



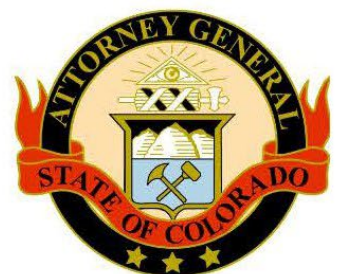
# Substance Abuse Trend & Response Task Force

State of Colorado



## Annual Report

# 2025



# Colorado Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force 2025 Annual Report

This report is respectfully submitted to the Judiciary Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the State of Colorado in accordance with Colorado Revised Statute § 18-18.5-103(6)(d) (I-III).

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Colorado Attorney General

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# **2025 Colorado Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force (Task Force)**

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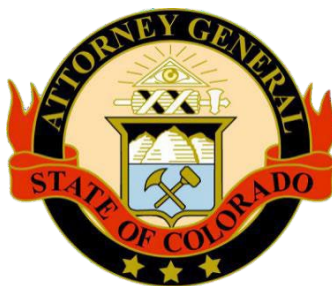
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## **STATE OF COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF LAW**

Dear Partners in Substance Abuse Prevention:

Six years ago, before taking office as Colorado's 39<sup>th</sup> Attorney General, I traveled to the San Luis Valley to meet with Alamosa County Sheriff Robert Jackson. He informed me that 90% of those in the county jail were struggling with opioid use disorder. The tremendous suffering and loss in the Valley inspired me to work hard on addressing the opioid and substance use crisis Colorado faces today.

Beyond holding Big Pharma accountable and recovering nearly \$800 million from them for the State to account for the devastation they've caused, we developed a first-in-class framework for spending the opioid settlement funds transparently and effectively, enabling leaders across the state to best spend funds to recover from this crisis.

This framework was recognized as a model by the Principles Coalition led by faculty of [The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health](#) in addressing the opioid crisis.

In July of this year, I returned to the San Luis Valley to celebrate the opening of the Valley's first substance use treatment center, appropriately named "Hope in the Valley." At the opening, I reflected on the hard work and dedication over these past five years that led to this encouraging milestone. The work of the San Luis Valley Opioid Response Council is a model for the state.

Another incredible milestone was the turnout at the [3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Opioid Abatement Conference](#), over 400 attendees and leaders from all 19 Opioid Abatement Council Regions showed up to support and learn from one another – in a spirit of true



collaboration and forge sustainable plans for the long term in our fight against the opioid crisis.

Thus far, the Colorado Opioid Abatement Council (COAC) has released over \$110 million in funds in Colorado. I'm proud to say that our office garnered expenditure reports from all (100%) of local governments, regions, infrastructure awardees, and state agencies receiving opioid settlement funds, the results of which are on our [publicly available dashboard](#).

As we close this year, I am thankful for each of our partners in the Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force who have dedicated years of service to proactively addressing substance misuse in the state. We are seeing the fruits of your labor.

As we continue to harness our efforts towards not only opioid response, but also substance use as a whole, we will need to think broadly about risk and protective factors for Coloradans. Fentanyl, alcohol, and vaping continue to impact both youth and adults; stimulants are an ongoing threat; and we'll have to keep our eyes on emerging substances, such as nitazenes and xylazine. Regardless of the substance, our efforts towards prevention around substance use and mental health will remain priorities.

In closing, I offer my sincerest thanks to the leaders, community members, experts, affected individuals, and family members—and so many others—who are on the front lines of this work to expand education and access to services.

I remain optimistic for our future based on the commitment I have seen from communities across Colorado in meeting this moment with a spirit of innovation, collaboration, and tireless dedication.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Philip J. Weiser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Philip" and last name "Weiser" clearly legible.

Phil Weiser

Attorney General

# **I. Task Force Background**

## **Overview of the Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force**

In 2013, the Colorado General Assembly reauthorized the Colorado State Methamphetamine Task Force under the name “Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force” (Senate Bill 2013-244), with representatives of state government, local governments, and the private sectors, including but not limited to legislators, child and family service providers, public health officials, experts in the field of substance abuse treatment, child welfare workers, law enforcement officers, judges, and prosecutors.

In 2018, the Colorado General Assembly reauthorized the Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force (Task Force) for a period of 10 years.

**As set forth in C.R.S. § 18-18.5-103(4), the core purpose of the Task Force and partners is:**

- a. Assist local communities in implementing the most effective models and practices for substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment and in developing the responses by the criminal justice system;
- b. Review model programs that have shown the best results in Colorado and across the United States and provide information on the programs to local communities and local drug task forces;
- c. Assist and augment local drug task forces without supplanting them;
- d. Investigate collaborative models on protecting children and other victims of substance abuse and non-federal-drug-administration-regulated pharmaceutical drug production and distribution;
- e. Measure and evaluate the progress of the state and local jurisdictions in preventing substance abuse and non-federal-drug-administration-regulated pharmaceutical drug production and distribution and in prosecuting persons engaging in these acts;
- f. Evaluate and promote approaches to increase public awareness of current and emerging substance abuse problems and strategies for addressing those problems;
- g. Assist local communities with implementation of the most effective practices to respond to current and emerging substance abuse problems and non-federal drug administration-regulated pharmaceutical drug production and distribution;
- h. Consider any other issues concerning substance abuse problems and non-federal drug-administration-regulated pharmaceutical drug production and distribution

that arise;

- i. Develop a definition of a "drug-endangered child" to be used in the context of the definition of "child abuse or neglect" as set forth in section 19-1-103(1), C.R.S., and include the definition in its January 1, 2014, report to the judiciary committees of the senate and the house of representatives, or any successor committees.

## **Task Force Membership and Meetings**

**The membership of the Task Force is set forth in C.R.S. § 18-18.5-103 and consists of a chair, three vice-chairs, and 29 members, including:**

- Phil Weiser, Colorado Attorney General, serves as Chair of the Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force, as specified in C.R.S. § 18-18.5-103(2)(a)(I).
- Dr. Lesley Brooks, Chief of Addiction Medicine at SummitStone Health Partners, and Assistant Medical Director at North Colorado Health Alliance, serves as Vice-Chair for Substance Abuse Treatment by appointment of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- Vanessa Devereaux, Director of the Division of Community Engagement, Colorado Department of Law, serves as Vice-Chair for Substance Abuse Prevention by appointment of the Colorado President of the Senate.
- Rick Brandt, Chief of Police, Evans Police Department, and past President of the Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police serves as Vice-Chair for the Criminal Justice System by appointment of the Governor.

The list of current members is found in Appendix A of this report.

## **Task Force Committees:**

- The [Colorado State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup](#) (SEOW) serves as the Data Committee of the Task Force. The SEOW consists of representatives of several state departments and other partners that manage and analyze data relevant to substance use and abuse. Barbara Gabella, Branch Director, Epidemiology and Evaluation, and Sharon T. Liu, Director, Community Prevention and Early Intervention at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and co-chair of the SEOW/Data Committee. *See Appendix B*

for a summary of the SEOW.

- The [Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment \(SBIRT\) Advisory Council](#) Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment as a standard of care throughout Colorado's health and mental health care systems. The council is chaired by Hannah Nibauer, MSW, SBIRT Program Manager at Peer Assistance Services. *See Appendix C* for a diagram of the structure of the SBIRT Advisory Council.
- The Supporting Perinatal substance use Prevention, Recovery, and Treatment in Colorado (SuPPoRT Colorado) Steering Committee, formerly known as the Substance Exposed Newborns (SEN) Steering Committee, is co-chaired by Dr. Kathryn Wells, MD, Executive Director of the Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect, and Jade Woodard, Executive Director of Illuminate Colorado. The Colorado Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Commission became integrated into this committee in 2015. In 2016, the Colorado Hospital Learning Collaborative was established as part of this committee. *See Appendix D* for a diagram of the structure of the SuPPoRT Colorado Steering Committee.
- The Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention (Consortium) serves as the Prescription Drug Abuse Committee of the Task Force. This committee is chaired by José Esquibel, Director of the Consortium Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention. The Consortium consists of 10 workgroups responsible for implementing the goals and strategies to mitigate the impact of the opioid crisis in Colorado. *See Appendix E* for a diagram of the Consortium workgroups.



## II. Progress on Task Force Strategic Priorities

This year, the Task Force continued to prioritize maximizing the impact of the opioid settlement distribution, track data trends for a range of legal and illicit substances, and monitor substance use related legislation. In addition, the Task Force ensured ongoing collaboration and knowledge sharing on substance use response efforts around the state.

### Opioid Settlement Distributions

Opioid settlement funds are directly reaching communities across the state to fund critical programs for substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery. To date, the Colorado Opioid Abatement Council (COAC) has reviewed two-year plans for each of the 19 Regional Opioid Abatement Councils, resulting in \$110 million funds released to regions and participating local governments. The distribution to local governments and [19 opioid regions](#) created by the MOU is a model unique to Colorado. In addition, the COAC has released \$4.4 million in funds to 12 Infrastructure Share recipients.

In 2024, the Colorado Opioid Abatement Council launched the first round of expenditure reports in compliance with 100% reporting on all shares of opioid settlement funds. All (100%) of opioid settlement fund recipients (103 of 103) reported expenditures by the February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, deadline. For current information on expenditures, please visit the nationally recognized [Colorado opioid settlement dashboard](#).

**As referenced in the opioid settlement dashboard, the following funds have been released from the State Share of opioid settlement funds to date:**

- \$4 million to 8 Innovation Grantees
- \$8 million to 19 Impact Grantees
- \$3.9 million to expand medications for opioid use disorder and continuity of care upon release to individuals leaving the prison system
- \$747 thousand to Ute Mountain Ute federally recognized tribe for culturally response substance use prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery services
- \$1.3 million to Southern Ute federally recognized tribe for culturally response substance use prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery services
- \$750 thousand funding towards “Connect Effect” an evidence-based prevention campaign for youth 10-14 and their trusted adults

- \$250 thousand to 5 grantees for the “Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) in Jail and Connections to the Community Recognition”

To date, Attorney General Weiser and the Department of Law are on track to recover nearly \$800 million for the state. This money will be paid out over the course of 18 years, which gives Colorado a significant window of opportunity to work on long-term, strategic plans to help mitigate the opioid crisis.

**Colorado continues to be recognized as a national leader, including as follows:**



- Presentation as the only state representative to invitation-only panel on “Best Practices in Opioid Settlements” at the Bloomberg Overdose Prevention Initiative at the invitation of The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Recognition by National Association of Counties (NaCO) and National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) on a webinar and publication highlighting “Promising Practices for Collaboration on State and Local Opioid Settlement Spending”
- The Task Force has been integral in informing the work of opioid settlement distributions. For more information about the opioid settlement dollars, please visit the [Colorado Attorney General’s Opioid Response webpage](#) and the [Opioid Fund Distribution Dashboard](#).

## **Tracking Substance Use Data Trends**

Over the course of 4 quarterly meetings, more than 14 presentations were made by state experts on timely topics around substance use and misuse trends.

The first quarter Colorado Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force (SATF) meeting focused on the impact of substance misuse on youth, families, and children. We heard about treatment gaps for youth substance use and mental health services. In addition, the Co-Chair of the SEOW Committee educated the Task Force on primary prevention best practices for children, youth and families.

At the second quarterly meeting, data presentations from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) highlighted trends and annual changes in fatal and nonfatal drug overdoses in Colorado. In addition, the Black Advisory Substance Use Committee for Colorado (BASUC) shared about the impact of health disparities as a driver for substance use and misuse.

At the third quarterly meeting, CDPHE shared research on their overdose prevention campaign. Additional representatives from CDPHE shared top 2023 data stories from the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS) as well as HKCS-marijuana-specific findings. A presentation by Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Task Agency (RMHIDTA) informed Task Force members on relevant drug seizure data trends. Finally, the Colorado Department of Law shared updates on substance use related legislation.

For the fourth quarterly meeting, the Colorado Department of Public Safety shared timely data on public safety impact and CDPHE shared public health data use trends on excessive alcohol use trends. In addition, the State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) shared their data profiles specific to substance use in Colorado and throughout the United States as a resource for individuals and organizations working in substance use related areas like behavioral health, public health, public safety, and public policy.

[Click here](#) to access the SEOW's data profiles and other resources.

## **Collaboration and Knowledge-Sharing**

The 2024 Colorado Opioid Abatement Conference held on September 30<sup>th</sup> in Loveland, Colorado, and was an excellent venue for the Task Force to collaborate and

meet other experts in the field of opioid response. There were over 400 attendees from across the state at the Conference.

The Task Force continues to serve as a nexus for state subject matter experts to gather the most up-to-date resources on programs and activities occurring statewide. These collaborative settings increase accountability for public funds by reducing duplication and best leveraging shared resources.

Several goals for the Task Force include institutionalizing sufficient staffing support for the coordination of quarterly meetings and annual report, improving efficiencies in notetaking during quarterly meetings, providing more timely uploads of data presentations, and ensuring routine maintenance of membership rosters.

**In addition, the Task Force will continue to provide key leadership in the following areas:**

- Increasing education and coordination on substance use response efforts
- Tracking substance use related data trends
- Monitoring substance use related legislation

### **III. Committee Work and Accomplishments**

#### ***A. Data Committee***

The [Colorado State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup \(SEOW\)](#) serves as the Data Committee of the Task Force.

The mission of the Colorado State Epidemiology Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) is to provide partners, communities, and policymakers with comprehensive data on the patterns, context, and impact of substance use in Colorado to inform interventions at the local, tribal, state, and federal levels.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), Prevention Services Division (PSD), Violence and Injury Prevention and Mental Health Promotion (VIP MHP) Branch, Community Prevention and Early Intervention (CPEI) unit supports the SEOW through the Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services (SUPTRS) Block Grant funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The CPEI unit contracts with the University of Colorado Denver, The Evaluation Center (TEC) to facilitate meetings, develop and design SEOW publications, and manage data resources on the website.

The SEOW is committed to connecting people to various data through the SEOW website, bi-annual newsletters (fall 2023 and spring 2024), and the data resources on the SEOW website. The SEOW website went through changes to meet accessibility standards and continues to promote relevant data presentations at events and conferences.

#### **Health Statistics Regional Profiles**

The primary focus of the 2024 Fiscal Year was the development of the first-ever Health Statistics Regional Profiles. The idea for the regional profiles arose from a needs assessment conducted by the SEOW team in 2021, where public health professionals expressed a need for more localized substance use data. Based on these findings, the SEOW focused its efforts on developing Regional Profiles that align with the [21 CDPHE Health Statistics Regions](#). The Regional Profiles will address the data gap that exists for counties with small populations using groupings by geographic area. This allows the SEOW to provide another layer of data that gets closer to the county level for communities and others to reference and use for planning and improving services. The



[Regional Profiles](#) will lead to promoting data sharing among communities and state partners by providing quality data sets along with understanding the advantages and limitations among the existing data sets. The SEOW chose the CDPHE Health Statistics Regions because the CDPHE [nonfatal overdose dashboard](#) also provides results for these regions.

The profiles were designed with accessibility and equity at the forefront and developed using an interactive infographic software called Infogram. The software tool makes all content visible to screen readers, has alternative text embedded into all graphics and charts, and has a feature that allows the data in charts and graphs to be exported as an Excel file to give individuals the ability to look at the content in different ways. The development of the profiles was a collaborative effort to ensure that the deliverable would be a useful resource for all Coloradans interested in examining localized substance use trends within their communities. Activities to support the creation of the regional profiles included a review of other SEOW sites' regional profiles, interviews with SEOW evaluators in different states, interviews with local and state public health representatives, and quarterly steering committee meetings to make collective decisions on the design of the profiles.

## **Presentations**

This year, the SEOW evaluators were invited to host one virtual and one in person interactive workshop at the 2024 Shared Risk and Protective Factors conference. The purpose of the workshops was to encourage attendees to think about using interactive infographics to tell data stories. The SEOW continues to present at the annual meeting of the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention (Consortium) and the annual update on substance use data trends for the Task Force. Anyone in the SEOW network can also invite the SEOW to present on key findings from the Regional Profiles and discuss how the data might inform their work. The SEOW will continue its steering committee of representatives from the University of Colorado Denver, TEC, state agencies such as CDPHE, BHA, in addition to Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (RMHIDTA), Vivent Health and the Consortium.

## **Publications in the Media**

The Denver Post published a four-part special report on alcohol use in Colorado in early 2024. The series discussed the growing number of deaths due to alcohol use, increasing access to the substance, challenges in getting treatment for alcohol use

disorder, and current policies that address alcohol consumption. The articles referenced the SEOW and information from the 2023 Alcohol Profile and an alcohol policy brief titled, *Reduce Excessive Drinking to Build Healthier Communities*.

The State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) has shared their data profiles specific to substance use in Colorado and throughout the United States as a resource for individuals and organizations working in substance use-related areas like behavioral health, public health, public safety, and public policy and in an effort to connect people to data. [Click here](#) to access the SEOW's data profiles and other resources.

## ***B. Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) Advisory Council***



The [Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment \(SBIRT\) Advisory Council](#) was established in January 2019 with the objective of strengthening and expanding the practice of SBIRT throughout various settings in Colorado. SBIRT is an evidence-based prevention and early intervention approach to identify, reduce, or prevent use of alcohol and other substances. The SBIRT Advisory Council takes a collaborative approach in identifying best practices and reducing barriers to implement SBIRT as a standard of care throughout Colorado's health and mental health care systems.

### **Advisory Council Overview**

The Council is led by the SBIRT Advisory Steering Committee and has an established Adolescent SBIRT Work Group. The SBIRT Advisory Council generally meets quarterly, providing opportunities for council members and community partners to present national and state-wide updates regarding substance use and the expansion of SBIRT. The SBIRT Advisory Council was created by and continues to be supported by Peer Assistance Services, Inc., SBIRT in Colorado, and has engagement from over 50 members ranging from medical, nursing, and public health professionals, social workers, educators, administrators, substance use community prevention specialists, SBIRT program managers and trainers, and school-based health center administrators.

### **Adolescent SBIRT Work Group**

The goal of the SBIRT Adolescent Work Group is to assess the level of adolescent SBIRT awareness and practice in healthcare settings. Work group members have identified SBIRT needs and gaps, with the main objective of expanding SBIRT implementation to primary care professionals serving adolescents, such as pediatricians, nurse practitioners, and health professionals within schools.

## **Ongoing Review of Youth Substance Use Prevention Efforts:**

The Adolescent SBIRT Work Group continues its focus on youth mental health and substance use, both of which remain high priorities. As part of this effort, the group has reviewed the Youth Substance Use Prevention Survey and Key Informant Interview Project, an initiative led by Peer Assistance Services, Inc. in collaboration with the National Opinion Research Center (NORC). The project aims to assess the current landscape of youth- focused substance use prevention across school, primary care, and emergency department settings. It specifically engages front-line health professionals who play a pivotal role in prevention and early intervention efforts.

## **Research Methodology:**

- A brief, 5–10-minute survey was administered to gather broad insights.
- More in-depth, focused key informant interviews followed to provide detailed context and understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by these professionals.

In addition to these efforts, the Work Group dedicated significant time and effort to summarizing key findings and recommendations from the project. This visual tool aims to increase awareness and understanding of youth substance use prevention among healthcare providers, educators, and policymakers.

## **Advisory Council goals for 2025:**

- Outreach to and recruitment of new members from different settings and disciplines: Examples include community health workers, nurses, middle and high school health professionals, representatives from juvenile and adult justice settings, Regional Health Connectors (RHCs), and community organizations that could expand the reach of substance use prevention and early intervention (e.g., faith communities, youth-serving organizations, college wellness programs).
- Utilize the Youth Survey findings infographic to expand implementation of youth SBIRT in primary care clinics, hospitals, middle schools, and high schools.
- Formation of a new workgroup and/or ad hoc workgroups informed by Advisory Council member input on priority areas for expanding SBIRT training and technical assistance, SBIRT implementation, and collaboration with other state

initiatives. Examples: school mental health screening initiatives (making sure they also address substance use as part of mental health); expanding treatment options and access to protective services and opportunities for youth at risk for or with an alcohol or drug use disorder; integration of SBIRT training in health professional training programs (e.g., undergraduate nursing, social work, medicine, physician assistant, and advanced practice registered nursing programs); and collaboration with the re-organized Behavioral Health Administration (BHA).

- Keep Advisory Council members informed about SBIRT-related research and innovative SBIRT projects in Colorado, as well as other states and countries. Examples: integrating SBIRT into perinatal services, electronic SBIRT, policy initiatives that address access and regulation of alcohol, cannabis and other substance-related industries, naloxone distribution in schools, postpartum and doula home visitation programs, and others.



## ***C. Supporting Perinatal Substance Use Prevention, Recovery, and Treatment in Colorado (SuPPoRT Colorado) Steering Committee***

[SuPPoRT Colorado's](#) vision is a Colorado that equitably serves all families through prevention and reduction of substance use during pregnancy and provides multigenerational support for families to thrive. The Illuminate Colorado Strategic Initiatives team continues to provide backbone support for all of SuPPoRT Colorado.

### **The Steering Committee and Family Advisory Board**

The SuPPoRT Colorado Steering Committee seeks to identify and implement strategies for reducing the number of families impacted by substance use during pregnancy and for improving outcomes for families across their lifespan. The SuPPoRT Colorado Steering Committee is co- chaired by Kathryn Wells, MD, Executive Director of the Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect, and Jade Woodard, Executive, Director of Illuminate Colorado.

The purpose of the Family Advisory Board (FAB) is to elevate the voices of families who have experienced, directly or indirectly, the impacts of substance use during pregnancy to understand barriers in seeking support and health care (including treatment and other services). The FAB is chaired by Diane Smith and Marrissa Ratcliff.

The FAB and Steering Committee make strategic decisions together and collaborate on projects to ensure both lived and professional experience inform how to address the impacts of substance use and best serve the needs of families impacted by substance use during the perinatal period.

**During 2024, the FAB and Steering Committee continued to oversee and support the implementation of the activities and work to drive forward the following 2022-2024 priorities:**

- Reduce stigma around accessing substance use disorder treatment and recovery supports for those who are pregnant and/or parenting
- Ensure systems (and the people who work within them) develop policies

and practices with families that support warm handoffs and standardize practices to address inequities

- Build Colorado’s statewide capacity to align efforts, apply lessons from our data, and recognize and respond to emerging needs
- Build Colorado’s statewide capacity to identify Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

**The following foundations are applied across all SuPPoRT Colorado’s priorities, strategies, and activities:**

- Family voice/ lived expertise and leadership
- Ensuring data-informed strategic planning, activity engagement, and impact

Throughout 2024, all Work Groups and Advisory Groups under the Steering Committee and FAB met on a regular basis to drive action toward the goals and activities outlined in each respective Work/Advisory Group Action Plan. The working and advisory groups each have a core set of multidisciplinary participants who are dedicated to achieving the goals and objectives of the group.

## SuPPoRT Colorado 2024 Progress

**Priority Area:** Reduce stigma around accessing substance use disorder (SUD) treatment and recovery supports for pregnant and parenting people.

Strategy	Progress	Space
Expand healthcare provider education resources related to substance use and pregnancy with an emphasis on family leadership and addressing implicit bias	<p>In 2024, the Provider Education Work Group met seven times and updated its work plan to address this priority area. Throughout the year, they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintained and promoted the Trauma Informed Care webinar series.</li> <li>• Identified current and emerging provider education needs in ongoing collaboration with the FAB, Data and</li> </ul>	Provider Education Work Group

	<p>Research Advisory Group, Plan of Safe Care (POSC) Work Group, and Policy Analysis Work Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintained relationships in Child Welfare and Health Care spaces to attune to the needs and challenges of staff in both areas.</li> <li>• Recruited two new providers who bring new perspectives to the group (family medicine and obstetrics).</li> <li>• Identified strategies to develop and disseminate curriculum to providers state-wide.</li> <li>• Collaborated with the POSC Work Group to discuss the next steps in the standardization of guidelines in healthcare spaces. They are currently identifying POSC training needs to review/update current tools or develop new ones.</li> </ul> <p>Looking ahead the Provider Education work group will continue efforts to convene content experts and develop educational resources/training for health care providers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a training series and curriculum to respond to identified needs, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Education on the Child Welfare system and nuances of mandatory reporting.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
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<p>Build capacity around storytelling to reduce stigma</p>	<p>In 2024, the FAB met five times for their regular bi-monthly meeting, twice for the joint meeting with the Steering Committee, and three times for Ad Hoc meetings to assist with other SuPPoRT spaces. Their progress includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing consultation on multiple projects related to perinatal substance use and assisting in the development of materials for multiple spaces outside of SuPPoRT Colorado.</li> <li>• Hosting multiple sessions to assist in the development and review of the Kempe Perinatal Navigator materials.</li> <li>• Reviewing and providing feedback on scripting for healthcare providers who participate in Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (AIM) SUD with Colorado Perinatal Care Quality Collaborative (CPCQC).</li> <li>• Actively making time to share their stories in each of the SuPPoRT Work Groups where they participate and relate their lived experience to the communities SuPPoRT serves.</li> <li>• Continuing efforts to expand the FAB.</li> <li>• Contributing to the capacity building of Steering Committee member organizations to include family voice and storytelling.</li> </ul>	<p>FAB, with support from Illuminate and the Steering Committee</p>
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**Priority Area:** Ensure systems (and the people who work within them) develop policies and practices with families that support warm handoffs and standardize practices to address inequities.

Strategy	Progress	Space
Continue to support and expand the Colorado Hospital Substance Exposed Newborns Quality Improvement Collaborative ( <a href="#">CHoSEN QIC</a> )	<p>The cornerstone initiative of the CHoSEN QIC is focused on quality improvement. This work is built around multidisciplinary hospital-based improvement teams working collaboratively to achieve measurable improvements. In 2024, CHoSEN QIC has expanded focus to include improving outcomes along the perinatal period for families impacted by substance use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHoSEN hosted Spring and Fall forums during the past year.</li> <li>• CHoSEN Hospitals assisted with the implementation and dissemination of the POSC and Toxicology Best Practice Guidelines.</li> </ul>	CHoSEN QIC (CPCQC and Illuminate)



Support Plan of Safe Care (POSC) implementation	<p>The POSC work group was highly active during 2024, meeting monthly. POSC work took place in many spaces, including the following specific activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued disseminating the <a href="#">POSC Best Practice Guide</a>.</li> <li>Developed, vetted, and collaborated with partner agencies on a comprehensive POSC Template.</li> <li>The POSC Template has been reviewed by healthcare professionals who are champions of working with pregnant and parenting people impacted by substance use, the SuPPoRT Colorado Family Advisory Board, partner entities, and the SuPPoRT Colorado Steering Committee chairs.</li> <li>The Plan of Safe Care Work Group Chairs continued to support statewide POSC implementation and lead POSC Strategic Planning.</li> <li>POSC Work Group continued to develop additional tools for a statewide webpage launch in Fall 2024 and have participated in discussions around Notification and Reporting for Colorado.</li> <li>Monitored other states' approaches to implementation to inform strategies.</li> <li>Supported and advised the POSC Pilot Project.</li> <li>Coordinated POSC training curriculum with Provider Education Work Group and POSC Pilot training efforts.</li> <li>Coordinated with Data and Research Advisory Group to identify indicators</li> </ul>	<p>POSC Work Group;  Provider Education Work Group;  Data and Research Advisory Group;    Policy Advisory Work Group; and  FAB</p>
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	<p>for POSC Best Practice Guide utilization, implementation, and reach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensured Lived Experience Expert/Family Voice is present in the implementation.</li> </ul>	
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**Priority Area:** Build Colorado's statewide capacity to align efforts, apply lessons from our data, and recognize and respond to emerging needs

Strategy	Progress	Space
<p>Translate our SuPPoRT Colorado policy priorities into state-level policies utilizing key considerations and findings, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perspectives of the FAB;</li> <li>• Maternal Mortality Review Committee report recommendations;</li> <li>• Child Fatality Prevention System report recommendations; and</li> <li>• Ongoing results from the Colorado Perinatal Substance Use Data Linkage Project.</li> </ul>	<p>In 2024, the Policy Analysis Workgroup led the following efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated the Indications for Toxicology Testing guidelines to align with recommendations from CDPHE and CHoSEN lactation and substance use guidelines.</li> <li>• Maintained open communication and feedback loops with providers and policy members to ensure collaboration.</li> <li>• Developed and maintained a document to track dissemination efforts of the guidelines.</li> <li>• Responded to technical assistance requests to support guidance implementation.</li> <li>• Monitored nationwide policy movements related to substance use and pregnancy on an ongoing basis and considered potential efforts in Colorado.</li> <li>• Monitored statewide policy and implementation related to substance use and pregnancy, shared key information and opportunities for advocacy.</li> </ul>	<p>Policy Analysis Work Group; Provider Education Work Group; and</p> <p>Data and Research Advisory Group</p>

<p>Continue to build data and research capacity in the state through advising, collaborations, dissemination, and learning.</p>	<p>Throughout 2024, the Data and Research Advisory group engaged on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advising on the data and research components of statewide and SuPPoRT Colorado Projects such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Data Linkage Project</li> <li>◦ Data SnapShot</li> <li>◦ Plan of Safe Care Pilot</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Creating opportunities for cross-sector collaborative learning and action through Data Spotlights.</li> <li>• Supporting the dissemination of project-related recommendations like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Responding to data support requests from other SuPPoRT Colorado Work Groups.</li> <li>◦ Elevating and reviewing emergent trends and data needs.</li> <li>◦ Building awareness of existing data sources to better leverage data in driving priorities and solutions.</li> <li>◦ Continuing Data Spotlights.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Data and Research Advisory Group</p>
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**Priority Area:** Build Colorado's statewide capacity to identify Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).

Strategy	Progress	Space
<p>Implement the education recommendation from the Colorado 2020 FASD Report and explore prevention strategies</p>	<p>FASD work group's meaningful efforts and strategy to build Colorado's statewide capacity and identify FASD in 2024 included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued exploration of resources for professionals and families.</li> </ul> <p>Illuminate Colorado's Executive Director and Illuminate Colorado's Policy Manager attended the FASD United Summit in Washington DC, participating in advocacy efforts with legislators on Capitol Hill.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FASD Awareness Day and month included advocacy activities and blogs.</li> <li>Added additional providers to the FASD Informed Behavioral Health Care Provider List published on the SuPPoRT Colorado Webpage.</li> <li>The SuPPoRT Colorado FASD Awareness work group aligned efforts with the Illuminate <a href="#">FASD Navigation Program</a> that launched in 2023.</li> <li>Aligned and collaborated with the Illuminate Education Team members, who are supporting the <a href="#">FASD Navigation Program</a>.</li> <li>The Education Team developed an 11 minute FASD Video for any audience. The Education Team consulted with the Work Group, which continues to be</li> </ul>	<p>FASD Work Group; and Provider Education Work Group</p>



	<p>composed of FASD professionals and Lived Experience Experts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FASD Work Group recruited two new members. One new member has expertise in special education and the other new member is a health care provider with the University Hospital.</li> <li>• The Work Group has connected health care providers who are interested in becoming FASD informed to the lecture series developed by the American Association of Pediatricians developed to assist health care providers in diagnosing FASDs.</li> </ul>	
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## Looking Ahead for SuPPoRT Colorado

SuPPoRT Colorado is concluding the 2023/2024 Strategic Plan. The SuPPoRT Colorado Steering Committee and Family Advisory Board will start strategic planning for 2025/26. The Steering Committee and Family Advisory Board will continue to use data to drive 2025/2026 strategic planning and identify 2025/2026 priority areas. SuPPoRT Colorado Steering Committee, FAB, Work and Advisory groups will discuss what activities will continue into the next strategic plan.

The 2025/2026 strategic plan and priority areas will be finalized in January 2025. SuPPoRT Colorado Steering Committee, Family Advisory Board, Work Groups and Advisory Groups will continue to build on almost 16 years of work on this effort and make progress in supporting families impacted by substance use disorder by enhancing systems education, collaboration and practice change.

For more information on SuPPoRT Colorado or to join SuPPoRT Colorado working or advisory groups, refer to the following [link](#). Reach out to Kelli Sutton [ksutton@illuminatecolorado.org](mailto:ksutton@illuminatecolorado.org) to get involved in 2025/2026 efforts.

## ***D. Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention***

### **Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Highlights**

The Consortium, housed at the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences on the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, helps to coordinate the statewide response to the opioid crisis. In addition to eleven work groups focused on policies, practices, and partnerships for improving prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery services, the Consortium has External Relations Strategists that interact with community organizations and coalitions across the state, including members of Regional Opioid Abatement Councils (ROACs).

In 2024, External Relations Strategists provided subject matter expertise to members of various ROACs and advisory council members of ROACs and participated on committees of some ROACS. This included guidance on evidence-based approaches to addressing the opioid crisis, reviewing applications for funding, and assisting with inter-regional collaboration among ROACs.

### **State Legislation**

Four bills from the Opioid and Other Substance Use Disorders Study Committee were introduced in the 2024 regular session of the Colorado General Assembly related to prevention (SB24-047), harm reduction (HB24-1037), treatment (HB24-1045), and recovery (SB24-048). The Consortium notified stakeholders about committee hearings and helped ensure subject matter experts testified in support of the bills. Through the steadfast efforts of the bill sponsors, all four bills were passed by the legislature and signed by the governor.

### **Some highlights from the bills include:**

- Expanding screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) training and technical assistance to schools and pediatric settings to increase SBIRT with adolescents (SB24-047).
- Expanding the Perinatal Substance Use Data Linkage Project (SB24-047).
- Updating the definition of opioid antagonist to include any product beyond the date

- of expiration to allow naloxone to be used and not discarded (HB24-1037).
- Clarifying the civil and criminal immunity that protects a person who acts in good faith to furnish or administer an opioid antagonist also protects a person who distributes an opioid antagonist (HB24- 1037).
- Requiring reimbursement of pharmacists at the same rate as other providers of medication-opioid antagonist (HB24- 1037).
- Requiring reimbursement of pharmacists at the same rate as other providers of medication-assisted treatment (HB24-1045).
- Requiring the Department of Health Care Policy and Finance to seek federal authorization for screening, medication-assisted treatment, prescription medications, case management, and care coordination services through the state Medical Assistance Program to persons up to 90 days prior to release from jail, a juvenile facility, or a Department of Corrections facility (HB24-1045).
- Creating the Contingency Management Grant Program related to stimulant use disorder in the Behavioral Health Administration with an allocation of \$750,000 through June 30, 2027 (HB24- 1045).
- Establishing the Recovery-Friendly Workplace Program within the University of Colorado School of Public Health Center for Health, Work & Environment (SB24-048).
- Declaring that recovery residences are a matter of statewide concern (SB24-048).
- Declaring that recovery residences, sober living facilities, and sober homes are a residential use of land for zoning purposes (SB24-048).

### **Assisting Jails with Meeting Legislative Mandates for Opioid Use Disorder Treatment**

In 2024, the Consortium continued to partner with County Sheriffs of Colorado and the Colorado Jail Association on improving the connection between jails and providers of treatment for opioid and other substance use disorders. This included the development of a guide on withdrawal management protocols related to opioids and alcohol based on national standards and conducting a series of regional meetings between jail personnel and community organizations to improve continuity of care.

Another developing area is working to provide guidance on how best to integrate peer support professionals in carceral settings. Evidence supports that peer support professionals provide benefits to the jails as well as to incarcerated individuals with an opioid or other substance use disorder. There is a need for guidance to jails to assist them in policy development and practice protocols. This effort is being led by members of the Advancing the Peer Support Workforce in Carceral Facilities, a sub-group of the Consortium's Recovery Work Group. Outreach is now occurring with sheriffs and staff of jails that are already utilizing peer support professionals to help inform the drafting of guidance for use across the state.

### **Fentanyl Response Stakeholders Meetings**

The Consortium continued its partnership with Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (White House Office of National Drug Control Policy) on conducting quarterly Colorado Fentanyl Response Stakeholder meetings to learn about the ongoing impacts of the fentanyl crisis and the various response efforts in the state related to prevention, harm reduction, treatment, recovery, and interdiction. The meetings offer an opportunity for people from various disciplines to interact, share updates, and follow up with each other on activities of mutual interest in responding to the fentanyl crisis.

### **Peer Support Professional Lunch & Learn Series**

With funds from the Behavioral Health Administration's State Opioid and Stimulants Response Grant, the Consortium worked with various partners on conducting a series of nine lunch and learn sessions for peer support professionals, where among other participants, at least 25 peer support professionals attended all nine sessions.

**The following nine topics were covered at the lunch and learn sessions, where there were attendees from across the state:**

- Motivational Interviewing (45 participants)
- Harm Reduction (40 participants)
- Pathways to Recovery (35 participants)
- Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Session 1 (35 participants)
- Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Session 2 (33 participants)
- Grief & Loss (50 participants)

- Ethics Refresh (53 participants)
- Conflict Management Session 1 (46 participants)
- Conflict Management Session 2 (43 participants)

**The key partners in planning and conducting the lunch and learn series were:**

- Victor King, Mental Health Partners, assisted with planning and provided remarks at the sessions.
- Colorado Providers Association offered the professional continuing education credits for all sessions.
- Racquel Garcia, Hard Beauty, speaker.
- Maggie Seldeen, High Rockies Harm Reduction, speaker.
- Irina Bogomolova, Choice in Recovery, speaker.
- Kat Martinez, Mental Health Colorado, speaker.
- Carrie Bauer, HeartLight Center, speaker.
- Rachel Fowler, Serenity Recovery Connection, speaker.
- Jean Blackwell, Crossroads Turning Points, speaker.

**Colorado Recovery Friendly Workplaces and the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy**

The Consortium continues to be an active partner with the Center for Health, Work and Environment in the University of Colorado School of Public Health of the Colorado Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative. The passage of SB24-048 codified the Recovery Friendly Workplace Program in state statute and acknowledges the critical role that employers hold in elevating the importance of supporting people with mental health and substance use disorders in the workplace. The goal is to educate, train, and provide resources to help managers and individuals implement evidence-based workplace practices and support for employees in this effort received attention on the part of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). In recognition and celebration of National Recovery Month, the Center for Health Work & Environment received an invitation from ONDCP to participate in a special meeting of business, labor, and state government leaders at the White House held on September 18, 2024. A representative of the Center for Health Work & Environment was one of three state government leaders who spoke about their efforts to promote and support the adoption of

recovery-ready workplace policies in their state during a conversation with Dr. Rahul Gupta, ONDCP Director.

### **Keep the Party Safe: Fentanyl Public Awareness Campaign**

The primary audiences for the Keep the Party Safe public awareness campaign are individuals ages 18-45. The Consortium continued its partnership with Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG) Presents to promote the campaign at 18 live AEG music events and venues.

Since inception, the campaign has handed out over 7,500 doses of naloxone and documented 16 known drug overdose reversals related to that distribution. Notably, there were likely more lives saved that were not reported to the Consortium.

Through the campaign, the Consortium partnered with Electric Dance Music artist Ravenscoon to record a naloxone training to share with fans that generated 42,000 views. The Consortium also partnered with Summit County on bus wraps, custom posters, and movie theater ads promoting the Keep the Party Safe messaging.

**The Keep the Party Safe campaign continues to be well-received as demonstrated by the following figures:**

- 65,000 website sessions
- 5.5 million digital impressions from paid media
- 30 online, radio, and broadcast news media stories
- 49 public health and community organizations ordered free campaign materials to distribute
- 18 community partner collaborations
- 46,000 digital ad link clicks\$159,000 advertising value equivalency from earned media coverage

## **IV. Colorado Substance Use Trends**

The Task Force reviews data from various sources to understand the trends in substance use and misuse in Colorado. This section provides a summary of key trends and presentations, as presented to the Task Force. Below are the titles, short summaries, and links to this year's presentations when relevant and available.

### **Colorado Perinatal Substance Use Disorders (SUD) (February 2024)**

Colorado Perinatal Care Quality Collaborative (CPCQC) presented on Colorado Perinatal Substance Use Disorders and how to build next level initiatives. Throughout the presentation, CPCQC states their work is driven through their mission – which is to ensure that mothers, birthing individuals, and their families in Colorado receive culturally relevant, safe, equitable, high-quality care while addressing major causes of maternal mortality, including mental health and substance use.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation.

### **'What Do We Mean by Primary Prevention for Children, Youth, and Families' (February 2024)**

Sharon Lui, Director of Community Prevention Early Intervention at Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment presented on the meaning of primary prevention and what it looks like in communities. With supporting evidence provided by the [Association of State and Territorial Health Officials \(ASTHO\)](#), the benefits of primary prevention have shown to increase access to jobs, homes, and nutritious meals to improve the way people live, grow, and play and also helps decrease rates of child abuse and neglect.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation

### **Overview of Legislative Opportunities Related to Perinatal SUD (February 2024)**

The impact of prenatal exposure to substances can include poor birth outcomes such as low birth weight, preterm delivery, withdrawal, and longer term cognitive, behavioral, and developmental delays. Combined with the fact that unintentional drug

overdose is the second leading cause of death for pregnant and postpartum Coloradans, the stakes are high for families. Yet, proven and promising approaches to prevent perinatal substance use and improve outcomes are available, but not widely utilized.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation.

### **Opioid Settlement Distribution Update (February 2024)**

Jamie Feld, the Director of Opioid Response at the Colorado Department of Law, provided updates on the distribution of opioid settlement funds in 2024 and planned distributions to the 19 regions. Jamie also provided updates on the timeline for regional funding requests and expenditure reporting for the 19 regions. She shared information about upcoming and past funding opportunities from the opioid state share, including the “Medications for Opioid Use Disorder in Jail and Connections to the Community Award” which was launched in January of 2024, at the County of Sheriffs in Colorado (CSOC) conference and provides \$50,000 to five different categories of nominated jails within Colorado.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation

### **The Opioid Crisis & Black/African American Population: An Urgent Issue (June 2024)**

Maisha Fields and Vonzel Sawyer, as chairs of the Black Substance Misuse Task Force, shared their task force’s state plan to reduce opioid and substance misuse deaths and addiction in the Black community. In 2020, Black or African American Coloradans had the highest rate of death from drug overdose across all racial or ethnic groups: 36.3 per 100,000 people, which is double the rate for this population in 2018. Maisha shared steps for a plan including hiring a project manager, forming work groups, creating a provider database, developing a readily available community resource list, and identifying gaps in service.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation

### **Trends in Fatal and Non-Fatal Drug Overdoses in Colorado (June 2024)**



Christine Demont, Lead Analyst, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment presented on data of total drug overdoses through 2023. Christine shared the State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System which was funded by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and is part of the Overdose Data to Action grant. This system has over 600 variables specifically focusing on overdoses of unintentional or undetermined intent.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation

### **CDPHE Overdose Prevention Campaign Research Overview (August 2024)**

Heather Link-Bergman, Communication Manager from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) presented on their Overdose Prevention and Fentanyl Awareness Campaign's initial findings. Heather shared that this project is funded by HB 22-1326, which directs CDPHE to develop, implement, and maintain an ongoing statewide prevention and education campaign to address the fentanyl education needs in the state. Heather noted that CDPHE is working with Cactus Communications as their primary contractor for this project while also working closely with two other agencies, Hispanidad for Spanish language campaign materials and Linhart PR. The budget for the campaign is \$3.7 million from March 2024 to June 2025.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation

### **Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (August 2024)**

Em Fine, School and Youth Survey Manager with CDPHE presented the top data stories from the 2023 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS), the most comprehensive survey on the health and well-being of young people in Colorado. Em shared that the purpose of the HKCS is to better understand youth health and the factors that help young people make healthy choices. The results are widely used by schools, districts, local public health agencies, youth serving organizations, and state departments focused on youth. They highlighted improvements in mental health and reductions in risk factors for suicidality, however, they also noted a concerning increase in alcohol use among youth. The results demonstrate consistent disparities in health outcomes for LGBTQ+ youth.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation

## **Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (August 2024)**

Katie Finlinson presented on the mission of the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), which is to “[r]educe drug trafficking and drug production through the disruption and dismantling of drug trafficking organizations and money laundering organizations and prevent drug overdoses.” HIDTA is a federal program that falls under the Office of National Drug Control Policy and what makes HIDTA unique is that it is anchored at the local level, meaning they have established partnerships between federal, state, local, and tribal agencies. HIDTA has upstream and downstream prevention and law enforcement efforts and focus. Katie shared a “HIDTA Map” which shows all HIDTA locations throughout the United States, totaling 33 locations and providing coverage to over 600 counties. When focusing on Colorado, there are 13 HIDTA funded task forces, including 12 investigative and 1 interdiction.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation

## **Legislative Updates (August 2024)**

Jefferey Riester with the Colorado Department of Law shared that the previous legislative year was focused on terms of substance use policy, grant opportunities, and fine tuning the policies that have been implemented over the last six years with the Opioid Interim Committee. Six bills were discussed, four of which the Opioid and Other Substances Interim committee worked on. The following bills were discussed: “Prevention of Substance Use Disorders” ([SB24-047](#)), “Substance Use Disorders Harm Reduction” ([HB 24-1037](#)), “Treatment of Substance Use Disorders” ([HB24-1045](#)), “Opiate Antagonists and Detection Products in Schools” ([HB24-1003](#)), “Overdose Prevention Centers” ([HB24-1028](#)) and “Substance Use Disorders Recovery” ([SB24-048](#)).

## **Rise Above Youth Survey (November 2024)**

Kent MacLennan shared results from the Rise Above Colorado Youth Survey which ran from March 4th through May 31st, 2024, and had about 885 participants. The survey consisted of 130 questions. Kent shared that survey results indicate an improvement in mental health from young people. When looking into personal safety, which is also tied to mental health, the survey asked survey participants if they live with someone who either has a substance use disorder, lives with depression, or who is experiencing other mental health concerns.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation.

### **Colorado Public Safety Data Trends (November 2024)**

Allison Rosenthal with the Colorado Department of Safety presented on Substance Use and Crime Trends within the state of Colorado. Beginning with drug seizure data, Allison shared U.S. Customs and Border Patrol drug seizure statistics by drug type, focusing between the years of 2019-2023. Drugs seized, including fentanyl, were tracked by weight in pounds. Data showed that Fentanyl seizures were at an all-time high in 2023 when compared to data from 2019-2022. Similarly, data shows that fentanyl is also one of the topmost drugs seized in Colorado. Both data points show that fentanyl seizures in the U.S and Colorado has risen between the years of 2021- 2023.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation.

### **Public Health Drug Use Trends, Excessive Alcohol (November 2024)**

Julia Stullken with the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment presented on excessive alcohol use, alcohol related harms, and alcohol availability within the state of Colorado. Beginning with excessive alcohol use, Julia shared that excessive drinking is not the same as an alcohol use disorder and shared that excessive drinking takes many forms and is not uniform across categories of people. One example is binge drinking which has different standards between men and women (i.e., excessive drinking for a woman is consuming 4 or more drinks at one sitting versus 5 or more drinks for a man). With excessive drinking being the cause of injuries, chronic health problems, morbidity, and mortality, the economic costs of alcohol-related issues are valued at over \$5 billion per year.

Julia also shared data on alcohol-induced deaths, which is about 12.3 deaths per every 100,000 people. With that data being a nation-wide statistic, Colorado is ranked as the 7<sup>th</sup> highest rate of alcohol-induced deaths, which may correspond in part to the high amount of alcohol availability throughout the state.

[Click here](#) to view the full presentation.

# **Appendix A: Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force Member Roster**

## **Chair**

**Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser**, Task Force Chair

## **Vice-Chairs**

**Dr. Lesley Brooks**, Vice-Chair, Substance Abuse Treatment Chief of Addiction Medicine, Summit Stone Health Partners Assistant Medical Director, North Colorado Health Alliance

**Chief Rick Brandt**, Vice-Chair, Criminal Justice System Chief of Police, Evans Police Department, City of Evans

**Vanessa Devereaux**, Vice-Chair, Substance Abuse Prevention Director, Division of Community Engagement, Colorado Department of Law

## **Members**

Local Child and Family Service Provider: **Julia Roguski**, Associate Executive Director, Savio

Major Health Facility: **Dr. Kathryn Wells**, Executive Director, of the Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect

Human Service Agency: **Shannon Bryan**, Substance Use Disorder and Substance Exposed Newborn Specialist, Division of Child Welfare, Colorado Department of Human Services

Criminal Defense Bar: **Liz Krupa**, Attorney at Law, Law Office of Elizabeth Espinosa Krupa

Behavioral Health Treatment Provider: **Dante Gonzales**, Chief Executive

Officer, Centennial Mental Health Center

Colorado Department of Education: **Vacant**

Colorado District Attorneys Council: District Attorney **John Kellner**, 18th Judicial District

County Sheriffs of Colorado: **Sheriff Jaime FitzSimons**, Summit County  
Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police: Chief George Dingfelder, Chief of Police, City of Monte Vista

County Commissioner from a Rural County: **Commissioner Wendy Buxton-Andrade**, Prowers County

Organization Providing Advocacy and Support to Rural Municipalities: **Jessica Sandgren**, Council Member, City of Thornton, appointed by Colorado Municipal League

Licensed Pharmacist: **Dr. Robert Valuck**, University of Colorado, Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Colorado Department of Public Safety: **Erin Crites**, Statistical Analyst, Division of Criminal Justice, Department of Public Safety

Office of The Child's Representative: **Alex Wolff**, Case Consultant Coordinator, Office of The Child's Representative

Colorado Department of Corrections, Division of Adult Parole: **Melissa Divido**, Manager, Division of Adult Parole, Department of Corrections

Colorado Drug Investigators Association: **Ray Padilla**, Police Detective, Westminster Police Department and Task Force Officer, Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force

Youth Representative: **Kaole Vang**, Youth Advisor, Rise Above Colorado

Substance Abuse Recovery Community Organization: **Tonya Wheeler**, Executive Director, Advocates for Recovery Colorado

Environmental Protection: **Lynette Meyers**, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Community Prevention Coalition: **José Esquibel**, Director of the Consortium Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment: **Andrés Guerrero**, Manager, Overdose Prevention Unit, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Colorado Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Administration: **Joy Hart**, Director, Division of Statewide Programs, Behavioral Health Administration

District Court Judge Experienced in Handling Cases Involving Substance Abuse: **Hon. Ingrid Bakke**, Chief Judge, 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial District

Judicial Department Division of Probation. **Cary Heck**, Chief Probation Officer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District

Governor's Policy Staff Representative: **Brandon Davis**, Policy Advisor, Governor's Office

President of the Senate Designee: **Vacant**

Senate Minority Leader Designee: **Vacant**

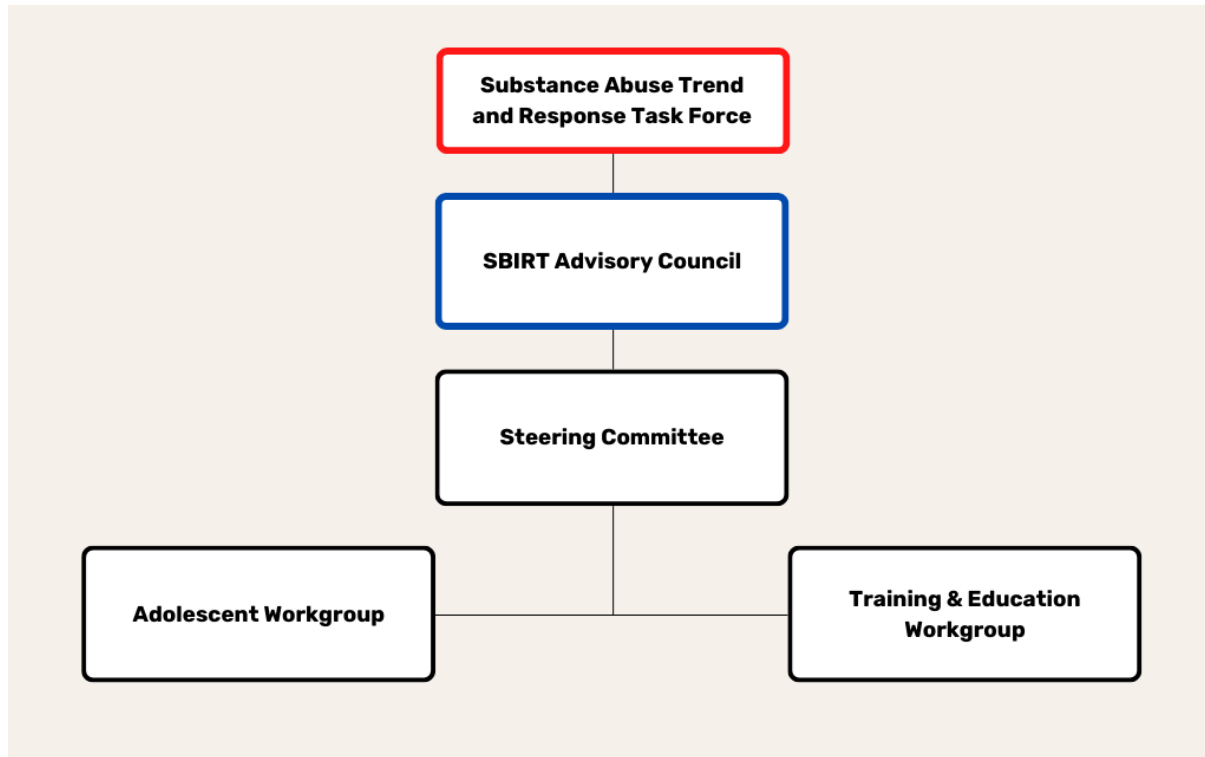
Speaker of the House Designee: **Vacant**

House Minority Leader Designee: **Vacant**

## **Appendix B: Summary of the Charter SEOW**

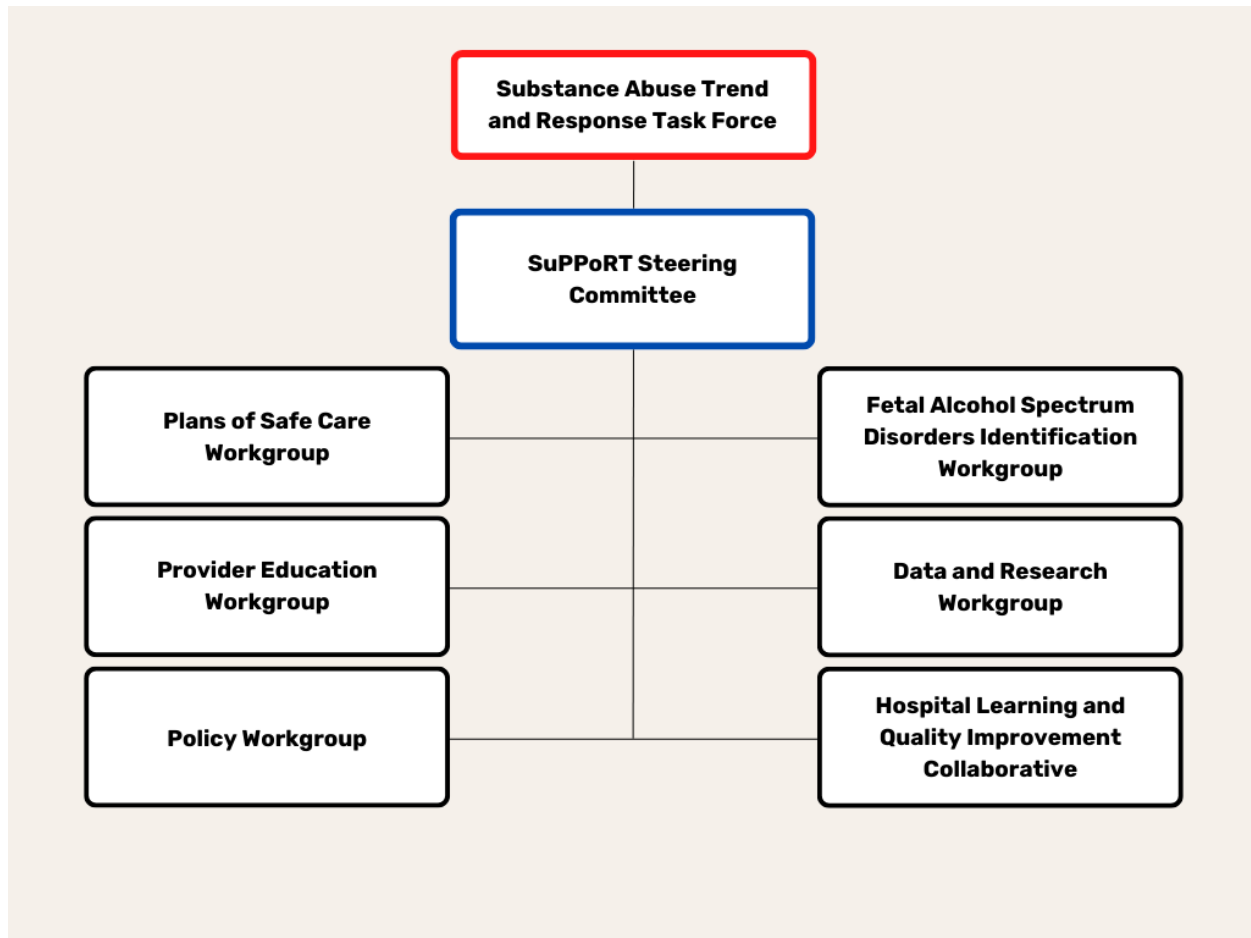
The Colorado State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) is a multi-disciplinary working group with the goal of promotion, collection, analysis, and clear communication of data to support improved health in Colorado. To accomplish this, the SEOW is tasked with increasing access to data and data products that address substance use and health issues to inform promotion, prevention, intervention, treatment, recovery, enforcement, and broader policy.

## Appendix C: Structure of the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) Advisory Council

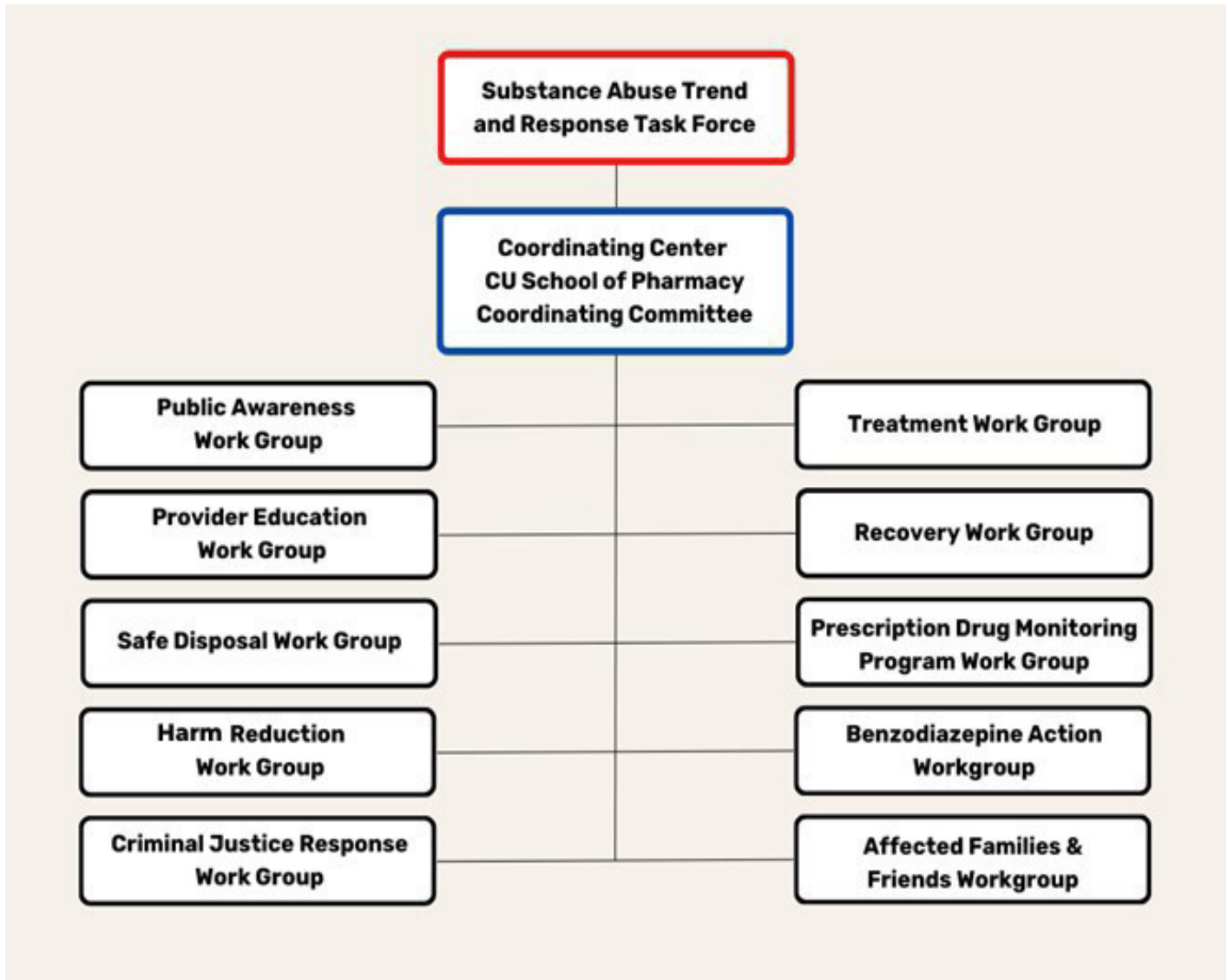




## Appendix D: Structure of the Supporting Perinatal Substance Use Prevention, Recovery, and Treatment in Colorado (SuPPoRT Colorado) Steering Committee



## Appendix E: Structure of the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention



[Click here](#) for more information about the Consortium's work groups.