



State of Colorado

Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force

Overview of the Task Force

The Task Force utilizes a comprehensive, collaborative approach to identify strategies to:

- **assist local communities** with implementation of the most effective practices for substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment and in developing responses by the criminal justice system.
- **review model programs** that have shown the best results in Colorado and across the U.S. and provide information on the programs to local communities and local drug task forces.
- **investigate collaborative models** on protecting children and other victims of substance abuse and drug production and distribution.
- **measure and evaluate the progress** of state and local jurisdictions in preventing substance abuse and illegal drug production and distribution, and in prosecuting persons engaging in these acts.
- **evaluate and promote approaches to increase public awareness** of current and emerging substance abuse problems and strategies for addressing those problems.

The Task Force monitors emerging drug abuse issues in order to respond proactively and mitigate escalation of potential negative impacts on the people and communities of Colorado.

A network of partners is essential to fulfilling the charge of the Task Force. In addition to membership representation from a broad range of agencies and organizations that address substance abuse or those impacted by it, there are ongoing partnerships with:

- Illuminate Colorado
- Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention
- Rise Above Colorado

The membership of the Colorado Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force is set forth in C.R.S. § 18-18.5-103 and consists of a chair, three vice chairs, and twenty-eight members.

Chair: Cynthia Coffman, Colorado Attorney General, as specified in C.R.S. § 18-18.5-103.

Vice Chair for Treatment: Marc Condojani, Director of Community Treatment and Recovery Programs in the Office of Behavioral Health, Colorado Department of Human Services, by appointment of the Speaker of the Colorado House of Representatives.

Vice Chair for Prevention: José Esquibel, Director of the Office of Community Engagement, Colorado Department of Law, Office of the Attorney General, by appointment of President of the Colorado Senate.

Vice Chair for Criminal Justice: Chief Rick Brandt, Evans Police Department, serves by appointment of the Governor.

Task Force Committees

- The *Substance-Exposed Newborns Steering Committee* addresses a variety of issues regarding the screening for and identification of drug-exposed infants and the connection to substance abuse treatment services for pregnant and post-partum women. Co-chairs:
 - Kathryn Wells, MD, Medical Director, Denver Family Crisis Center
 - Jade Woodard, Executive Director of Colorado Alliance for Drug Endangered Children

- The *Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention* serves as the *Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Committee* of the Task Force and consists of seven work groups that are responsible for implementing the goals and strategies of the Governor's *Colorado Plan to Reduce Prescription Drug Abuse (2013)*. Chair:
 - Robert Valuck, Ph.D., Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Department of Clinical Pharmacy, University of Colorado

- The *Colorado State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup* serves as the *Data Committee* of the Task Force. The SEOW compiles data from numerous sources on various drugs of abuse - in particular, alcohol, marijuana, opioids, cocaine, marijuana, and synthetic drugs - to monitor and report on drug trends. Co-Chairs:
 - Rebecca Helfand, Ph.D., Office of Behavioral Health, Colorado Department of Human Services
 - Daniel Vigil, MD, MPH, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment