

## MINUTES

**Purpose:** Engage Okaloosa County community members in a health improvement process through an open, two-way dialogue to reduce the impact of harmful events such as pedestrian injuries, older adult falls, and substance use and to reduce the housing burden.

**Attendees:** Emily Pickens, Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County (DOH-Okaloosa); Petra Maddens, DOH-Okaloosa; Lauren Hobbs, DOH-Okaloosa; Beth Smith, DOH-Okaloosa; Greg Cain, Okaloosa County Emergency Medical Services; Robert Bage, Fort Walton Beach Police Department; JB Whitten, City of Crestview; Sheila Fitzgerald, Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners; Tim Gibson, City of Fort Walton Beach; Jason Fulghum, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office (OCSO); Shane Binger, OCSO; Mikiko Tucker, City of Fort Walton Beach; Robert Schohn, Fort Walton Beach Police Department; Mandy Bricker, DOH-Okaloosa; Leann Calabro, Fort Walton Beach Fire Department; Aaron Murray, Northwest Florida State College Police Department

### Opening – Beth Smith and Emily Pickens

- Beth opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
- Minutes from the October 19, 2023, meeting were reviewed and approved.
- Emily shared Community Engagement Survey results from the previous meeting.

### Action Plan Updates – Robert Bage and JB Whitten

#### Okaloosa EMS Community and Paramedicine Discussion

- Greg Cain provided overview of current Okaloosa County EMS practices and assessment protocols. Members were prompted on how EMS and the fire department can bridge the gap where individuals need resources/supplies but are unable to obtain them otherwise.
- Chief Bage mentioned that Broward County has a robust community paramedicine program that is co-lead by a social worker. He asked if it would be possible to ask them if they could provide a presentation to the group on their program focusing on best practices and available fall prevention assessment tools. Beth added that Brevard County's program is ran as part of CORE and that their department would be happy to share. Greg volunteered to reach out to them.
- Petra added that two counties presented on their paramedicine programs at the OD2A conference, and that Marion County also has a great program that the group can look into as well. Greg added that Broward County and Manatee County have community programs like Escambia, focused on suboxone and rehabilitation services through CORE.
- Greg stated that from the first responder perspective, one focus should be on communicating the resources available to first responders. Leann Calabro added that it would be beneficial to create a position in EMS to tackle the assessments and provide appropriate resources to individual.
- Chief Bage shared that the Healthy Behaviors group has created a First Responders Guide that provides a list of resources to first responders. Emily added that we can tailor the guide to EMS/fire department needs for fall prevention. She stated that she could

look into local faith-organizations further to determine what resources are available through them as well.

- Chief Bage stated that the group could create a tool in which first responders are able to determine what to do if they get a call where a person has fallen as well as a list of resources for that person to prevent falls in the future. Could adapt the current resource guide to give to individuals who have fallen.
- Chief Bage asked if the Medical Examiner's office was able to look at fall data. Mandy Bricker stated that she could sort through data to determine cause of death and will look into whether she can see what caused the fall that led to death. Leann stated that besides tripping and falling, many other factors can result in falls, such as medications.
- Emily suggested that we circle back to fall prevention starting in January. Chief Bage agreed.

### **Opioid Overdose Discussion**

- Mayor Whitten provided updates on the projects of the Crestview Rotary Club and Drug Task Force. He stated that anti-vaping devices have gone into schools to detect and discourage youth from vaping. He also stated that the Rotary Club has the funding and education to counter the opioid/fentanyl crisis and that currently it is being operated through the Drug Task Force to keep the community informed on current trends.
- Emily stated that the Boys & Girls Clubs in Okaloosa County have received grant funding and that as part of their agreement they will provide opioid education to their students.
- Chief Bage provided a brief overview of the [Naloxone Plus Framework](#). It creates a mechanism that bridges the gap to services following an overdose reversal. Greg emphasized that individuals are often lost to follow up after an overdose event and how that program like Naloxone Plus would help to prevent future overdoses by connecting individuals to appropriate resources.
- Emily stated that there would be a joint meeting to include entities working on similar opioid overdose prevention goals on December 12th. This meeting will allow us to breakdown any silos and work together to accomplish the same mission.
- Chief Bage reviewed the [Unite Us](#) referral system with the group.
- Beth provided overview of the new epidemiology position, filled by Mandy Bricker. This position works with the Florida District 1 Medical Examiner's Office by analyzing and providing data, assisting with budget requirements, responses to media inquiries, tracking local mortality trends. The current goal of the position is to provide timely and accurate mortality information to aid in identifying overdose hotspots. This allows the implementation of targeted prevention programs. Mandy added that she has been analyzing data for the joint Healthy Behaviors and Healthy Communities meeting on December 12th. Sheila Fitzgerald added that she has been tracking the opioid funding and will provide additional information at the meeting in December as well.

### **OCHIP Celebration**

- Emily opened the conversation on OCHIP celebration and award nominations. The group decided on three awards: Injury Prevention Award, Opioid Overdose Award, and Healthy Communities Member of the Year Award. Members are encouraged to use this

[form](#) to nominate individuals for awards. Nominations are due by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Action Items – Robert Bage and JB Whitten**

- Greg Cain will reach out to Broward County to schedule presentation on their paramedicine program.
- Emily will reach out to Elder Affairs and local hospitals to gain input and involve them in the groups fall prevention goals.
- Mayor Whitten will reach out to the Boys & Girls Club to inquire about their requirements for opioid education.
- All members will nominate individuals for the three chosen OCHIP celebration awards.

**Open Discussion – ALL**

- Mayor Whitten provided overview of the [Safe Haven for Newborns](#) program that is being implemented around Florida.
- Chief Bage shared that The Fort Walton Beach Police Department is hosting its 3rd annual [Winter Wonderland](#) on Friday, December 9, from 6pm to 10pm at the Chester Pruitt Softball Park. The Fort Walton Beach Police Department and the Downtown Fort Walton Beach organization are also hosting their second "[Community Bike Ride](#)" event at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Closing – Emily Pickens**

- Emily thanked attendees for participating and asked them to complete the meeting evaluation form to provide feedback.

*Next Meeting – Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM at DOH-Okaloosa*

<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Owners</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Status</b>
Reach out to Broward County EMS to schedule meeting for paramedicine program overview.	Greg Cain	January 18 <sup>th</sup>	Not started
Recruit representatives from local hospitals and Elder Services to attend Healthy Communities meetings.	Emily Pickens	January 18 <sup>th</sup>	Not started
Reach out to the Boys & Girls Club at Riverside to gather details on their opioid education initiatives.	JB Whitten	January 18 <sup>th</sup>	Not started
Nominate award winners.	All	November 22 <sup>nd</sup>	In progress