

Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council 2014 Annual Report



December 1, 2014

**Florida Department of Health
4052 Bald Cypress Way A00
Tallahassee, FL 32399**

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
Surgeon General & Secretary
Florida Department of Health**

**Rick Scott
Governor**

OVERVIEW

Drug abuse affects every sector of Florida society, straining the state's economic resources, health care and criminal justice systems and endangering the lives of young people. The Drug Policy Advisory Council serves as a leader and catalyst for improving the health and safety of all Floridians by promoting strategic approaches and collaboration to reduce drug use and related crime.

BACKGROUND

The Florida Legislature created the Office of Drug Control and the Drug Policy Advisory Council in 1999 (DPAC) in the Executive Office of the Governor. The primary purposes of the office were to coordinate drug control efforts, provide information to the public about the problem of substance abuse and services available, and develop a strategic program and funding to coordinate state agency activities relating to drug control. The Office of Drug Control consisted of three councils and one task force, the Drug Policy Advisory Council (DPAC), the Seaport Standards Advisory Council, the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council, and the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Oversight and Implementation Task Force.

Senate Bill 2104, which became effective on July 1, 2011, separated the Office of Drug Control from the Executive Office of the Governor and established the Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council under the Florida Department of Health (DOH). The law provided that the Surgeon General or his or her designee is a nonvoting, ex officio member and chairperson of the advisory council.

In fiscal year 2013-2104, the council was integrated into the Department's Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida (BTFF), which had achieved notable success protecting Florida's citizens from the dangers of tobacco.

PURPOSE

Per Section 397.333 Florida Statutes, the Drug Policy Advisory Council (DPAC) meets at least quarterly to analyze substance abuse problems in Florida, and makes recommendations to the Governor and legislature for developing and implementing drug control strategies. The council may also determine the most effective means of communicating drug control strategies to the public and private sector, and provide a feedback mechanism for comments and recommendations. Other action items of the council include reviewing and recommending substance abuse programs, assessing successful drug control strategies in other states or the federal government, seeking research projects for the purpose of achieving improved outcomes and strategic budgetary decisions, and ensuring a coordinated, multi-disciplinary response to substance abuse for both the public and private sector.

REVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014

- The Drug Policy Advisory Council was assigned the responsibilities of the Attorney General's Statewide Task Force on Prescription Drug Abuse and Newborns, including 15 policy recommendations that will be folded into the work of DPAC.

- The DPAC supported a Department of Health rule which adds Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome to the list of conditions reportable to the Department.
- The DPAC continues to study the creation of a compendium on best practices and Good Governance on Drug Policy, to determine successful programs that can be implemented using fiscally sound principles.
- The DPAC membership participated in a Government in the Sunshine training provided by the Office of the General Counsel of the Department of Health.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To reduce the demand for drugs, the Drug Policy Advisory Council supports:

- The oversight of sober homes in order to provide a safe environment for individuals in treatment transition.
- Working to reduce NAS in Florida by at least 10% from the baseline number of 1,630 estimated in CY 2012.
- Working to reduce the number of Florida middle and high school students who have tried any illicit drug, from 31.7% to 25%, as reported in the 2013 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey.
- Programs and initiatives that reduce the incidence of heroin overdose-related fatalities.

To reduce the supply of drugs, the Drug Policy Advisory Council supports:

- The increased utilization of the Florida Prescription Drug Monitoring Program by active healthcare professionals.
- Maintaining or expanding the Florida Highway Patrol Criminal Interdiction Units staffing levels.
- Increased surveillance and apprehension of importers and distributors of synthetic drugs.

SUMMARY

It is important that Florida's law enforcement and justice system have the necessary tools to combat illegal drugs, and programs proven to be successful at reducing drug initiation are funded and implemented. The Drug Policy Advisory Council will continue to support these ideals through its analysis of the illicit drug environment, and its policy recommendations to the Governor and legislature.

Appendix

2014 DRUG POLICY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

John Armstrong, MD, FACS, Surgeon General

Cynthia Kelly, Office of Planning and Budget

Pam Bondi, Attorney General

Gerald Bailey, Department of Law Enforcement

Mike Carroll, Department of Children and Families

Michael Crews, Department of Corrections

Christy Daly, Department of Juvenile Justice

Pam Stewart, Department of Education

Julie Jones, Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

Major General Emmett Titshaw, Department of Military Affairs

Vacant, Senate President Appointee

Melanie May, Chief Judge, Fourth District Court of Appeal, Florida Supreme Court Appointee

Representative Darryl Rouson, Speaker of the House Appointee

Governor Appointments:

Mark P. Fontaine, Tallahassee, Executive Director of the Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association, reappointed for a term beginning November 4, 2011 and ending September 6, 2015.

Kimberly Spence, Panama City, Chief Executive Officer of Keeton Corrections, Inc., reappointed for a term beginning November 4, 2011 and ending September 6, 2015.

Five Governor Appointments are unfilled at the time of this report.