



Meeting Title: Grundy County ROSC Council Meeting

Date: April 28, 2026

Location: Virtual

Facilitator: Neesha Stringfellow

Attendees: Michelle L. Pruiam (NAMI Will-Grundy); Akilah Gomez; Angela Solis (Crossroads Counseling Services); Danielle Heffernan (Serenity House); Diana Belicke (Rosecrance Behavioral Health); Ben Rudolph (ROSC Region 2 technical assist.); James Kowalsky (IDHS); Morgan Roberts (UI Ext.); Paul Hempel (Recover Centers of America); Ginni Demko (Chestnut Health Systems); Crystal Torres (NAMI Will-Grundy); Cristyna Ramirez (ECS Therapy); Gabriel Garcia (Will-Grundy Medical); Dominica Dybas (Chicago DEA); Neesha Stringfellow (HLM); Tarcia Leak (HLM); Magdalena Campos (HLM); Celeste Fonseca (HLM)

Status Report on items pending from last meeting: N/A

Who	Task	Status

12:30pm - 1:30pm

Welcome & Presentation by
Michelle L. Pruiam, Executive Director
National Alliance on Mental Illness
(NAMI) Will-Grundy

Overview/Notes:

- The meeting focused on identifying gaps in substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery services in Grundy County and prioritizing resource needs for the coming fiscal year. Ben Rudolph opened with an introduction to his ROSC technical assistance role and framed the conversation around systemic barriers and priority areas. Attendees described recurring administrative and staffing burdens that limit providers' ability to scale services and pursue grants, and identified clinical shortages in medication-assisted

treatment and inpatient capacity. Access issues included limited meeting and weekend coverage, transportation barriers, stigma, inconsistent program availability, and poor resource dissemination; local responses noted were North Central's urgent care clinics and Angela's mental health fund to cover copays and balances.

- **Welcome:** The meeting began with logistics and a request for brief silence, followed by Ben Rudolph offering prayer and introducing himself as the Region 2 ROSC technical director and advocate for the council's work and funding needs. Ben described his responsibilities for ensuring deliverables, advocating for resources, and planning site visits to support local programs.
- **NAMI Will-Grundy Overview and Mission:** Michelle Pruim of NAMI Will-Grundy presented NAMI's peer-support programs, Connection groups, Family Support, Calm and Connected teen support, Ending the Silence school presentations (reaching roughly 3,000 students last year with over 90% reporting increased confidence), Family-to-Family classes, and WRAP offered in English and Spanish. She described operational constraints: group sizes frequently exceed recommendations and facilitator shortages limit capacity, and requested stronger provider partnerships and referrals. Participants raised school outreach gaps, concerns about parent notification and post-referral follow-up, wristband prompts to stimulate family conversations, and districts' rare combination of student, staff, and parent sessions.
- **Q&A and Additional Remarks:** Exec. Director Neesha Stringfellow and Ginni asked how schools communicate program information to parents and whether referrals result in successful connections to support. Michelle explained schools sometimes use opt-out or notification letters and that NAMI provides a template and wristbands to prompt student-family conversations, while acknowledging districts rarely run student, staff, and parent sessions together and that schools often lack capacity for case-management follow-through. Schools vary in communication practices; some use opt-out or parent-notification letters and NAMI provides a template for those notices NAMI gives students wristbands to prompt conversations at home and shares information about 30+ ongoing support groups with school contacts NAMI uses complementary presentations for students, staff, and parents to reinforce youth messaging and available supports. Attendees raised concerns that school staff often do not follow up after initial referrals, leaving students without confirmed connections to services.
- **Discussion on Resource Needs and Community Support:** Ben Rudolph mentions in the chat Red Tape and more Peer Recovery Specialists are needed. Operational challenges including licensing-related billing restrictions, staffing shortages, heavy administrative workloads, and limited ability to apply for grants, which impede service delivery expansion. Clinical gaps named included access to SUD medications, need for expanded medication management through the hospital system, and constrained inpatient capacity. Administrative and staffing challenges hinder service expansion and grant eligibility. Medication-assisted treatment and inpatient capacity are significant clinical gaps in the county. Community Access, Awareness, and Local Responses. Participants highlighted inconsistent mutual-help meeting availability, transportation barriers requiring long drives for meetings, stigma and low awareness, and weekend coverage shortfalls for urgent needs such as detox. Local responses discussed included

North Central's walk-in urgent care clinics, ad hoc coordination to transport clients to DuPage for detox, sharing resources via chat, and Angela's initiative to set up a Grundy-specific mental health fund to assist with client copays and balances. North Central is deploying urgent care clinics in La Salle and Ottawa to provide walk-in services and reduce ER visits. Stigma and lack of public awareness continue to impede engagement and service uptake. Meeting access and transportation are barriers causing some people to travel 30–60 minutes for mutual-help meetings. Angela is leading a Grundy-specific mental health fund to help cover copays and client balances.

- **Updates from Partner Organizations:** Rosecrance suicide-prevention training announcement Diana Belicke announced a two-part Suicide Prevention Training/Workshop on May 7 at Illinois Valley Community College that offers three CEU hours and Question, Persuade, Refer certification, with presentations by Tracy Mazzarano and Jason Rael; Ginni Demko described planning Hope Fest on July 25th in Braidwood to distribute school supplies to low-income and foster families, request volunteers and donations, and offer family activities with partner tables for outreach and safety resources such as fingerprinting. Morgan Roberts introduced herself as the Extension food and health systems educator covering Will, Grundy & Kankakee counties and offered collaboration on food access, insecurity, social connectedness, and healthy aging, sharing contact details in the chat and agreeing to repost information for late joiners. Dominica Dybas from the Chicago DEA thanked partners for participating in the National Prescription Drug Take Back events and reported that large quantities were collected, with final weight data forthcoming. Cristyna Ramirez from the Southwest Coalition for Substance Abuse Issues announces their annual spring conference and invites attendees to join.
- **Final Remarks and Closing:** Neesha thanks all attendees for their participation and contributions to the meeting. Mentions the importance of sharing information and updates with the ROSC and other partners. Neesha also invites attendees to the next meeting and expresses gratitude for their ongoing support and collaboration.
- **New Partners:**
Dominica Dybas from the Chicago DEA's Diversion Control Section introduces herself and discusses her role in outreach and prescription drug control.
Morgan Roberts from the University of Illinois Extension introduces herself and explains her focus on food and health systems.