

**MINUTES OF THE
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES INTERIM COMMITTEE**
Wednesday, May 17, 2006 – 2:00 p.m. – Room W020 House Building

Members Present:

Sen. Allen M. Christensen, Senate Chair
Rep. Bradley G. Last, House Chair
Rep. D. Gregg Buxton
Rep. Wayne A. Harper
Rep. Patricia W. Jones
Rep. David Litvack
Rep. Rebecca D. Lockhart
Rep. Steven R. Mascaro
Rep. Ronda Rudd Menlove
Rep. Paul Ray

Members Absent:

Sen. Sheldon L. Killpack
Sen. Peter C. Knudson
Sen. Scott D. McCoy

Staff Present:

Mr. Mark D. Andrews, Policy Analyst
Ms. Catherine J. Dupont, Associate General Counsel
Mr. Thomas R. Vaughn, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Joy L. Miller, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Christensen called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m. Sen. McCoy was excused from the meeting.

Due to lack of a quorum, the minutes of the April 19, 2006 meeting were not approved.

2. Drug Offender Reform Pilot Study

Ms. Mary Lou Emerson, Utah Substance Abuse and Anti-violence Coordinating Council, distributed "Progress Report on the Drug Offender Reform Act Pilot Program." DORA (Drug Offender Reform Act) was amended this year to require screening and assessment for all felony offenders in Salt Lake County. The amendment will enable a front-loading of offenders into the DORA Pilot Program, providing sufficient follow-up time to measure program outcomes. Ms. Emerson pointed out that the Legislature also appropriated the remaining funding for 2007 and 2008.

Mr. Brent Kelsey, Assistant Director, DSAMH (Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health), distributed "Drug Offender Reform Act and Drug Court Comparison." He reviewed the differences between DORA and drug court. He noted that drug court is a voluntary program which brings the full weight of all interveners to bear, forcing the offender to deal with his or her substance abuse problem. There are 1,700 people being served in the drug court program in every judicial district. DORA serves an average of 80 offenders yearly with a combined total of 250 offenders over a three-year period.

Mr. Rick Schwermer, Administrative Office of the Courts, explained that DORA was originally conceived as "smart sentencing," making sure the judge had appropriate information at the time of sentencing. The intent behind problem-solving courts and drug courts is to identify the underlying problem which keeps the person committing crimes and stop it. DORA is more about getting persons in the door than the treatment provided and the approach taken. Mr. Schwermer estimated that fully funding the need for drug courts would require more than doubling the \$2.6 million currently appropriated.

Mr. Mike Haddon, Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice, stated that outcomes for those in the DORA program will not be available for some time. Once the offenders have finished the pilot program, there is a 12-18 month period of follow-up and treatment.

3. Substance Abuse

Ms. Lisa-Michele Church, Department of Human Services, explained that substance abuse affects almost every area she administers. She commented that treatment works and drug court is very successful. Ms. Church pointed out that methamphetamine is very widespread among young mothers in the state.

Mr. Mark Payne, Director, DSAMH, indicated that mental health and substance abuse issues are similar. He hoped the presentation would help the Legislature to understand the system, its challenges, and the issues it faces.

Mr. Kelsey distributed a copy of his presentation "Utah's Public Substance Abuse and Mental Health System." Addiction is a public health problem that affects many people and has wide ranging social consequences. Utah serves approximately 19,000 people a year in the public system. He stated that integrated public health/public safety strategies blend the functions of the criminal justice system and the substance abuse treatment system in an effort to optimize outcomes. He identified several challenges and issues in substance abuse policy:

- the need to treat substance abuse as a health care issue,
- the need to explore ways to decrease spending in the private system and increase it in the public system,
- the need for "parity" laws, and
- the need to determine how to decrease the amount spent by taxpayers on substance abuse.

Mr. Kelsey discussed the problem of meth and the impact it is having on the state. There is an increasing number of women coming into services. The cost of treatment for meth ranges from \$3,500 to \$26,000 for a woman and her two children per year. The cost of incarceration for a woman is \$30,000 per year. Foster care costs about \$33,000 per child per year. Mr. Kelsey also addressed the issue of underage drinking which costs the state approximately \$326 million per year. He stressed the need to treat alcohol and other drug use as a health issue. Close collaboration with law enforcement and the judiciary increases treatment retention and enhances outcomes.

Mr. Marvin Sims, CSDP (Controlled Substance Database Program) Program Manager, distributed a copy of his presentation. He explained that CSDP is a resource to aid in the prevention, enforcement, and treatment of prescription controlled substance misuse and diversion. CSDP is an in-house system for the collection and dissemination of data. To date, over 27 million records have been processed. He reviewed the list of persons entitled to receive this information by statute. Mr. Sims noted there are criminal and civil penalties for obtaining data under false pretenses or misusing information.

Dr. Robert Rolfs, Utah Department of Health, gave a presentation on "Overdose Deaths from Prescription Medications - Utah." In 2005 Utah experienced over 250 fatal overdoses from nonillicit drugs. Methadone is the most common prescription medication causing overdose deaths. He noted that prescriptions for pain medications comprise approximately 60 percent of the CSDP. Nonillicit drug deaths have seen a 4-fold increase from 2000 to 2005.

Minutes of the Health and Human Services Interim Committee
May 17, 2006
Page 3

4. Other Business / Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Mascaro moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Last adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.