Kane County October ROSC Council Meeting

Meeting: Kane County ROSC Council
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2026
Time: 3:00–4:00 P.M.
Location: Alpharus Health, 400 Mercy Lane, Aurora, IL / hybrid via Zoom
Zoom: Meeting ID 898 8819 871 | Passcode 901718
Facilitator: Annette Villarreal, Kane County ROSC Coordinator
Co-Host: Jarrett Burton

Attendance Sheet

Tony Garcia
Brian Delbello
Nathan Ritzma
Michelle Meyer
Ben Rudolph
Annette Villarreal
Jarrett Burton
Annie Jorwaski
Tom Deligado
Sandra Knezen
Cassandra Hartzog
Alicia Wise
Tony Green
Tony Kolki
Justin Wolf
Tessa
Gloria Blood
Alex Browne
Kelsey Chavez
Sharon Cabrera
Matilda Fane
Marco Figardo
Daniel Liquori

Welcome and Introductions

Annette Villarreal welcomed attendees and thanked everyone for joining online and in person. She thanked Alpharus Health for hosting the Kane County ROSC Council at its Aurora location. Participants introduced themselves, including representatives from Kane

County Health Department, Alpharus Health, Serenity House, DuPage/Kane ROSC, and people with lived recovery experience.

Purpose of the ROSC

Annette reviewed the meaning of ROSC: Recovery Oriented System of Care. ROSC is a coordinated network of person-centered, community-based services and support that build strengths and resilience of individuals, families, and communities. Its central focus is creating a local system of care with the relationships, resources, and infrastructure needed to address the full range of substance misuse and co-occurring needs, including prevention, intervention, treatment, recovery support, harm reduction, peer support, and connections to other community services.

The Illinois Department of Behavioral Health and Recovery identifies five objectives for every Illinois ROSC:

- Reducing stigma
- Promoting medication-assisted recovery and other evidence-based practices
- Promoting harm reduction
- Ensuring effective service delivery
- Prioritizing equity

These objectives guide Kane County ROSC work and remind partners to listen to people with lived experience, identify gaps, strengthen partnerships, and build a welcoming, effective, and accessible system.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October was recognized as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The national theme is "With Survivors," a call to move beyond awareness into action through safety, support, and solidarity.

Key points shared:

- Domestic violence, also called intimate partner violence or IPV, affects about one in two women and one in six men in their lifetime.
- Domestic violence, mental health, and substance misuse intersect. Research shows 50–80% of domestic violence survivors develop severe psychological conditions such as PTSD and depression, and many turn to substances to cope with trauma.

- Women are more likely than men to use substances in response to stress and trauma, increasing susceptibility to relapse and cravings.
- People who cause harm may use drugs to manipulate partners or prevent them from attending treatment, a behavior known as substance misuse coercion.
- Trauma-informed care is essential. Integrated services addressing substance misuse, mental health, and domestic violence together improve recovery outcomes and trauma-related symptoms.
- Over 15.5 million children in the United States are exposed to adult intimate partner violence at home. Children who witness violence are more likely to experience school difficulty, behavioral problems, and risk of maltreatment.

Host Presentation: Alpharus Health

Annie Jor and Tom Deligado presented on Alpharus Health, formerly Gateway Foundation. Gateway Foundation rebranded to Alpharus Health as of August 19. The new name reflects:

- **Alpha** — Greek for leader and new beginnings
- **Ferrus / lighthouse** — guiding light for people in recovery
- **Us** — it takes all of us to help people build healthier lives

The tagline discussed was “All For Us.” The flyer uses “All for healing.” Leadership clarified that Alpharus was not acquired by, merged with, or partnered with another organization. The rebrand reflects expansion into mental health and Level 1 services and continued growth as a behavioral health provider.

Services highlighted at Aurora:

- Residential treatment
- High-intensity outpatient programming, formerly PHP
- Intensive outpatient programming
- Outpatient groups
- Primary mental health services, including one-on-one therapy in person and virtually
- Medication management on an outpatient level for mental health disorders
- Commercial plans, Medicaid, Medicaid MCOs, and support for people without coverage

Additional updates:

- Alpharus expanded into adolescent individual therapy for ages 12–17 in central Illinois through Peoria and Bloomington clinics; virtual access may be available for Chicagoland families.
- Aurora has two fully licensed male therapists available for one-on-one therapy.
- A new recovery home is planned on campus with 32 beds, 16 for men and 16 for women. The license application is in with the state; certificate of occupancy is still pending. The goal is to open in January after the holidays, with a ribbon-cutting expected.
- Alpharus has a community division and a corrections division. The corrections division contracts with state correctional systems around the country and provides intensive outpatient services, clinicians, therapists, and clinical supervisors in correctional settings.
- Peer support has expanded across Alpharus sites and levels of care. Leadership reported that peer support has been beneficial by allowing counselors to focus on clinical and therapeutic interventions while peers help with home health, community connection, purpose, and discharge planning.
- Alpharus reported over one million people helped, a 94% residential satisfaction rate, and a 96% outpatient satisfaction rate.
- Tours of the Aurora facility are available upon request.

Discussion

Participants discussed the value of peer support, Alpharus' corrections work, transportation barriers, and the new recovery home. Annette noted that housing shortages are a major focus for the ROSC and Kane County. Alpharus leadership noted that the new recovery home will help address some of that need.

Community Survey

Annette reviewed the Kane County community survey. The survey is intended to understand community attitudes and identify areas where behavioral health and recovery supports can improve. Topics include:

- Respect and stigma
- Medication-assisted recovery

- Naloxone and syringe access
- Access to mental health and substance misuse treatment
- Funding priorities
- Equity
- Availability of Spanish-language services in Kane County
- Demographics

The survey has 15 multiple-choice questions; 13 come from the state and two were added locally. The local questions focus on gaps in services for Spanish-language speakers. Annette noted that some Kane County residents who only speak Spanish must travel into Chicago for services and may be uprooted from treatment, groups, and housing, which can increase risk of relapse or justice involvement.

QR codes were shared and are active. The survey takes about five minutes. Annette asked everyone to share it with coworkers, family, friends, and people outside the recovery field so the county can cast a wide net and collect community-wide data. Paper copies and laminated QR codes are available upon request. Data will be reported to the Illinois Department of Behavioral Health and Recovery to inform planning and resource decisions.

Discussion also highlighted barriers identified through assessments, including transportation and pet care. Some people cannot attend residential treatment because they have no one to care for a pet. These barriers can inform future planning and partnerships.

Announcements and Updates

Film Screening: "In Waves and War"
A screening will be held on November 5 from 6:00–9:00 P.M. at College of DuPage in partnership with College of DuPage, NAMI DuPage, and DuPage County ROSC/Serenity House. The film addresses psychedelics, including low-dose psychedelics, used to treat PTSD in combat veterans with treatment-resistant trauma. A panel discussion will follow, including Jarrett Burton, Bruce Seawick from College of DuPage, Heli Gensler from NAMI DuPage, and a combat veteran with relevant experience. The event is free; registration is suggested. A QR code was shared.

Mobile Outreach Van
Alex Browne and Kelsey provided updates on the mobile outreach van serving DuPage and Kane counties. The van visits:

- Gail Borden Library in Elgin
- Santori Library in downtown Aurora on Wednesday afternoons

The van supplies clothing, hygiene items, socks, underwear, and naloxone. The team can also help connect people to treatment and transport them to services. Donations are needed, especially new men's underwear, men's clothing, pants, shoes, socks, shirts, hygiene items, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, wipes, winter coats, gloves, hats, blankets, pillows, tents, and rain ponchos. Donation boxes are placed at partner locations, including libraries and NAMI DuPage. Kelsey noted NAMI DuPage recently requested a second donation box because of strong donation volume. Last winter, the van distributed 312 winter coats. Organizations interested in hosting a donation box or drive should reach out.

Sunday Meals
The van also goes out on Sundays from about 12:00–2:00 P.M. near the Aurora Animal Control dog park near Hesed House. The team cooks and provides meals for about 20–25 people living in tents by the river. Volunteers, cooks, and food donations are welcome.

Transportation
Serenity House recently received funding for a transportation fund. Alpharus Health also reported statewide door-to-door transportation through Uber Health and Lyft concierge/medical. Rides can be scheduled in advance or on the fly, and a phone is not required if the person's name and destination are known. Partners should reach out when transportation is a barrier.

Take Back the Night — Kane and Kendall Counties
Tuesday, October 27, 4:30–6:30 P.M. at Bethany Lutheran Church. The event is hosted with Mutual Ground and includes awareness, solidarity, support, a guest speaker, resource table, march, and vigil. Flyers were shared.

Domestic Violence Awareness Training
Friday, October 30, 9:00–11:00 A.M. Free and virtual, with Spanish interpretation and CEUs available. Presenter: Roxane Lozano. Registration is available through the link in the flyer caption.

Kane County Youth Tobacco Prevention Summit
November 4, 9:00 A.M.–2:00 P.M. at Baker Community Center in St. Charles. The summit is for adults who support youth through prevention, cessation, and reducing access to tobacco. Annette encouraged parents and people who work with youth to attend.

Kane County October ROSC Council Meeting

Harm Reduction Materials

Harm reduction materials were available at the meeting, including test strips for xylazine, fentanyl, benzodiazepines, and related substances, plus naloxone. Attendees were encouraged to take materials and ask for demonstration if needed. Kane County Health Department also has Narcan/naloxone available.

Continuing Education Events

- A virtual CE presentation on trauma-responsive care in behavioral health and SUD settings will be held next Wednesday from 12:30–2:30 P.M. via Microsoft Teams. It is free and offers two CEs. Flyer to be shared.
- An in-person CE event is scheduled for Friday, November 13, offering 1.5 CEs on CBT and DBT in substance use disorder treatment. Information will be shared for registration.

Holiday Party

A joint DuPage/Kane holiday party is being planned and details will be shared.

Closing

Annette Villarreal thanked everyone for attending and thanked Alpharus Health for hosting. She encouraged partners to reach out with questions and to watch for information about the joint DuPage/Kane holiday party. No formal motions or votes were recorded.

Action Items

- Share the community survey widely, including with people outside the recovery field; request paper copies or laminated QR codes from Annette or Jarrett.
- Share event flyers and registration information with networks.
- Donate or host donation boxes/drives for the mobile outreach van; contact the outreach team.
- Reach out regarding transportation barriers and available door-to-door ride support.
- Verify attendance names and spellings before future communications.
- Watch for updates on the Alpharus recovery home ribbon cutting, CE events, and the joint DuPage/Kane holiday party.