

Effingham County ROSC PLE Committee 4.9.24

Date: Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Time: 3:30pm

Location: 104 Blohm Ave, Effingham, IL

Attendees:

In person: Zach George (Senior Outreach Coordinator for Oxford House Inc,) Katy Houser (PLE, Effingham Problem Solving Court graduate,) Toby Depoister (PLE, Outreach Pastor EFG, Ministry Leader of Road to Redemption,) Beth Wise (Effingham County Connections,) Kathleen Peters (PLE ally,) Richard Hood (Hour House Recovery Navigator- Stabilization and Transition Unit,) Kat O'Brien (Gateway Foundation Warm Hand Off Program at HSHS,) Brandy Schlanser (PLE, Effingham Problem Solving Court graduate,) Natalie Hall (Effingham Resource Center advocate,) Travis Pierce (Reignite Street Reach, SOS Ministries Director,) Norbert Soltwedel (Effingham County Board member,) Samantha Hicks (Effingham County ROSC Coordinator) Felicia Depoister (Effingham County ROSC Navigator,)

Secretary: Samantha Hicks

Minutes

Attendees introduced themselves and why they were attending the PLE committee meeting today.

Zach started off by sharing his story of addiction and recovery while speaking on behalf of his personal experience as an Oxford House resident in Joliet. Zach has been clean and sober since 2020 upon entering into an Oxford House in Texas where he claims the men in the home saved his life.

Zach explained that an Oxford House is a single-family home with a minimum of 6 individuals living in the shared space. He stated he prefers to house 8-10 residents depending on availability of homes in various areas which increases the therapeutic value of accountability. Oxford house was established in 1975 in Maryland with the Oxford House model. Zach stated residents must have a substance use disorder diagnosis. New member must apply in which the current house members will review, then interview the prospect, and then decide on a vote by the house to accept or deny the applicant. Zach stated the key components of an Oxford House model is the fact that they are self-run, self-sustaining, and substance free. Self-run means the house is democratically run by its residents where they hold weekly house meetings to discuss finances, possible issues within the house, and anything the house feels the need for a vote. Everyone in the house has a say no matter the length of time in the house. Self-sustaining means each member of the house pays their own share on a weekly basis—i.e. rent, utilities, house essential necessities. This includes everything expect food. For this area, he is targeting

homes which residents can pay weekly rent of \$140-\$150 per week. Zach went on to remain transparent in the fact that the home is to remain substance free. So, if a member relapses, they are asked to leave for the time being until returning to sound sobriety in which then then can interview with the house members if they wish to re-enter. He emphasized that an Oxford residence is “not a house for abstinence, but a home for recovery.” There are rules in the first 30 days that include no overnights at the house or out of the house, a resident must have a job within 2 weeks and also have a sponsor, and are required to attend 5 recovery meetings per week. When a resident passes their 30-day mark, they are allowed some overnights and the recovery meeting requirement is decreased to 3 meetings per week. Zach stated there is no time limit to reside in an Oxford home because everyone recovers at different rates. He stated there are men, women, men with children, and women with children Oxford homes. He also stated there are 3,700-3,800 Oxford homes in the U.S. with 95 in IL. Zach stated Oxford homes are typically in nice neighborhoods because the environment in which you live in impacts your recovery. When a person lives in a nice space and has people who are striving towards betterment, the mentality to do better is inherently there. Oxford homes are families. Zach asked for questions:

Beth W. asked if they're all located in Chicago. Zach stated that it's about a half split—half in the northern area (not specifically Chicago) and half central/southern. He stated they've opened homes recently in Gailsburg, Mt. Vernon, Lincoln, Champaign, Decatur, St. Clair, and Madison counties. Once an Oxford House is opened and established/thriving, they'll open up another house in the same county or neighboring county to create chapters. These chapters support each other and create a community network of support.

Brandy S. asked if there are people from Oxford House overseeing the house on a continual basis. Zach stated himself or one of his outreach staff close to this area would most likely live in the house for the first 30-45 days to establish the tone and create leadership of the house. Oxford House employees are more for tech support between landlords and house members.

Travis asked what the success rate is for Oxford homes and Zach stated 87%. Travis asked what the criteria for success is. Zach stated based on DePaul research which as tracked Oxford House since the early 1990s, their criteria for success is overall general long-term recovery which they deem as 5 years.

Toby asked where the funding to buy or lease the house comes from. Zach stated each house has a tax ID number. The houses are umbrellaed under the 501c3 Oxford House Inc. House are rented via a local landlord or leased from an investor who already has Oxford Houses and believes in their mission. The house also has a checking account which the treasurer of the house manages, but is held accountable by the house.

Kat asked if an applicant has to go to treatment first before entering a home. Zach stated there is no requirement to apply and interview for Oxford home (other than gender if it's a men's Oxford house, women's Oxford house, etc.) She also asked what if someone was wanting to

enter a house and it's full. Zach stated they expand the need to meet the community and if he's doing his job right, there will always be an open bed.

Beth asked who is interviewing those who apply. Zach stated at first while the house is new and becoming established, himself or a Chapter or state chair. He expressed the importance of peer to peer communication and rapport. But once a house is established, the members of the house interview new applicants.

Katy asked if an applicant has to be from this area (Effingham County.) Zach stated no. A number of people prefer to have a new start away from the environment they caused chaos in but in time either return to their home with firm sobriety or venture onto new places.

Zach emphasized the recovery community support being integral in a person's recovery. He wants to gain community support and continue the connections ROSC has paved in Effingham County. An Oxford House fills a small gap on the continuum of care which is nonexistent in this county.

Effingham County ROSC PLE Committee 4.30.24

Date: Tuesday, April 30th, 2024

Time: 3:30pm

Location: 104 Blohm Ave, Effingham, IL

Attendees:

In person: Toby Depoister (PLE, Outreach Pastor EFG, Ministry Leader of Road to Redemption,) Kendra J. (PLE,) Samantha Hicks (Effingham County ROSC Coordinator) Felicia Depoister (Effingham County ROSC Navigator,)

Secretary: Samantha Hicks

Minutes

Attendees introduced themselves and why they were attending the PLE committee meeting today.

Distribution of Opioid Funds materials Samantha stated Felicia and she is putting together fentanyl and xylazine test kits on Tuesday, May 7th, at 1:00 at this location. Volunteers are welcome. Samantha asked for suggestions on where to distribute these kits.

Kendra J. stated in her active use that she'd often go to McDonald's on Keller. She'd typically go to places that have Wi-Fi. She said that while working at Silk Purse, she saw a lot of people dumpster diving. She also mentioned people sleeping at Bliss Park. She also suggested food pantries.

Felicia stated we should put some with ROSIE at the mall.

Literature

Samantha asked for suggestions as to where we should distribute the recovery literature books, which include:

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Celebrate Recovery Study Bible
- How Al-Anon Work for Friends and Families of Alcoholics
- Hope for Children of Alcoholics: Alateen
- Addiction Monster (a way to explain addiction to little ones)

Samantha suggested the Edgewood Library. Toby said they'd take them. Samantha also said that's a prime location for a Recovery Community Organization, so everything recovery-related is housed in one location. Samantha mentioned meeting the director of the Urban League in St. Louis, which does what ROSC does but on a large scale.

Transportation

Samantha asked for suggestions on where to allocate funds for the transportation piece of the grant.

Kendra J. suggested St. Anthony Church. They give food or gas vouchers. You have to pick one, and with the gas voucher, you have to have a driver's license. Kendra stated they purchased the gas vouchers from Kirby Foods. Samantha will stop by the Parish Hall and inquire about this.

Samantha stated that the Urban League has a program called Grill for Glory, where 100+ churches in St. Louis grill hot dogs every Saturday at the same time. They visit with the locals and distribute harm reduction supplies and where to find the Urban League for help and resources. Samantha thought this was a cool program and how cool it would be to get all the churches in Effingham County to participate in something like that.

September- Smore Recovery Panel

Samantha stated that ROSC would like to hold a recovery event with three people (NA, AA, CR) telling 20 minutes of their story around a campfire, eating smores, and grilling hot dogs. The others agreed that would be good.

Samantha asked for a location suggestion. Kendra J. suggested Community Park, as it has a fireplace in a pavilion. Samantha will call the city to check on that.

Samantha suggested Ballard Nature Center as it has a nice firepit set up by the pond. Samantha also suggested Lake Sara. She suggested asking Pastor Steve from the Journey Church to use his vans to solve the transportation barrier this may cause.

Felicia suggested having recovery Jenga & the addiction cards we already have. Toby suggested bringing bags.

Crossroots 5k in September

Toby stated that Crossroots Church has put on a 5k for recovery month for the last two years. He will check to see if they are still doing this, as he has transferred to Edgewood Full Gospel as his church. He stated he'd like to do this, but he wants to check with Crossroots first.

Samantha suggested ROSC help out at this event to get things organized, sponsors, etc. Toby will get back to the PLE committee when he speaks with Crossroots.

Next PLE meeting: **Tuesday, May 28th, 2024 @ 3:30pm @ 104 Blohm Ave in Effingham, IL.**

Samantha will post on FB group and FB chat to update other members.

Effingham County ROSC Council Meeting Minutes 4.15.2024

Date: Monday, April 15th, 2024

Time: 1:00-2:00pm

Location: 104 Blohm Ave, Effingham IL & Zoom

Attendees:

Zoom: Maria (ECCM,) & Kelly Buscher (ECCM,) Melissa Monte (Aviary Business Development Rep,) Christina Isley (SIHF Healthcare,) Nathan Nichols (County Transportation,) Carrie McKinzie (Gateway Foundation,) Liesl Wingert (SIU- Rural Health Projects,) Kevin McNally (HHS SUD counselor,) Whitley Grayson (Coles Co Recovery Navigator,) Karen Cook (Hour House ROSC Supervisor,)

In person: Cody Bushue (PLE,) Olivia Jenkins (Hour House Prevention program facilitator,) Natalie Hall (Effingham County Family Resource Center,) Jacob Lorenz (FRC,) Kat O' Brien (Gateway Foundation Warm Hand Off Program at HSHS,) Melissa Monte (Aviary Business Development Rep,) Samantha Hicks (Effingham County ROSC Coordinator)

Secretary: Samantha Hicks

Minutes

Council meeting attendees introduced themselves and agencies they represent or reason for being present.

Open floor discussion

Samantha opened the floor to attending participants who wanted to voice what they saw via community barriers with the populations they work with and possible solutions to address these barriers.

Olivia mentioned she spoke with the resource officer (Cody Hartke) at EHS, a police officer in Effingham County. She stated it was a great conversation and gave her a deeper insight into the role of law enforcement in the community and their perception of working with ROSC. Olivia stated that law enforcement is heavy on required training, and attending another training is cumbersome and mentally exhausting. She said Officer Hartke is very on board in helping any way he can and has some ideas as to what he'd like to do/partner with ROSC and Olivia in the schools regarding education and prevention. Olivia stated she would discuss this further with Samantha after the meeting and share Officer Hartke's contact information.

Natalie stated that the clients the Family Resource Center has been working with recently have been told that their random drug screens must be completed in Charleston as the contract with DCFS is with the Help at Home agency. She was unsure if this was the agency's name. Natalie expressed that these clients are required to get and maintain a job, and now they have to travel 45 minutes away to take a drug test. Transportation for her clients served is also a barrier. Kat

stated that Family Care Associates does drug screenings, but you must be a client of their office to receive certain services. Kat said they do have a behavioral health center as well. Kat suggested to Natalie to refer her clients to FCA for primary care. Others stated that HSHS and the Health Dept also do drug screenings but are unsure of the cost.

ROSC Coordinator/Recovery Navigator update

Samantha gave an update on Felicia's Recovery wellness groups and on how the Noon Rotary ROSC presentation went. She stated that the Rotarian who invited ROSC to speak also attended our PLE meeting the following week to hear from Oxford House Inc. about recovery housing. She stated that the paths of people in the judicial system and ROSC are starting to cross, which is exciting.

SMART Recovery discussion

Samantha addressed the materials ROSC will receive via the Opioid Settlement funds allocated by the county board. She stated that ROSC has funds for (4) SMART Recovery Professional training and materials for credentialed individuals in agencies. She also stated ROSC is looking for individuals who will employ the knowledge gained from the training with the community or with the clients the individuals work with within the agency—i.e., individuals who are passionate about providing another form of recovery in the community that is not 12-step or faith-based. Samantha stated she and Felicia are going to Greenville to attend a SMART Recovery meeting to see what it's like. Samantha asked for suggestions from the Council.

Kat stated she would like more information on SMART Recovery. Samantha gave a simple overview and told Kat she would email her the website link along with the Professional training syllabus. Kat also suggested reaching out to El Shaddai employees. She stated she has a friend (Katie) who works there and will contact her to see if anyone would be interested in this opportunity. Felicia facilitates a weekly Wellness group there as well.

Natalie & Jacob stated they are interested in this training and their clients. Samantha noted that Beth Wise (their supervisor) had contacted her about this.

Kat said she might contact the Health Department about this as well to see if they'd be interested. Samantha said she would contact Becky Rhodes, the parenting coordinator at the Family Life Center, as well. Cody suggested probation/drug court counselors. Samantha will reach out to Cheryl Meyers.

Recovery Literature discussion

Samantha stated the various recovery literature ROSC has received to distribute throughout the community—NA Basic Text, AA Big Book, CR Study Bible, Alateen, Al-Anon, and Youth Addiction Monster books. Samantha stated she would be giving copies to EPL and would ask Altamont and Edgewood libraries if they would like copies as well. Samantha asked for suggestions as to where to distribute these books.

Nathan suggested a mobile library next to ROSIE or our other DOPP sites. Samantha stated the mall does have a vending machine that dispenses free books. The main complaint is that adolescents empty it in one swoop. Samantha stated ROSC's resources are in ROSIE next to the Narcan.

About the Addiction Monster for Youth book:

- Karen suggested various support groups such as Grandparents Raising Grandchildren groups and school counselors.
- Kat suggested CARITAS and One Hope United.
- Natalie suggested case aids specifically for those organizations and Tri-Star.
- Kelly suggested Head Start.

About the other literature:

- Kat suggested recovery meeting groups.
- Cody suggested probation/drug court.

Fentanyl/Xylazine test kits

Samantha stated that PLE volunteers will be making fentanyl test kits and xylazine test kits that include cotton applicators, condiment cups, sterile water, and test strips for these kits. Samantha asked for suggestions on where to distribute.

Kat suggested the high school nurses and that she would take some but thinks they'd probably be more useful somewhere else.

Jacob suggested the FAC for intact families, the Health Dept, and staffing agencies, as all require a drug screen. Jacob also suggested contacting Steve S. (former Effingham taxi) to see if he'd be willing to help, as it seems like he would support our mission. Samantha will get Steve's info again from Jacob so that he can reach out about kits and his current transportation system.

Other ROSIE locations

There are no concrete leads to another Narcan newsstand location. The Council wants to put newsstands in smaller communities. Possible connections would be The Open-Door Diner in Altamont, Edgewood Legion, Danny's in Watson, the adult store in Edgewood, and the motel in Montrose. No one in attendance had any connections to these locations. Samantha will reach out to Bill (the owner) at Danny's.

Upcoming events

Samantha mentioned the list of upcoming laundry days & is still looking for future sponsors to fill the months of September-December 2024. Olivia stated she would volunteer for the summer days as she is done teaching in the schools. Olivia also volunteered to be the secretary for this summer meeting. THANK YOU.

Samantha also mentioned the Tails and Trails Mental Health Awareness walk, which will be held May 31st at Noon at Ballard Nature Center in Altamont in partnership with Family Mental Health Support. Diana's Barkery & Sweets will sell dog treats for her business. Anyone and their dog are invited. Text Samantha to get a free bandana from the event!

Next ROSC Council Meeting Date: **Monday, May 13th, 2024 @ 1:00 pm**

Next PLE Meeting Date: **Tuesday, April 30th, 2024 @ 3:3pm (in person only)**

Location: **104 Blohm Ave in Effingham & Zoom**

Where to find past meeting minutes:



Effingham County ROSC Facebook page:



Contacts:

Effingham County ROSC Coordinator; 217-663-0823

Samantha Hicks - samanthah@hourhouserecovery.org

Effingham County ROSC Navigator; 217-690-3773

Felicia Depoister - feliciad@hourhouserecovery.org