



Maryland SOS Regional Town Hall Series Impact Statement: Eastern Shore

January 27th, 2022

PREVENTION • TREATMENT • RECOVERY



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THE OPIOID OPERATIONAL COMMAND CENTER

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On January 27, 2022, the Opioid Operational Command Center (OCC) hosted the eighth installments in our Maryland Stop Overdose Strategy (Maryland SOS) Regional Town Hall Series. This session, which was held virtually, focused on the nine counties in Maryland's Eastern Shore Region.

OCC Executive Director Robin Rickard began the event by providing an update on recent overdose trends in Maryland. She also talked about the Opioid Restitution Fund and addressed the potential uses for funds that the state will receive from legal settlements with prescription opioid manufacturers and distributors.

Next in our program, we heard from Dr. Aliya Jones, Deputy Secretary for the Behavioral Health Administration of the Maryland Department of Health. Deputy Secretary Jones provided an overview of local overdose trends and the work of Maryland's Racial Disparities in Overdose Task Force, which is currently working under the auspices of Maryland's Inter-Agency Opioid and Heroin Coordination Council chaired by Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford.

Our final presentation was provided by Katie Dilley, the executive director of Mid Shore Behavioral Health. Executive Director Dilley addressed a wide variety of programs in the Mid Shore region aimed at assisting individuals with substance use disorder (SUD), such as harm reduction efforts, peer support services, the Eastern Shore Crisis Operations Center, mobile crisis services, and recovery housing.

Following our presentations, we invited town hall participants to talk about their experiences with the opioid and overdose crisis and to share their ideas for how state and local officials can do more to help individuals struggling with SUD. The issues addressed by our town all participants included:

- Expanding care coordination and linkages to treatment in hospital emergency departments
- Increasing support for families of individuals struggling with SUD and increasing awareness of available resources
- The benefits of following up with individuals who visit hospitals for non-fatal overdoses
- The need to address stigma surrounding people with SUD and their families
- Increasing financial support for recovery support services
- Addressing workforce shortages among treatment and recovery providers, especially in rural areas
- Increasing housing support for individuals in recovery
- The need to promote access to multiple treatment forms of treatment
- The increased challenges of providing detox services to individuals withdrawing from fentanyl
- Increasing peer recovery specialist compensation
- Promoting awareness of treatment bed availability across the region

The OCC would like to thank everyone who participated in this session for their shared dedication to supporting those who are living with the disease of addiction. The feedback that we received will be used to help inform the 2022 update to Maryland's Inter-Agency Opioid Coordination Plan, the state's strategic opioid crisis response framework.