



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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MEMO

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

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) continues to convene the working group to develop recommendations for the distribution 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 current balance in the Stabilization fund is \$951,017.95. The working group recommends an allocation of \$130,853 to implement the identified priorities.

The working group proposes the following recommendations and allocation of funds for FY21. A detailed explanation of each recommendation and justification of funding is provided below.

1. Substance use prevention counselor for youth
2. Efforts to support Overdose Prevention Centers/Supervised Consumption Facility implementation
3. Parent and community education on adult-use marijuana
4. Youth education on marijuana, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) and other substances
5. 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 sustaining the 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. Since hiring, albeit interrupted by Covid 19, the counselor has conducted over 23 individual student assessments; offered direct on-going in school support to 9 students; on-going drop-in hours for students and families; facilitate and coordinate multiple support groups for students and families; and offer on-going guidance, training and education to students, staff, parents, community members, and other City departments. Staff enhanced the Prevention team's social media presence, creating both an Instagram account (@SomervillePrevention) and a YouTube channel (<http://bit.ly/SomervillePrevention>). Working with youth, created/posts educational content on a regular basis. Additional social media expanding facebook post, used frequently by parents. Since the Covid 19 interruption, staff continued support to students and families with a focus of substance use prevention and other mental health concerns.

Benchmarks for success may include:

- Increased referrals and access to substance use assessments
- Assess and implement focused support groups (AA, Alanon, etc.)
- Expand services to include Next Wave/Full Circle
- Provide continuing education courses for staff and parents
- measure recidivism rates

Allocation: \$83,003 for 1FTE (including benefits) and program supplies:

Salary: \$65,000

Benefits: \$18,003

Recommendation #2: Community Education about Adult-Use Marijuana

HHS aims to be proactive in providing additional education and community engagement opportunities to support community 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.

- Dr. Marni Chanoff – \$2,500.00
 - Dr. Marni Chanoff is a psychiatrist and faculty member of Harvard Medical School and McLean Hospital. Dr. Chanoff is an educator and speaker, as well as a regular collaborator with the City of Somerville’s Prevention Services. Dr. Chanoff will be talking about managing anxiety and substance use during the COVID shutdown and utilizing different coping skills and techniques including mindfulness, diet and lifestyle modifications, and cognitive-behavioral practices
- Riverside Trauma Center - \$7,500.00
 - Psychological First Aid/Posttraumatic Stress Management Workshop (PFA/PTSM)
Description: The goal of this comprehensive 2-day training is to prepare participants to deliver basic behavioral health disaster response skills following large-scale disasters or critical incidents, such as homicides, suicides, accidental deaths, and similarly distressing events. Participants will be presented with the evolution of efforts to assist survivors following trauma, and provided with an overview of the human stress response and how it affects the choice of interventions used with distressed individuals. The 9-phase Posttraumatic Stress Management continuum and the 8 core functions of Psychological First Aid (PFA) will be discussed.
 - Psychological First Aid Training (PFA)
Description: Psychological First Aid has long been established as the gold standard of disaster responses. Created by a global team of experts, it is the only intervention endorsed by both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the U.S. government (FEMA/MEMA) for use in the aftermath of traumatic events. The goal of this comprehensive full-day training is to prepare participants to deliver basic behavioral health disaster response skills following large-scale disasters or critical incidents, such as homicides, suicides, accidental deaths, and similarly distressing events. Participants will be presented with the evolution of efforts to assist survivors following trauma, and provided with an overview of the human stress response and how it affects the choice of interventions used with distressed individuals. The eight core functions of Psychological First Aid (PFA) will be taught. An abbreviated four-hour version of this training is also available. In this shortened version, the same basic tenets are covered; however, it will not include any experiential exercises for the audience.

Benchmarks for success may include:

- Host 3 virtual, in person if possible, parent/community learning opportunities
- Complete each educational workshop courses

Allocation: \$10,000 for consultants and training expenses (facilitators, space, supplies, food)

Recommendation #3: Ambassadors Programs

The Somerville Office of Prevention has been working with community partners and SPS to conduct trainings on various prevention services (alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, etc) for parents by parents (Ambassadors). The Ambassadors are parent liaisons within SPS who have established relationships with Somerville Public School families. The Working Group recommends the continue support of The Parent Ambassadors program. The Working Group also recommends expanding Ambassador Program model to a Youth Ambassador Program.

Benchmarks for success may include:

- Recruit, train and evaluate Ambassadors on prevention options, appropriate social media training
- Each Ambassadors conduct at least 3 peer trainings
- Increase knowledge of prevention options
- Increase social media messaging on prevention

Youth Prevention Ambassadors

- \$1,500.00 to hire ten students (8th-12th grade) to post substance use prevention messaging on their social media platforms (\$15 per post, limit 10 posts for a total of \$150.00 per student)
- \$500.00 for post advertising (\$50.00 per student)

Prevention Ambassadors Program

- \$250.00 for staff training
- \$250.00 program supplies

Allocation: \$2,650 for program supplies and stipends

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. As part of an overdose response, CPR is often administered. Additional funds are requested to purchase CPR barrier masks.

FY20 accomplishments:

Trainings:

FY20 (July 2019-June 2020) – 151 total trained

FY21 (July 2020-present) – 75 total trained

Doses of Narcan Distributed:

FY19+FY20 – 180 doses total

FY21 –25 doses allocated for partnership with Somerville Homeless Coalition in relation of OD2A grant.

FY 21 Benchmark for success:

- Continued distribution of naloxone (Narcan) without barriers
- Continued trainings on use of naloxone to community members, businesses and non-profit agencies

Allocation: \$15,200 to purchase naloxone (Narcan) and CPR mask (barrier to avoid virus transmission)

Recommendation #5: Effort to support the implementation of an Overdose Prevention Center (Supervised Consumption Facility)

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: \$20,000 for program supplies and additional compliance stipends (similar to tobacco/alcohol)

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 10/1/20, there is a balance of \$951,017.95 in the stabilization fund. The working group recommends an allocation of \$130,853 to implement the identified priorities. As new regulations and funding is available, the Working Group will begin to 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 | \$91,450 | 24,611 (21,611 FTE/benefits + 3,000 start-up/supplies) |
| 2. Parent and Community Education on Marijuana Use | Stipend, materials, community meetings | \$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 |