

ROSC Council Meeting Minutes

October 11th, 2023

0:00-9:48

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton begins this month's meeting by introducing himself and welcoming everyone to the meeting. He asks everyone to be muted while not talking and reminds everyone that this meeting is recorded. Jarrett states that DuPage ROSC is a coordinated network of community support and services, whose goal is to help those living with substance use and mental health disorders in DuPage County. He states that people with lived experience, in recovery, as well as allies are who makes DuPage ROSC run. He then asks everyone to put their names in the chat for IDHS documentation and networking. Jarrett then states that the October ROSC meeting always takes a special place with him because it is around his sober anniversary. He states that yesterday was his 5 years of continuous sobriety. He states that he went to detox on October 10th 2018 and from there, he went to Abraxas in Woodridge, and then Serenity House in Addison. He states that he isn't sharing this to brag, but to show that being open and honest about sobriety in front of others is a powerful tool in helping combat the stigmas that are still held towards people with mental health and substance use disorders. He states that anyone's story who is in recovery has power and can be used to help someone who is still struggling.

Meeting Agenda:

1. Meeting Open – Jarrett Burton
2. Agenda
3. Preview of upcoming meetings/trainings
4. What's App referral group update: Danny Sourbis
5. **Mimi Doll, Candeo Consulting Inc: Focus group findings**
6. **Alexandra Milkent, DV Program Supervisor, Family Shelter Service: Domestic Violence Awareness + Services**
7. Organizational Updates
8. Regional ROSC Roundup
9. Closing

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton mentions the ROSC Presentation Series on October 25th at 10:00 AM on zoom. He states that **Lisa Bloom, MSW, LSW of Behavioral Health Services at Central DuPage and Delnor Hospitals** will be doing a presentation on Neurodivergence and trauma. He states that the presentation series are different from the ROSC Council Meetings because the presenters have the full hour and they dive deeper into the topic.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then mentions next month's presentation series on November 15th at 10:00 AM on zoom. He states that **Don Mitckess, LCPC, CRADC from Banyan Treatment Centers** will be doing a presentation on non-suicidal self-injury. Jarrett states that self-injury has crossed over more and more with substance use and mental health disorders.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then promotes DuPage ROSC's Winter Clothing Drive. DuPage ROSC is taking donations through October of coats, hats, scarves, gloves, and sweaters to donate to the **People's Resource Center** in Wheaton. He states that to donate, you can bring the items in person, or reach out to him self to set and arrangement. He states that People's Resource Center was very grateful last year for the donations, so he hopes to drop off as much this year.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then shares pictures of recent DuPage ROSC activities. He shares of picture of himself with the Narcan vending box, that was provided by the **DuPage Health Department** and DuPage ROSC, that he set up at the **West Suburban Fellowship Club** in Naperville. He states that ROSC oversees finding sites, installation, and restocking those Narcan vending boxes. He states the Narcan is free for anyone who goes into the club. Then Jarrett showed another picture of himself with a Narcan vending box he installed at **360 Youth Services** in Naperville. He states that that box is closed for only their residents. Jarrett then states that there is a 3rd Narcan vending box going to **Stonybrook Center** in the next few weeks. Jarrett states that his main goals with Narcan are that it is free, easily accessible, and you can remain anonymous while obtaining it. He states that although you can purchase Narcan over the counter now, it is also quite expensive at 40-45 dollars. He states if anyone's organizations are interested in a Narcan vending box, or any harm reduction materials, to reach out to him.

9:49-12:15

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then introduces **ROSC Co-coordinator Danny Sourbis** to give the What's App referral group update. Danny states that they have changed the name of the group to **The Referral Hub**. He states that there are now 67 members, and they were joined by members from Symetria Recovery, Cap America, Addison School District, YWC Metropolitan Chicago Families Support Program, Serenity House, AG Psychology Associates, Linden Oaks St. Charles, Will County Health Department substance use initiative program, RCO and Winnebago ROSC. Danny then states that if anyone has any questions, or wants to join, he will put his email into the chat and to reach out to him. He also states that there are 2 new referral groups that you can join: one for Greater Sauk Valley ROSC in DeKalb, as well as Winnebago ROSC's group chat.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then states that when ROSC started a few years ago, one of the main things he noticed was a gap where people needed treatment or services, but they were hard to find. He states that when you work in this field, it is not uncommon to receive a call at 10 o'clock on a Sunday for someone who needs help ASAP. He states that when ROSC started, it began with a 10-12 person group text to help others with referrals. But now it has grown to 60+ people helping others with referrals.

12:16-40:34

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then introduces **Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc.** He states that Mimi teamed up with DuPage ROSC and the DuPage Health Department a couple of months ago to create focus groups made up of DuPage residents in recovery. He states that the goal of those focus groups was to have conversations about people's path to recovery, how they

got there, any barriers that they faced, and what has worked for them. He states that the feedback they received was interesting and Mimi will be breaking down the results.

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc thanks Jarrett and everyone who took the time out of their day to hear these findings. Mimi then states that they could not have done this work without the DuPage Health Department and DuPage ROSC. She states that these focus groups were for a needs assessment that the health department is doing as part of their Illinois opioid response work. She states that the goal of this is to respond to local needs and ultimately reduce rates of opiate abuse, overdose, and death. She states that as part of this work, instead of only looking at surveillance data and epidemiological data, they wanted to make sure they really got the voice of people with lived experience. She hopes that by hearing the voices of people with lived experience, we can inform policies in a way that is meaningful and makes sense that it's really connected to people's experience. She states that they are developing that deeper in depth understanding instead of just a number on a spreadsheet. She states that they are also promoting equity by including people at all information gathering and decision-making points. She states that the guiding questions are:

- What barriers do people in DuPage County face to accessing substance use treatment and recovery services?
- What gaps do DuPage County residents face during treatment and recovery?
- What facilitates people in DuPage County's engagement in treatment and recovery?

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc states that there were 22 people that they spoke with between the ages of 26 and 72 with a range of time in recovery from 3 months to a year or longer. She states that they did try to get a diverse sample in terms of time in recovery, racial ethnic background, and gender. The stats are:

- Gender: 68% male, 32% female
- Recovery Duration: 4 three months up to one year, 14 one year or longer, and 4 unknown
- Race/Ethnicity: 82% White, 9% unknown, 5% black/African American, 5% Latinx

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc then goes over the access barriers to substance use treatment. She states that for uninsured clients, the spaces are limited and do not meet demand. Also, treatment cost is another access barrier. She then states that another barrier people have faced is what is necessary for medical detox and what is not. She states that if you happen to be using a substance that doesn't technically require a medical detox, you can be turned away. That causes clients to feel unsupported and to sometimes return to use. She states that another barrier is that emergency departments and first response systems aren't always equipped to care for people with substance use disorders and people get turned away. She states that it takes a lot of courage for someone to try to enter treatment and detox, and them getting turned away is exactly what we do not want to happen. She states a quote from the focus group that says "I wouldn't have had the option of treatment, the treatment program certainly that I went to, or very many options at all without having reasonable insurance."

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc then mentions another quote from the focus group that says, "It takes a tremendous amount of courage or desperation, whichever way you want to look

at it to walk into an emergency room and present that I am in trouble, and I have nowhere to go, and there's something wrong. I need help. And at that point, you know, in our advanced society today, nobody should be turned away and said, 'Oh, you don't need help after that criteria. You can figure it out.' There should be no questions asked. You know, until they can sort that situation with crisis intervention and things like that, where they're doing warm hand offs, even police departments or ERs... where they have peer supports showing up where, you know, uh, emergency rooms, if you don't meet the criteria, they are trying to implement a network.

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc then states that when gaps exist between levels of substance use treatment, it can leave people without needed support and contribute to relapse. She states that some of the gaps that were found through these focus groups are:

- The treatment system facilitates steps down in care more easily than steps up
- Insurance standards determine and limit length of stay at each care level
- Stigma for relapse and differential treatment by providers
- Need for more robust mental health services in treatment settings
- Felt Need: Responsibility is on patients to chart their own treatment course, which is especially difficult during early, fragile stages of recovery and/or when patients lack housing.

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc then shares 2 quotes, pertaining to the gaps in treatment, from participants of the focus group. The first quote states, "We were talking about the scariest parts right after we get out in that few days between all that's, and all these phone calls and paperwork... I know for a fact you're sitting there like, you gotta call every day... and you get nervous. And then of course we're addicts. So I'm like, (expletive) that. I'm just gonna drink. I'm not making these calls, man, they're not gonna call me back." The second quote she shares states "It seems that the terms of treatment are starting to become shorter and shorter and the availability of state-sponsored beds or scholarships into these places for the uninsured or something like that, which I know we're all supposed to be insured, but there still are people that aren't... The availability seems to be shrinking along with the timelines that are available to the people who need the service.

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc then states that housing and health/safety are the primary needs that participants sometimes struggle to meet. That is due to the lack of available spaces or gaps between levels of care. Then she goes on to state some solutions that they have developed such as using other substances to become detox eligible, staying with friends or family, jails and psychiatric wards, and also strongly advocating for themselves. Mimi then states that although many of these solutions meet housing needs, they leave treatment needs unattended or under-attended. Then Mimi shared a few examples of how those solutions worked. The first example was of someone who used heroin and couldn't get into detox with just heroin in their system, so they drank to get into detox. The next example was of someone going to jail to detox because jail never closes and is inclusive.

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc then states that access to insurance makes a huge difference. She states that the participants who have unstable housing appreciate that you no

longer need a home address to receive Medicaid. She states that clients with insurance note that they have more choices of treatment facilities available to them. She then states that being mandated to treatment helps clients too. It can be an incentive to remove felony charges from their record and there are cases where they would not receive treatment without that incentive. She then states that the participants noticed an improved coordination of care when it comes to treatment centers and courts working better together, and integration with homeless services, and councilor's knowledge and use of supportive services. Lastly, participants noticed a reduction in stigma associated with substance use because it is more acceptable to discuss substance use, mental health, and coping.

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc then goes into some barriers that the participants face. She states that there are not enough recovery residences available in DuPage County and highlights a lack of public transportation near the existing recovery residences. She then goes on to state that relapse is a huge fear for the participants. The participants also found that having a productive adult life without prior experience is quite challenging. Lastly, there is a lack in support and services for those who have relapsed that also minimizes the risk to others in treatment or recovery community.

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc then states that they found that the longer you stay in treatment and involved in recovery, it builds the chances of a longer recovery. They do that by the support of the treatment center staff, and support of the community they are recovering with. Then Mimi goes into recommendations from the participants. They are:

- Increase access to detox and treatment
- Close gaps across levels of care
- Provide navigation support
- Develop more robust mental health support during treatment
- Stigma busting community education/awareness building
- Supportive services to promote holistic, productive, and healthy life

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc then goes into what they are hoping to do next with this information provided with this focus group. She states that they will develop priority areas for action at the DuPage County level, report the finding on the DuPage County Health Department website, and collaborate with allied stakeholders such as DuPage ROSC Council, Behavioral Health Collaborative, Prevention Leadership team, HOPE Task Force, and people with lived experience.

Mimi Doll of Candeo Consulting Inc then thanks everyone for listening and thanks **ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton**. She then opens the floor for comments or questions. Jarrett starts off by stating that DuPage is trying to fix some of these gaps currently. He states that the one that stands out to him right now is called the loophole. He states that if you have worked in this field or are in recovery, you have seen this loophole before. The loophole is stating that you are suicidal to get housed at a hospital regardless of insurance. He states that that is a main way people struggling can get into detox. He states that by identifying those things, it can help to not have to do those things anymore. Then Mimi stated that she is grateful that the Health

Department is investing in a crisis facility for people who are in immediate crisis whether it is substance use or mental health. **Bruce** then mentioned how insurance companies are shaving off days on clients' treatments and clients are lucky if they get 28 days in a treatment facility. Jarrett then states that advocacy is the best option right now. **Serenity House Director Donna Rennard** then states that lobbying is where and how the change will be made. Jarrett then thanks Mimi again for letting us know the findings and states that he hopes that next year there will be more movement with the issues.

40:35-55:50

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then introduces **Alexandra Milkent, DV Program Supervisor of Family Shelter Service**. Jarrett states that October is Domestic Violence Awareness month and that personally, when he first got into this field, domestic violence was one of the blind spots for him. He states that he didn't have any prior experience with it, but that the longer he has worked in this field, he has seen how much it crosses over with substance use and mental health disorders. He states that there are a number of great services in DuPage County for domestic violence, and Family Shelter Service is one of them.

Alexandra Milkent, DV Program Supervisor of Family Shelter Service states that she agrees with **ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton**. Alexandra states how important the focus group findings are to victims of domestic violence. She states that the ones that stuck out to her were transportation, housing needs, life skill development, navigating the next steps, the feeling of being scared to relapse, as well as mental health support. She states that it is nice to meet everyone and she has been with Family Shelter Service for 5 years working on the children's program, and now she does the community outreach and education programs. She states that she appreciates highlighting Domestic Violence Awareness month and that they are doing several things in the community.

Alexandra Milkent, DV Program Supervisor of Family Shelter Service states that they offer several different services but the critical one is the emergency service. She states that they offer a 24/7 emergency shelter in DuPage. She states that there are 41 beds in the shelter, and that they take anyone into the shelter. She states that they house families and single people. She states that the focus of the shelter is to keep people safe from immediate safety threats. She states that an immediate safety threat is a requirement to be in the shelter. She states that although their focus is immediate safety, they will still support someone who may be homeless from domestic violence without an immediate safety threat and help find them somewhere safe to go. She then states that they also offer a 24/7 hotline to access resources, someone to talk to, or the shelter. Then she states that they offer court services. She states that they have an office in the DuPage County Courthouse where they serve orders of protection. She states that orders of protection are confusing and lengthy, so they assist with those. She also states that they have improved their relationship with the police department. She states that every time a police officer goes on a domestic violence call, they must call Family Shelter Service or access their website to enter in all the information on the incident that occurred. They then follow up with those victims the next day. She then states that they are trying to connect victims of domestic violence with their services.

Alexandra Milkent, DV Program Supervisor of Family Shelter Service then states that some other services Family Shelter Service offers are domestic violence education and training. She states that they also provide a 40-hour training on domestic violence that comes with a certificate. She then states that they are also in schools to do prevention work. She states that they provide healthy relationship education, as well as dynamics of abuse with warning signs. Then she states that also have an advocacy program where they support both adults and children coming from domestic violence homes where they provide case management, life skills, education, and general emotion support. She states that they are not clinicians or therapists, they are strictly advocates.

Alexandra Milkent, DV Program Supervisor of Family Shelter Service then states that Family Shelter Service was a non-profit for the past 45 years but in 2019, they merged with Metropolitan Family Services. She states that the reason they merged with them was because they needed wraparound services such as early childhood education and behavioral health services. She states that behavioral health services were one of the highest needs that they had because domestic violence intersects with mental health and trauma. She states that the goal is to have longer term services and create connections in the community for warm handoffs.

Alexandra Milkent, DV Program Supervisor of Family Shelter Service then states that because it is Domestic Violence Awareness month, they were at the Wheaton farmers market last weekend, as well as the Glendale Heights farmers market coming up. She states that they are in libraries and offering screenings of documentaries about domestic violence. She states that they will also be offering fun and engaging events for their clients. She also states that on October 28th, the Wheaton Township is doing their business trick or treat, and they will be offering treats out of their Willow location.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then points out that when he was learning about domestic violence, he was able to learn that domestic violence goes beyond physical violence like financial control and verbal abuse. **Alexandra Milkent, DV Program Supervisor of Family Shelter Service** then follows up with that is the awareness they want to share with the community. She states that she has heard from survivors that sometimes the mental and emotional aspect of domestic violence hurts more than the physical. She states that that is what stays with you, hurts your mental health and self-esteem, and hurts your ability to believe in yourself. She then goes on to stress that anyone can experience domestic violence, not just women. It is a huge misconception that domestic violence can only happen to women, but they work with a lot of male survivors. There is a stigma, and they are trying to break those stigmas down so people can access the services that they need. Then Jarrett thanks Alexandra and opens it up for questions and comments. **ROSC Recovery Coach Felicia Miceli** then asks if someone calls 988 and experiencing domestic violence, does it get forwarded to Family Shelter Service. Alexandra states that she does not believe it does, but the people at 988 should have their resource to connect the caller with their service. Then Felicia asks if all 41 beds at their shelter are usually full. Alexandra states that typically they are at capacity depending on family size and room availability. She states that it is difficult to turn people away every day and send them out of DuPage County. She then states that substance use comes up in their shelter everyday and they

want to connect with substance use professionals on how to help them. Then **Ann** states that it was a good point to bring up the different domains of domestic violence. Ann then asks if mental and emotional abuse count towards immediate safety threats to have access to the shelter. Alexandra then states that it does not have to be an immediate physical safety issue. It can also be that a person is getting threatened by their abuser or the abuser is threatening to harm them self. You do have to be fearing for your life to enter the shelter though.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then thanks **Alexandra Milkent, DV Program Supervisor of Family Shelter Service** and states that he will provide Alexandras contact information to everyone at this meeting.

55:51-59:15

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then opens the meeting for everyone to promote what they are working on. **Bruce** states that it may be a good idea to invite a representative to our ROSC meetings so they can hear what we are struggling with. Jarrett then states that they hope to do that in the next coming months. He states that there is a board starting up that should hopefully expand into mental health and substance use so there will be plenty of opportunities to do some lobbying. Jarrett then states that the next ROSC Council meeting will be held on November 8th at 3 PM. Then Jarrett mentions that on December 13th they will have the annual ROSC Christmas Party. Jarrett then thanks everyone for coming and the presenters for presenting.