



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

TO: Public Safety Committee **DATE:** January 13, 2025

DEPARTMENT: Police Department

PREPARED BY: Thomas O'Neal, Police Captain

PRESENTER: Thomas O'Neal, Police Captain

AGENDA TITLE: Fentanyl Task Force-Update January 2025

RECOMMENDATION

After a review of the report and presentation, the Public Safety Committee should:

1. Provide feedback and suggestions related to the direction of the Fentanyl Task Force.
2. Consider suggesting additional information or data that should be added to the report prior to the update being presented to City Council on January 20, 2025.

BACKGROUND

Fentanyl Task Force Overview

The Fentanyl Task Force (Task Force) was formed on January 23, 2024, following multiple fentanyl overdose deaths on the Mendocino Coast. The initial goal of the Task Force was to bring together a diverse group of subject matter experts in order to explore potential solutions to the fentanyl crisis. A public solicitation was issued for applications for Task Force Members and approximately 25 applications were received. Those applications were reviewed and reduced down to 18 individuals.

The Fentanyl Task Force met for the first time on February 28, 2024. Members participated in several presentations from subject matter experts currently working in organizations related to the fentanyl crisis. Task Force members participated in group discussions and obtained a general overview of the crisis and some potential responses. The goal of this first meeting was to gather a trove of data that could be sorted through in order to identify potential approaches to the crisis.

The Police Department's Care Response Unit correlated the data from the first Task Force meeting and began identifying potential solutions at the local level. The data gained from the meeting included hours of group discussion, presentation notes, recommended

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literature, and informal data related to the crisis. The first meeting additionally generated several questions which required additional research. With multiple potential solutions identified, the Task Force met a second time on October 16, 2024 to determine a formal plan of action.

During the second Task Force meeting, members engaged in question and answer sessions with representatives from nine different agencies who provide direct services related to the fentanyl crisis and were associated with the proposed plans of action. The Task Force identified strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities related to these services that could be harnessed or mitigated to achieve the group's goals. The last half of the meeting included group discussions focused on identifying three foundational approaches that the Task Force could take immediately. The Task Force additionally formalized its Mission Statement to guide the future of the program.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

This section represents the current state of the Fentanyl Task Force at the time of this report:

Mission Statement

The Fentanyl Task Force provides a collaboration of unique organizational leaders to address the impact of the opioid epidemic as a community. United by our shared commitment to combat the fentanyl crisis, our diverse task force empowers agencies through collaborative resource sharing and innovation. We strive to break down barriers to treatment and care, leveraging the unique strengths of our community resources to ensure equitable access and effective solutions for all affected individuals.

The Task Force has now split into three different Committees in order to focus our efforts on achieving actionable items:

1. Education Committee
2. Treatment Access Committee
3. Youth In-Patient Treatment Center

These Committees have met several times since October 16, 2024, and have identified the following goals, plans of action, and challenges:

Education Committee

The Education Committee is tasked with developing and implementing effective education campaigns targeting school-aged children, youth, businesses, and underrepresented groups, including the Latinx and Native American communities. The

goal of these campaigns is to raise awareness about the dangers of opioids and fentanyl and to promote prevention efforts across these diverse groups. The Committee, consisting of local business owners, educators, and individuals with lived experiences, and is dedicated to addressing the needs of these communities and ensuring that resources are tailored to their unique challenges.

The Education Committee expects to release its first targeted education campaign by March 31, 2025.

The Education Committee is seeking approximately \$5000 in order to fund its initial campaign.

Treatment Access Committee

This committee's first goal is to streamline connecting youth to services from the initial report of a youth experiencing substance use disorder to the connection to treatment. The goal is to provide every school staff member the tools needed to connect youth to a qualified service provider for substance use disorders within one hour of the initial self-disclosure to school staff. This committee expects to achieve this goal by August of 2025.

This committee's main challenges include navigating policies and statutes that create barriers between our education system and our medical system.

Youth In-Patient Treatment Committee

This committee's overarching goal is to increase access to in-patient treatment for youth experiencing a substance use disorder. Currently, the majority of juveniles with substance use disorders are required to travel to southern California to be treated in the only commonly available in-patient treatment facility.

This committee is currently exploring the potential of opening an in-patient treatment facility in Mendocino or Lake County and is currently conducting a feasibility study including research related to this complex and critical issue. This committee expects to complete this feasibility study by April of 2025.

FISCAL IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE

The only current costs associated with the Task Force is staff time related to Police Department staff and some indirect costs such as printing and meeting supplies. That staff time has varied depending on the associated project.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Not applicable.

STRATEGIC PLAN/COUNCIL PRIORITIES/GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

No formal community stakeholder meetings have been held regarding this issue. The Police Department routinely receives feedback from diverse sources within community including suggestions and references to information.

COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Updates related to the Task Force have been verbally provided at Public Safety Committee and City Council multiple times since the inception of the program. This will be the first official Committee review.

ALTERNATIVES:

No alternatives were identified. The report is intended to be informational only.

ATTACHMENTS:

None applicable.

NOTIFICATION:

None Applicable