

October 6, 2022



D.C. Update: NASADAD Meets with CDC and ONDCP Officials About the Drug Free Communities Support Program, National Youth Substance Use Prevention Month, CDC Issues Awards Designed to Expand and Strengthen SSPs, and More

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Meet the Member

Jennifer Smith, SSA for Pennsylvania, Secretary of Pennsylvania's Drug and Alcohol Programs



Jennifer (Jen) Smith serves as Pennsylvania's Secretary of Drug and Alcohol Programs. As Secretary, she leads the department's efforts to fulfill its mission of engaging and coordinating the state's effort to prevent and reduce substance use disorder and problem gambling; and to promote recovery, striving to reduce the human and economic impact of the disease of addiction.

Smith was first appointed Secretary of DDAP in March 2018 and reappointed in April 2019 under Governor Wolf's second term. Since assuming the role of Secretary, she has led the department's focus on strengthening Pennsylvania's drug and alcohol treatment landscape by increasing drug take-back opportunities, launching Pennsylvania's Get Help Now Hotline, expanding access to naloxone in communities across the commonwealth, and spearheading the effort to bring the free and confidential Addiction Treatment Locator, Assessment, and Standards Platform, ATLAS, into Pennsylvania.

In addition, Secretary Smith was integral in the formation and implementation of Pennsylvania's first licensure program for drug and alcohol recovery houses. Smith's achievements in the treatment and recovery fields are examples of her dedication to ensuring that Pennsylvanians are supported through all phases of their recovery.

Secretary Smith has led collaborations with the Pennsylvania Department of Health to release guidelines and protocols for "warm handoffs" that help overdose survivors transition into substance use disorder treatment, and award Pennsylvania's Coordinated Medication Assisted Treatment Centers to expand access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) to uninsured, underinsured, and privately insured individuals who are

suffering from the disease of addiction.

Alongside Governor Wolf and fellow Cabinet Members, Secretary Smith has worked tirelessly to ensure that fighting the opioid crisis remains a priority on the federal, state, and local levels. Under her leadership, the department has secured over \$300 million in federal grant funding to fight the heroin and opioid epidemic and maintains close collaboration with sister state agencies and local governments to establish innovative, nationally-recognized projects with the funding. In 2021, Secretary Smith won NASADAD's State Service Award for her leadership.

NASADAD News

NASADAD Meets With CDC and ONDCP Officials About the Drug-Free Communities Support Program

On Wednesday, September 28, NASADAD's Lacy Adams, Public Policy Analyst, and Rob Morrison, Executive Director met with Grant Baldwin, Director of CDC's Division of Overdose Prevention within the agency's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC); Karen Voetsch, Branch Chief, Drug Free Communities (DFC) Support Program (within NCIPC); and Helen Hernandez, Assistant Director, DFC Support Program, Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). The meeting covered a variety of issues regarding the DFC program specifically, and prevention in general. In addition, work is moving forward to identify additional opportunities for CDC and ONDCP to engage in a dialogue with members about the DFC program. (Pictured: L to R: Helen Hernandez, Grant Baldwin, Karen Voetsch, and Rob Morrison)



National Youth Substance Use Prevention Month

October is [National Youth Substance Use Prevention Month](#), dedicated to recognizing youth substance use issues, successful prevention strategies, and opportunities for improvement of substance use disorder (SUD) prevention services. NASADAD's members include the National Prevention Network who serve as the prevention leads in each State or Territory.

On September 30, 2022, President Joseph Biden issued [A Proclamation on National Youth Substance Use Prevention Month, 2022](#), recognizing the month of October as National Youth Substance Use Prevention Month. In the Proclamation, he calls on “parents, siblings, friends, neighbors, teachers, community members, and more to reach out to the young people in their lives to share information, promote healthy lifestyles, and help transform lives through evidence-based substance use prevention.”

The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) will be highlighting the work of community coalitions and school officials that help youth through prevention during October. ONDCP will feature evidence-based prevention programs and resources to help communities develop prevention services. Use #PreventionMonth to be featured on ONDCP's social media.

ONDCP is also hosting a webinar on [Understanding the Impact of Youth Substance Use on the Adolescent Brain](#). This no-cost webinar will be offered on October 7, 2022, at 2:00 pm (ET). Dr. Ruben Baler from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) will be presenting on prevention efforts across the nation. Registration is required.

Details about NASADAD's work on prevention and federal prevention updates can be found on our [webpage](#).

Capitol Hill Happenings

Continuing Resolution Through December 16, 2022



Last Friday, President Joe Biden [signed](#) the Continuing Appropriations and Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023 ([H.R.6833](#)) which maintains federal funding levels through December 16, 2022. Congressional lawmakers will continue to hammer out details for a broader budget deal before the expiration of the December 16 continuing resolution.

Bipartisan Group of Senators Send Letter to DoD Regarding Service Member Overdoses

Last week, a bipartisan group of senators sent a [letter](#) to the Department of Defense (DoD) with concerns about the recent rise in fatal drug overdose among active duty U.S. service members. Senators Edward Markey (D-MA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), John Cornyn (R-TX), and Martin Heinrich (D-NM) signed the letter raising concerns from a recent Rolling Stone reports detailing at least 14, and as many as 30, [overdose deaths that have occurred at Fort Bragg in North Carolina](#) since 2020. The group also pointed to reports of overdose at [Fort Bliss](#) and [West Point](#). The main topics senators asked Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III about include:

- “For an accurate count of the number of fatal overdoses that have occurred among active military service members since 2017;
- Whether treatment, including Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), for active duty service members is equally accessible at all military installations;
- What support DoD provides to families of an active duty service member who dies from a fatal overdose; and
- What protocol is in place for DoD to identify and respond to an uptick in overdoses, either generally or at a specific military installation.”

The full text of the letter can be read [here](#).

Around the Agencies

SAMHSA Announces New Recovery Office Leadership and Personnel



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) announced the appointment of [SAMHSA's new Office of Recovery's](#) leadership team and personnel tasked with promoting recovery and recovery support services. Paolo del Vecchio, MSW, will take the role of Office Director. Mr. del Vecchio currently serves as SAMHSA's Executive Officer and Director of the Office of Management, Technology and Operations and previously as Director of SAMHSA's Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS). Dona Dmitrovic will take the role of Senior Advisor. Ms. Dmitrovic previously served as Director of SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP). Larry Davidson, Ph.D., will also be serving as Senior Advisor. Dr. Davidson currently serves as a Professor of Psychology at Yale University's Department of Psychiatry and previously as Project Director of SAMHSA's Recovery to Practice initiative.

Additional key staff include:

- David Awadalla as Public Health Analyst (liaison to CSAP)
- Sabrina Frost as Executive Assistant
- Steven Fry as Public Health Analyst (liaison to CMHS)
- Grace Lee as Statistician (liaison to CBHSQ)
- Guadalupe (Lupe) Mendez as Public Health Advisor
- Enid Osborne as Public Health Analyst (liaison to Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT))
- Elizabeth Sweet as Public Health Advisor

CDC Issues Awards Designed to Expand and Strengthen

SSPs as Vital Part of the Public Health System



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently issued two awards totaling \$7.7 million for the first project year to Research Triangle Institute (RTI) International and the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) through the [Strengthening Syringe Services Programs](#) cooperative agreement. This five-year program aims to increase access to harm reduction services and prevent hepatitis C, hepatitis B, HIV, and other infectious diseases linked to injection drug use. RTI International plans to use its funds to expand a national network of syringe services programs (SSPs) and create an annual survey on the nation's SSP capacity and delivery. NASTAD plans to use its funds to increase the reach of SSPs to prevent infectious consequences of injection drug use and overdose through harm reduction services. The funding will solidify SSPs as a public health strategy for the [Department of Health and Human Services' \(HHS\) Overdose Prevention Strategy](#) to lower overdose and disease in people who inject drugs.

People who inject drugs are also a priority population for [HHS' Viral Hepatitis National Strategic Plan](#) aimed at improving the health of people who use drugs, reducing health disparities, and eliminating viral hepatitis.

SAMHSA Accepting Applications for 19th Annual Prevention Day Presentations

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is now accepting applications to present at the SAMHSA 19th Annual Prevention Day celebration. The event will be held in person on January 30, 2023, at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center hotel in Oxon Hill, Maryland. SAMHSA is accepting abstracts for those interested in presenting at Prevention Day. Abstracts should be related to one of the topic areas from the Call for Presentations landing page and should highlight trends, successes, lessons learned, and/or present information on prevention-related research.

The deadline for submissions is October 9, 2022. Details on SAMHSA's 19th Annual Prevention Day and how to submit an abstract can be found [here](#).

HRSA Invests over \$104 Million to Expand Substance Use Treatment and Prevention in Rural Communities to Combat the Overdose Epidemic



The Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) [awarded](#) more than \$104 million to expand substance use treatment and prevention services in rural communities. This funding comes as part of the [Rural Communities Opioid Response Program \(RCORP\)](#), a multi-year initiative aimed at reducing rural Americans' morbidity and mortality due to substance use. These awards will go to three RCORP programs:

- [“The Rural Communities Opioid Response Program - Medication Assisted Treatment Access](#) is awarding \$10 million to establish new medication assisted treatment access points for substance use, including opioid use disorder. The program will reduce barriers to evidence-based treatment in underserved rural areas.
- [The Rural Communities Opioid Response Program - Implementation](#) awarded \$65 million to strengthen and expand opioid use disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery services in rural communities utilizing workforce development and training, telehealth, health care integration, and family support services.
- [The Rural Communities Opioid Response Program - Behavioral Health Care Support](#) awarded \$29 million to improve the quality and sustainability of behavioral health care services in rural communities, including through evidence-based, trauma-informed treatment for substance use. The program works to improve rural residents' access to quality, integrated behavioral health care services.”

This funding will help rural communities tackle difficulties in providing and accessing

substance use treatment, especially for those with opioid use disorder (OUD) as is key to [HHS' Overdose Prevention Strategy](#).

SAMHSA Partnerships for Equity: Virtual Behavioral Health Job Fair



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) [Partnerships for Equity \(PE\)](#) in [American Indian and Alaska Native \(AIAN\) Communities](#) will host a [3-part Virtual Behavioral Health Job Fair](#) for mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) professionals and students interested in Federal employment serving AIAN communities. The Job Fair will provide information about the USAJobs process and opportunities for those pursuing a career in mental health and SUD within AIAN communities. The 3-part Job Fair schedule and topics are:

- October 13th 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM ET: **Navigating USAJobs**
- October 20th 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM ET: **Accessing IHS Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program**
- October 27th 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM ET: **Exploring Behavioral Health Career Opportunities**

Webinars to Watch

Central East PTTC Webinar Stigma Series on SUD Part 2



The Central East Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) will host a webinar on the stigma and myths around substance use disorder (SUD) for prevention professionals. Part 2 of this series, [Debunking the Myths Around Addiction](#), will be offered on October 12, 2022 at 1:00 pm (ET). The webinar will introduce and highlight the disparate stigmatization of those with SUD and the consequences of stigma, as well as debunk common myths and misinformation surrounding substance use, SUD, and SUD interventions.

The webinar intends to help participants:

- “Understand the basic principles of stigma
- Understand how stigma manifests for people with SUD
- Understand evidence-based stigma interventions
- Learn about common myths and misconceptions about addiction and how to dispel them
- Understand common myths around Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD).
- Understand that addiction is a chronic relapsing disease and how to change the messaging in community.”