



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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MAYOR

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MEMO

March 11, 2019

TO: Mayor Curtatone
FROM: Doug Kress, Director of Health & Human Services
SUBJECT: Registered Medical Marijuana Dispensary Host Community Agreement Working Group Recommendations

Working Group Overview and Participants

In April 2018, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) convened a working group to develop recommendations for the use of funds from the City of Somerville's Host Community Agreement with registered medical marijuana dispensaries (RMDs). Per the RMD Host Community Agreement, RMDs shall contribute 3% of gross sales to the City to "support education, prevention, and treatment for substance abuse through the City of Somerville." The funds are to be administered by HHS and may be expended by HHS or distributed to other City departments, schools, or nonprofit organizations.

The working group met on April 18, 2018 and October 11, 2018. Members of this working group include JoAnn Rivieccio (Community Member/Parent), Alderman Jesse Clingan (Ward 4), Elizabeth Doncaster (Somerville Public Schools), Bonny Carroll (Tobacco Control Officer/Community Member), Robert Ciccia (Board of Health), Chief David Fallon (Somerville Police Department), Michael Dundas (Sira Naturals, Inc.), and Doug Kress (Director of Health and Human Services). The group is staffed by Matthew Mitchell (HHS, Prevention Services Manager).

The working group proposes the following recommendations and allocation of funds for FY19. A detailed explanation of each recommendation and justification of funding is provided below.

1. Substance use prevention counselor for youth
2. Parent and community education on adult-use marijuana
3. Youth education on marijuana and electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS)
4. Overdose Prevention & Naloxone (Narcan) Trainings and Distribution

Recommendation #1: Substance Use Prevention Counselor for Youth

The working group, with strong input from Somerville Public Schools (SPS), recommends creating a new full-time position (1 FTE) for a Massachusetts-licensed substance abuse clinician (LADC I) with strong clinical skills and several years of experience working with youth. The position would be analogous to a grant funded position, dependent on CBA funding allocations. The new counselor would conduct assessments; provide early intervention options; facilitate and coordinate support groups; and offer guidance, training and education to students, staff, parents, community members, and other City departments. The counselor would support HHS in addressing community-wide impacts of marijuana use.

SPS currently funds a part-time counselor (0.4 FTE) to provide assessments on youth substance use. This part-time position has limited capacity for follow-up and ongoing support. SPS emphasized a need to increase services, especially with the introduction of adult-use marijuana. The Working Group recommends, with support from SPS, the counselor be housed in HHS, supervised by the Prevention Services Manager. The counselor would work closely with SPS administration, SPS support services, and other community providers on programming and policy. A draft job description is attached to provide additional information (City of Somerville –Substance Abuse Counselor).

Benchmarks for success may include:

- Increased referrals and access to substance use assessments
- Increased youth access to support groups (AA, Alanon, etc.)
- Provision of continuing education courses for staff and parents
- Reduced recidivism rates
- Increased substance use prevention education opportunities to students

Allocation: \$91,450 for 1FTE (including benefits) and program supplies:

Salary: \$65,000

Benefits: \$21,450 (est.)

Program supplies: \$5,000

Recommendation #2: Parent and Community Education about Adult-Use Marijuana

HHS aims to be proactive in providing additional education and community engagement opportunities to support youth prevention efforts. HHS will develop and disseminate educational materials, conduct focus groups, and train internal staff on the new regulations for adult-use marijuana. Partners on this effort could include Tufts University, Harvard University, the Somerville Board of Health, the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC), health care providers, youth programs, the Somerville Police Department (SPD), and substance use prevention providers.

The following list outlines suggested topics for training and education efforts:

- Parent education and engagement on youth perceptions of harm, youth access, youth use, and how to communicate with youth
- Youth focus groups on perceptions of harm and understanding risks of substance use
- Training with city staff, SPS, and SPD on the new regulations on adult-use marijuana
- Medical versus adult use
- Pain management alternatives
- Legal versus illegal purchasing and use
- Minimum legal age of sale (clarification on the status of 18-20 year olds)
- Regulations for growing plants in homes
- Safety measures to prevent access for youth
- Education on marijuana products (e.g. edibles, CBD)
- Creating positive norms for youth and correcting inappropriate messaging

Benchmarks for success may include:

- Developing educational materials for teachers, parents, and other professionals
- Creating and conducting 3 education courses for staff and parents (from priority list)
- Creating and conducting 2 educational courses for youth leaders/students (from priority list)

Allocation: \$20,000 for consultants and training expenses (facilitators, space, supplies, food)

Recommendation #3: Education on Marijuana and Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS)

The Somerville Office of Prevention has been working with community partners and SPS to conduct trainings on ENDS (e.g. e-cigarettes, JUUL, e-hookah) for staff, parents, and students. This includes community educational conversations for parents and school staff as well as assemblies and programming for youth through the Metro Boston Tobacco-Free Community Partner. Funding would be used to support additional compliance and

education needs, particularly as it pertains to the use of marijuana products (both THC & CBD) with ENDS devices.

Benchmarks for success may include:

- Creating educational materials to address ENDS use and increase youth prevention efforts
- Updating policies as needed
- Increased compliance checks

Allocation: \$10,000 for program supplies and additional compliance stipends (similar to tobacco/alcohol)

Recommendation #4: Overdose Prevention & Naloxone (Narcan) Trainings and Distribution

The HHS Prevention Services Manager and the Public Health Nurse Manager currently provide trainings on overdose prevention and naloxone (Narcan) use. Additional resources are needed to purchase supplies, make these resources available to more community members (e.g. family members, individuals, businesses), and eliminate barriers to access.

Benchmark for success may include:

- Conducting 3 classes on naloxone use in FY19, 12 sessions in FY20
- Purchase and distributing naloxone to eliminate barriers to access (begin with 75 doses)

Allocation: \$15,000 to purchase naloxone (Narcan) and conduct trainings

Funding Source

Per the RMD Host Community Agreement, RMD facilities agree to make payments as frequently as every six months. Payments are due 30 days after the end of a six-month period. The first payment will, therefore, be due seven (7) months after the opening date of the RMD, and a payment will be due every six months thereafter.

As of 3/6/19, there is a balance of \$246,153.38 in the stabilization fund. The working group recommends an annual allocation of \$136,450 to implement the identified priorities (\$44,611 for the remainder of FY19). As new regulations develop and funding is available, the Working Group will meet quarterly to review priorities, evaluate funding allocations, and make recommendations to the Administration.

Proposed Budget

Recommendation	Use	Proposed Annual Expense	Proposed FY 19 Expense (Pro-rated)
1. Substance Use Prevention Counselor for Youth	Salary, benefits, and supplies	\$91,450	\$24,611 (\$21,611 FTE/benefits + \$3,000 supplies/set-up)
2. Parent and Community Education on Marijuana Use	Stipend for consultants and training expenses	\$20,000	\$10,000
3. Education on Marijuana Use and ENDS	Community education efforts	\$10,000	\$5,000
4. Naloxone trainings and distribution	Community & business trainings on how to use Narcan and the purchase of Narcan for distribution	\$15,000	\$5,000
TOTAL		\$136,450	\$44,611