

MINUTES

HOUSE & SENATE HEALTH SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE & SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE AND LABOR

April 4, 2016

The House and Senate Health Services Subcommittees met Monday, April 4, 2016 at 1:30 p.m. in Committee Room B, of the Multi-Agency Complex (MAC) Building, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Senate Health Services members attending were: Senators Missy Irvin, Chair; and Scott Flippo.

House Health Services members attending were: Representatives Stephen Magie, Chair; Ken Bragg, Deborah Ferguson, Kim Hammer, and Betty Overbey.

Other legislators attending were: Senators Alan Clark, John Cooper, Joyce Elliott, Bruce Maloch, Gary Stubblefield, and Larry Teague. Representatives Charles Armstrong, Justin Boyd, Joe Jett, Sheilla Lampkin, Mathew Pitsch, Chris Richey, Sue Scott, and James Sorvillo.

Comments by the Chairs

Senator Missy Irvin called the meeting to order and stated the purpose of this meeting. Representative Stephen Magie made some brief comments, and then recognized Rep. Kim Hammer to present the first item on the agenda.

Discussion of Interim Study Proposal 2015-049. “An Act to Create a Contraceptive Incentive for Medicaid Beneficiaries and for Other Purposes.” (EXHIBIT C)

Representative Kim Hammer, sponsor of this ISP, presented ISP2015-049. Also presenting with Representative Hammer is Bradley Planey, MS, MA, Branch Chief, Arkansas Department of Health, Suzanne McCarthy, Director, Government Relations & Founding Senior Associate, Arkansas Center for Health Improvement (ACHI), and Robert Brech, Chief Financial Officer, Arkansas Department of Health (ADH).

Representative Hammer presented the statistics on teen pregnancy, the cost of teen pregnancy to the state of Arkansas, and how Arkansas can incentivize teenagers to practice contraception (*Handouts #1 and #2*).

Bradley Planey noted that Arkansas has the highest rate of teen births in the nation (62% higher than the national rate), and discussed the adverse affects of teen pregnancy.

Suzanne McCarthy stated that the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Office of Adolescent Health, has a list of evidence-based programs that do work to incentivize good contraceptive measures. ACHI’s Policy Board also has some advanced recommendations.

Robert Brech agreed with Mr. Planey, that there is sketchy data on the fathers of teen births. Mr. Brech explained the premise of Long-Acting Reversible Contraceptives (LARC), and stated the ADH is eager to be able to financially put this program in place. No matter the cost, it would save billions of Medicaid dollars, and the rate of teen births would be greatly reduced. LARC would be available to everyone in Arkansas through DHS.

Discussion of Interim Study Proposal 2015-140. “Requesting that House Committee on Public Health, Welfare and Labor Study Patient Access to Prescription Opioids and the Potential Impact of Abuse-Deterrent Opioid Analgesics.” (EXHIBIT D)

Representative Justin Boyd, Sponsor of this ISP, presented ISP2015-140, which proposes the implementation of new technologies to help prevent a significant amount of prescription drug abuse. Also presenting were Denny Altes, Arkansas State Drug Director; Kirk Lane, Chief, Benton Police Department and a member of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Advisory Board.

Mr. Altes summarized the CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, dated January, 2016, and some of the statistics are listed below:

- ❖ 60% of the 5,000 annual drug overdose deaths are due to prescription drugs
- ❖ 70% are under 25 years old
- ❖ Youth overdoses have more than tripled
- ❖ Arkansas is fifth in the nation in prescription drug overdose
- ❖ Since 1999 overdose deaths are up 400% for women

Since opiate prescription drug abuse leads to the use of Heroin, and opiate prescription drug abuse is increasing; Arkansas is moving closer to having a heroin problem. Today heroin is less expensive and more powerful than it was in the 1970s, and it is also available in pill form now. Currently 70-80 people are dying daily from prescription overdose. A good long-term abuse-deterrent opioid would help to reduce this statistic.

Most of the heroin is coming in from Mexico and going to the main distribution location of Chicago. Benton Police Chief Kirk Lane and Mr. Altes agree there is an epidemic of prescription drug abuse in Arkansas.

Chief Lane stated deficits of the prescription drug monitoring program:

- ❖ The program needs stable funding
 - Past funding has come from donations and grants, however this funding will be cut off in late 2017
- ❖ The process for entering information into the prescription drug monitoring program needs to be updated to real-time submission
- ❖ Use of the prescription drug monitoring program should be mandatory in Arkansas—right now it is on a voluntary basis
- ❖ All prescription medicines should be prescribed electronically

David Wroten, Executive Vice President, Arkansas Medical Society, voiced support of the prescription drug monitoring program, and discussed the attributes of Act 1208, sponsored by Representatives Justin Boyd and Stephen Magie, and Senator Missy Irvin. Act 1208 was passed in the 2015 session.

Lindsey Dayer, Pharm.D., BCACP, Assistant Professor, Director of Experiential Education, College of Pharmacy, UAMS, presented more information on the prescription drug monitoring program, and described UAMS's prescription drug monitoring program. Ms. Dayer stated that 22 states are participating in a *mandated* prescription drug monitoring program.

Howell Foster, BS, Pharm.D., DABAT, Associate Professor, Director, Poison Center & Drug Information, UAMS, discussed abuse deterrent technology. Dr. Foster stated that, “. . . all addicts are abusers, but not all abusers are addicts.” He said this is very important to remember during the discussion of this issue. Dr. Foster also supports the prescription drug monitoring program as the best way to reduce prescription opioid addiction.

Representative Boyd asked if this subcommittee could meet again for further discussion and possible resolution of this issue. Representative Magie agreed to schedule a future meeting for further discussion of this issue.

Carl Covey, M.D., Medical Director, Pain Treatment Centers of America (PTCOA), is a pain specialist in Little Rock, Arkansas. Dr. Covey discussed opiate prescription drug addiction, in relation to actual patients suffering from pain, and ‘posers’ (addicts who pose as people suffering from pain). Dr. Covey also discussed sources other than prescribing health professionals, from which addicts get prescription opiates. The vast majority of opiate prescription overdoses are not patients—they are the addicts. Dr. Covey also endorses the prescription drug monitoring program, urine drug screens, electronic prescribing, and pill counts.

Bridget Johnson, employee of Pfizer, Inc., discussed drug abuse deterrents. Ms. Johnson emphasized that deterrents are not a 'cure-all', but a tool to curb drug abuse. Arkansas does not have as many deterrent options as other states.

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.