile drug checking program and discussed how drug checking can support harm reduction efforts.

Drug Checking Technology

- Use of FTIR (Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy) devices to identify substances in drug samples.
- Drug checking provides results within approximately 10–45 minutes.
- Samples can also be sent to UNC's Street Drug Analysis Lab for confirmatory testing.

Testing Process

1. Device setup and calibration.
2. Sample collection.

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3. FTIR analysis.
4. Supplemental test strip testing (e.g., benzodiazepines, medetomidine).
5. Spectrum interpretation.
6. Confirmatory laboratory testing when appropriate.
7. Counseling and results discussion with participants.

Emerging Findings and Case Examples

- Detection of medetomidine and other adulterants in the local drug supply.
- Discussion of common additives and cutting agents.
- Identification of trends and emerging substances through community-based testing.
- Drug checking helped explain unexpected side effects experienced by participants.
- Testing identified substances that differed from what individuals believed they had purchased.
- Results informed safer-use decisions and risk reduction strategies.

Drug Supply Monitoring

- Community drug checking provides real-time information about local drug trends.
- Data complements information from:
 - Law enforcement seizures
 - Toxicology reports
 - Emergency departments
 - EMS data
 - Public health surveillance

What Service Users Want to Know

- How to be safer when using drugs that might contain adulterants.
- How often drugs turned out to be what they were sold as.
- The possible side effects of cuts and added ingredients.
- The cuts and added ingredients that commonly appear in certain drug products.
- The average percent of active drugs in dope (i.e. amount of fentanyl or xylazine vs. inactive cut).

Ethical Considerations and Trust

- Drug users have expressed fear about being arrested for possession of drugs if they bring samples for testing.
- Public health, social services, and law enforcement agencies are the least trusted messengers.

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- The most trusted sources are local harm reduction organizations, friends who use drugs, and local healthcare providers

Communication Best Practices

- Public alerts should:
 - Be based on confirmed testing.
 - Explain risks clearly.
 - Include harm reduction guidance.
 - Identify location and timeframe.
 - Avoid sensational or misleading messaging.
- Any drug supply communication should include:
 - Analysis of drug samples via secondary (lab) testing
 - How samples were sold and other contextual information
 - Limitations of the technologies and data sources used
 - Sensory, toxicological, and clinical effects of substances detected
 - Actions that can be taken to reduce harm
 - When and where the communication was produced

Expansion of Drug Checking Services

- Current drug checking services are available every Friday at the NCHRC drop-in location.
- Expansion planned through:
 - Wake County services.
 - A new Durham mobile outreach van.
- Future services may include:
 - Hepatitis C testing.
 - Wound care services.

Community Outreach

Organizations were encouraged to:

- Share information about the drug checking program.
- Invite presenters for demonstrations and educational sessions.
- Refer community members who may benefit from services.

Question about Vaping and Fentanyl

- Discussion occurred regarding claims that fentanyl may be present in vape devices.

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- Presenters noted that currently there is no evidence supporting widespread fentanyl contamination in vape products.
- Participants emphasized the importance of relying on verified scientific evidence.

Committee Member Updates

Arthur Payne noted that Morse Clinics has received increasing reports of medetomidine in patient drug supplies.

Members were reminded to review educational materials distributed with the meeting packet.

The July THR Committee meeting has been canceled due to many committee members taking time off for summer vacations.

The next THR Committee meeting is scheduled for August 11 at 3:00-4:30 PM.