

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force: Behavioral Health Committee

Meeting Summary for January 17, 2023

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1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Mike Parker called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. The meeting was held via Zoom Webinar and in person at the Whatcom County Council Conference Room, 311 Grand Ave., Suite 105, Bellingham, Washington

Members Present: Brian Estes, Brien Thane, Courtney Taylor, Dan Hammill, Donnell Tanksley, Doug Chadwick, Heather Flaherty, Michael Smith, Mike Hilley, Mike Parker, Perry Mowery, Stephen Gockley

Also Present: Jake Wiebusch

Members Absent: Arlene Feld, Jenn Lockwood, Nathan Bajema, Seth Fleetwood

2. Xylazine/fentanyl use in the community [\(00:01:23\)](#)

Michael Smith spoke about and answered questions on the deadly, risky drug called Xylazine, which is 50 times worse than fentanyl. It hasn't been seen here yet, but making its way from the east coast. He also talked about the animal tranquilizer "tranq".

Members had questions for research on and discussion of the following:

- Why would a user / provide want the tranquilizer?
- Xylazine doesn't show up in fentanyl strips. How do we test for it?
- Intensity of the high?
- Risks of overdose?
- Depressant
- Narcan does not help in overdose for Xylazine, just for opioids
- Does anything work on the overdose of Xylazine?
- What happens when mixed with alcohol?

3. Legislative priorities for State representatives [\(00:45:00\)](#)

Stephen Gockley shared with the group the 'wish list' of priorities for the State representatives, as well as some changes to those priorities.

Brian Estes asked Whatcom County Jail staff and Public Defenders office for data on on competency restoration and timeliness of psychiatric medications, so that this information could possibly be added to the legislative priorities.

4. Other Business

Dan Hammill would like to see on the next agenda:

- Housing / Homelessness
- Lighthouse Mission, opening of a larger facility

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- How is the City of Bellingham cleaning up homeless camps

5. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:31 a.m.