



Suffolk County Heroin and Opiate Epidemic Advisory Panel-Meeting Minutes 2-5-2021

Meeting Date: February 5th, 2021

Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Next Meeting Date: May 7th, 2021

Members in Attendance:

Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker, Chair
Suffolk County Legislator Tom Donnelly
Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn
Guy Calla, Office of Suffolk County Legislator Kevin McCaffrey
Suffolk County Dept. of Health Services Commissioner Gregson Pigott
Suffolk County Medical Examiner Odette Hall
Erin Meunkle, Office of Suffolk County Sheriff Errol Toulon
Kerri Ann Souto, Office of Suffolk County District Attorney Tim Sini
Inspector Stan Grodski, Office of Police Commissioner Geraldine Hart
Thomas Branco, Suffolk County Probation
Cari Faith Besserman, Suffolk County Division of Community Mental Hygiene Services
Steve Chassman, LICADD
Julie Lutz, Suffolk County Superintendents' Association
Richard Rosenthal, Stony Brook University Hospital
Kristie Golden, Stony Brook University Hospital
Pamela Mizzi, Long Island Prevention Resource Center
Pat Ferrendino, Family Service League
David Cohen, Eastern Long Island Hospital
John Venza, Outreach House
Antonette Whyte-Etere, NY OASAS Long Island Regional Office
Robert Woods, North Shore Youth Council
Robert McConville, Former Selden Fire Department Commissioner
Veronica Carrier, Resident

Also in attendance:

Recorder: Emily Murphy, Legislative Aide for Legislator Sarah Anker

Advisor: Edward Giaella, Suffolk County Drug Court

Alyssa Turano, Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn's Office

Robert Marmo, Suffolk County Probation

I. Welcoming Remarks- Legislator Sarah Anker

Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker welcomed everyone to the meeting.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Moment of Silence

IV. Panel Member Introductions/Review & Adopt Minutes 7-10-2020

Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker reminded everyone that public comments related to the panel may be made during the meeting or made in writing via email to the email contactlegislatoranker@suffolkcountyny.gov or mailed to the Office of Legislator Anker 620 Route 25a Suite B, Mount Sinai NY 11766. Submitted comments will be distributed to the panel members.

Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker thanked Edward Giaella from the Suffolk County Drug Courts for being in attendance as an advisory to the panel regarding the various Suffolk County court programs. Edward Giaella will act as Judge Andrew Crecca's designee to be an advisor to the panel. As an advisory, Edward Giaella will not vote on any of the panel's actions and will only provide information about the court system as needed by the panel. Legislator Sarah Anker noted that Edward Giaella's attendance will assist the panel in regards to discussions and action items related to individuals who suffer from substance use disorders or mental health disorders in the court system. Legislator Sarah Anker thanked the Suffolk County Sheriff's office and the law enforcement personnel on the call for their work in addressing recidivism through rehabilitation. Edward Giaella thanked the panel for having him at the meeting.

Legislator Sarah Anker announced that Cari Faith Besserman is the Acting Director of the Suffolk County Division of Community Mental Hygiene Services following Ann Marie Csorny's retirement as the Director. Cari Faith Besserman thanked Legislator Sarah Anker and stated that she looks forward to continuing the work that everyone has been doing. Legislator Sarah Anker reminded the panel members to work in collaboration and share with the group what they and their organization is working on in order to better address the opioid epidemic. Antonette Whyte-Etere stated that OASAS looks forward to continuing their work with the Suffolk County Division of Community Mental Hygiene Services and with Cari Faith Besserman as the new Acting Director.

Legislator Sarah Anker stated that as the Chair of the Health Committee, she is a member of the Board of Health and through that role has been working on vaccination availability and networking with the health community. Legislator Sarah Anker emphasized the importance of communication between various levels of government, organizations, agencies and not-for-profits in addressing issues and encouraged the panel members to reach out to her as well as the other panel members as needed.

Legislator Sarah Anker made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 13th, 2020. Legislator Tom Donnelly seconded the motion. Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn stated that she will abstain from voting as she was not present at the last meeting. All panel members voted yes to adopt the minutes. The motion carried to adopt the meeting minutes for the November 13th meeting.

Legislator Sarah Anker introduced Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn as a member of the panel as her designee as the Chair of the Health Committee. Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn stated that she is looking forward to being a part of the panel and thanked the panel members for their work in the field.

Dr. Kristie Golden acknowledged Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn for the committee she started for the roll out of medication-assisted treatment in Stony Brook Hospital's emergency department. Dr. Kristie Golden stated that it was the push from Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn's committee and the Greater New York Hospital Association that solidified the roll out and allowed the emergency department to induce about 50 people in the first year of the program.

Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn stated that the Taskforce still needs to finalize the recommendations and that she would like to see the presentation that was done for the Greater New York Hospital Association. Legislator Sarah Anker suggested that the presentation be shared at an upcoming meeting of the panel and highlighted the passage of Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn's legislation establishing emergency room protocols regarding opioid overdoses to get all the hospital emergency departments to follow the same provided protocol flow chart.

Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn recalled Legislator Sarah Anker's point that communication between everyone is key because Steve Chassman from LICADD advocated for the flow chart's importance. Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn went on to say that Jeff Reynolds was instrumental to getting NARCAN in law enforcement vehicles and that great ideas come out of meetings like this.

Steve Chassman added that according to Inspector Grodski in the last minutes, there were 1,053 non-fatal overdoses in Suffolk County thanks to naloxone and the first responders and the police. Steve Chassman added that while reports are received from Suffolk County departments, there is room for improvement in communication to follow up with those 1,053 people and those in need moving forward.

Legislator Sarah Anker reminded panel members to review the 2020 final report from the panel that was released in December 2020. Legislator Sarah Anker stated that the report shows that there has been a substantial reduction in overdose deaths since 2017.

V. Updates Statistics- Police Department & Medical Examiner's Office

Inspector Stan Grodski from the Suffolk County Police Commissioner's office reported that from the start of the year to date, there were 17 fatal overdoses, 110 non-fatal overdoses, and 81 NARCAN saves. In comparison with last year there was 24 fatal overdoses, 85 non-fatal overdoses, and 63 NARCAN saves. Legislator Sarah Anker asked Inspector Grodski that if the NARCAN saves and the aggressive Suffolk County opioid related programs are a part of the decrease in fatal overdoses. Inspector Grodski said that he believes it has an impact, but does not have the exact numbers to show to

what extent those things are responsible for the decrease. Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn asked Inspector Grodski if the 81 NARCAN saves are within the 110 non-fatal overdoses reported. Inspector Grodski reported that yes there may be some overlap.

Legislator Sarah Anker welcomed Dr. Odette Hall, the new Suffolk County Medical Examiner, to the meeting. Legislator Sarah Anker stated that the numbers that are provided by the Medical Examiner's Office and from the Police Department may be different because when the police arrive at the scene they fill out their information at that point and it goes to the medical examiner where she confirms and clarifies that information.

Dr. Odette Hall reported that the latest stats (updated from February 1st) from January and February (which may increase as medical examinations and toxicology reports take time to come back) there were 16 pending drug overdoses. At the conclusion of 2020 there were 245 total opioid deaths with 138 pending. There are still some pending cases from 2018, 2019 and 2020, as they are awaiting other factors and results to determine that an opioid was the cause of an individual's death. Legislator Sarah Anker mentioned that she and the other legislators can work to make sure that Dr. Odette Hall has the staff, equipment and other necessities to get the pending number down as much as possible. Legislator Sarah Anker mentioned that the mass spectrometer helped with the accuracy and timing of figuring out cause of death. Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn asked if the toxicology reports were sent out or done in-house. Dr. Odette Hall stated that the toxicology is done in house and that in terms of the pending cases, there are many factors that affect the time it takes to determine the cause of death. Dr. Odette Hall stated that she appreciates the support and help and that lowering the number of pending cases as much as possible is a high priority for the Medical Examiner's Office. There will always be some pending cases because there will always be results that the office is waiting on, but the goal of the office is to get it as low as possible.

Legislator Sarah Anker mentioned according to the statistics from 2020 and 2019, Brookhaven still has the highest number of opioid related deaths, followed by Babylon and Islip. Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn asked if the numbers are presented in numbers per 1,000, because the higher number may be explain by the size of the Town of Brookhaven. Dr. Odette Hall reported that the numbers were raw data and not per 1,000. Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn suggested that it may be helpful to present the numbers in terms of per 1,000 so population size can be factored out. Legislator Sarah Anker emphasized the importance of ensuring the Town of Brookhaven law enforcement have enough resources due to the large population size (500,000 people) of the town.

Legislator Sarah Anker added that the age of those experiencing the most deaths from opioids are as those aged 30-39 (86 deaths), followed by those aged 40-49, and that it appears the numbers are going down.

Legislator Sarah Anker also added that while the younger generations appear to be avoiding opioids due to the work of the advocates, they are using other types of drugs like benzos and other recreational drugs.

Steve Chassman asked if it is possible to reach out to Supervisor Romaine or Supervisor Lupinacci to suggest scheduling more NARCAN trainings and virtual community events to target these high risk areas. Steve Chassman also asked if it would be possible to get health alerts out to active users warning about potential high levels of fentanyl that police are seeing in street drug testing.

John Venza added that youth are using other drugs that have different names that many advocates may not be seeing yet- one being lean (codeine with soft drinks). John Venza added that providers should ask more in depth questions when doing their intake assessment, including using the terms that the youth are using such as lean or marijuana related substances such as wax. John Venza added that kids are getting to opioids through an indirect pathway and that the panel could work better job training for providers.

Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn asked how often the assessment tools are updated. Dr. Kristie Golden responded that most of the evidence based tools ask generic questions and that the OASAS providers will ask more specific questions about types of drugs used and preferred.

John Venza reported that on the provider side, it is usually up to each provider to determine what intake questions they ask, but that there is a need for everyone to evolve with the ever-changing nature of drugs that are being used and train providers and workers accordingly. He added that there are a large number of providers and they all have varying intake questions and forms.

Cari Faith Besserman reintroduced the idea of having someone from the Healing Communities Project present the latest progress of the study to the panel. The study is largely focused on the Town of Brookhaven. Cari Faith Besserman added that the large number of overdose reversals shows that NARCAN is doing its job and that the panel is doing good work by having it readily available. Cari Faith Besserman added that the Healing Communities Study is able to better target and create ad campaigns by having this type of data available. Through the project, there has been a NARCAN education campaign and an effort to make sure the various sheriff's department and law enforcement locations have NARCAN to give to all officers. Cari Faith Besserman said it's important to be data driven and data smart and that sometimes a raw number tells more than a percentage. Cari Faith Besserman added that there was an attempt to unify protocols amongst the agencies and that it was time consuming and didn't ultimately happen.

Legislator Sarah Anker stated that someone from Healing Communities should come present at the next panel meeting in May. Legislator Sarah Anker added that the Healing Communities was a large grant that was received due to the high numbers of drug overdoses in areas like Centereach, Selden and Coram. Cari Faith Besserman confirmed that Healing Communities Study is specific to Brookhaven but that due to knowledge that the movement of people from place to place, the focus is also county-wide. Cari Faith

Besserman also added that someone from Healing Communities will be ready and available to do a presentation.

Legislator Sarah Anker stated that the Healing Communities presentation is an action item from the meeting as well as discussing contemporary issues of substance use as per John Venza's sharing of the ever-changing nature of what drugs people are using and what they are being called. Legislator Sarah Anker asked how an advocate gets information about new drugs and terminology over to the police department, District Attorney's Office or the Health Department. John Venza stated from his experience that there is no established system, but it is relational through sharing with those you have relationships with or through various committees that advocates are a part of. He is preparing to do a training for parents in the Three Village area about contemporary marijuana issues.

Legislator Sarah Anker suggested that if a system isn't already in place, Cari Faith Besserman in collaboration with the Health Department could establish an information sharing system utilizing a website, portal or a form that could be shared with the various providers, Health Department, Law Enforcement and stakeholders getting everyone on the same page in regard to contemporary terms and drugs. Cari Faith Besserman stated that she will share that suggestion to the Health Department and that currently whenever the Suffolk County Division of Community Mental Hygiene Services receives information like this, they share it on the website and disseminate it to their contact lists. She added that communication could always be improved and could utilize the advancements of technology.

Dr. Kristie Golden added that she did a presentation at the Public Safety Committee regarding the increase in violence of patients coming to CPEP, in which she shared that the percentage of people coming from the 7th precinct has been increasing. At CPEP, they have been advocating for a system-wide study of all stakeholders to see if new policies that have been put in place could be having negative consequences. She urged the importance of looking at all the data across all systems- mental health, substance use, police, probation, sheriff, etc.

Legislator Sarah Anker asked what was causing the violent behavior in the particular area. Dr. Kristie Golden said the violent behavior wasn't in one particular area, but at CPEP they are finding that over the last 18 months to 2 years there has been an increase in the level of agitation, legal history and substance use disorders among the individuals that are being brought to CPEP by the police. Dr. Kristie Golden added that of the data they have been collecting, they saw a decrease in the amount of people being brought to CPEP, likely due to the intervening of the DASH center, and an increase in other precincts.

Steve Chassman added that tracking has shown a recent greater presence of methamphetamine on Long Island. Steve Chassman added that unlike opioid users, methamphetamine users are not docile, they get paranoid, are up for many days, and get aggressive. He reported that LICADD has seen an uptick in the amount of methamphetamine

related calls in recent years. Steve Chassman asked Dr. Kristie Golden if methamphetamine is tied to the increased aggression in patients brought to CPEP.

Dr. Kristie reported that they did a snapshot of 100 patients that came to CPEP in October and November and when broken down by substance use disorder history, 50% had substance use disorder either recent history or an existing problem. Dr. Kristie Golden added that she didn't do a breakdown of individual drug, but that they could.

Steve Chassman added that the Long Island and the greater New York region healthcare systems are not ready for a methamphetamine crisis and that the behavior of someone on methamphetamine is the opposite of those on alcohol and opioids.

Dr. Kristie Golden added that they have seen an increase in staff injuries and lost days due to workplace violence. She added that other hospitals in the area are seeing the same things and it is unclear at this point what the cause of it is- whether it's a particular drug, policy changes, etc.

Steve Chassman brought up the issue of marijuana legalization and how high levels of THC can exacerbate pre-existing conditions for psychotic and behavioral disorders. John Venza added that there recent literature supporting the idea of CIP (Cannabis Induced Psychosis).

Dr. Kristie Golden suggested the county should look across all systems as the advocates have been asking New York State to do.

Legislator Sarah Anker asked if Inspector Grodski had been seeing the same things the advocates have been seeing. Inspector Grodski reported that they have been seeing an increase in methamphetamine. He added that the department executed some search warrants recently that resulted in finding that one of the targets had a factory where they were making edibles with concentrated THC (hash oil)- which is not quality controlled, haphazard and has issues with sanitation. Inspector Grodski added that the area has resisted methamphetamine for a long time, but that they are starting to see more of it. He shared that as having been an officer in California, he has seen people using methamphetamine and PCP and that it is brutal in relation to levels of violence.

Legislator Sarah Anker asked if it's possible to up the penalty when it comes to that sort of crime to discourage dealers that are out there. Inspector Grodski said that that would be ideal but with bail reform, there's almost no consequence for these crimes. The jail population has gone from 1,700 to as low as 400 and 600 now. Inspector Grodski reported that there was an individual that the department has arrested 3 times in the last 10 months for possession of an illegal loaded handgun and he gets out every time.

Legislator Sarah Anker asked Edward Gialella to comment on what Inspector Grodski had shared. Edward Gialella reported that bail reform has had a tremendous impact on all of the treatment courts and the criminal justice system. Edward Gialella added that the judge has limited discretion due to bail reform. In the treatment courts, there is less

incentive for individuals to address their substance use disorder. Edward Gialella reported that while bail reform was well-intentioned, it has affected the ability to keep people in custody and in return, the ability to get people into treatment.

Legislator Sarah Anker stated that she had written a letter to state representatives urging them to revisit bail reform to provide more discretion to judges. Legislator Sarah Anker asked if judges currently have the discretion to keep certain individual in jail custody or require that they attend any sort of treatment.

Edward Gialella shared that in his experience, the discretion is currently very limited and that individuals that are not remaining in custody end up leaving the court and using again instead of having that time and space to break the cycle and be introduced to treatment options. Edward Gialella added that not only are people not remaining in custody, but that people are also not appearing in court. All courts are being operated virtually with at least one day in-person. People have attested that they can't get on, don't have the capacity or don't show up. This results in a warrant being issued, the person being picked up and then released again. Legislator Sarah Anker acknowledged that she has heard of that issue in parts of the district where a person dealing drugs is arrested, released and continues to deal drugs again.

Legislator Sarah Anker asked if there is a certain amount of times that a person can be arrested before the judge can issue a stronger decision. Edward Gialella shared that the treatment court judge has made notes in the file that if this person should be arrested again that bail should be set.

Legislator Sarah Anker asked if a "red flag file" could be created for people who are repeat offenders. Edward Gialella reported that the courts have a universal case management system of files on cases and that it is well documented and detailed, but during COVID cases were given 2, 3, 4 months out and cases were getting administratively adjourned, resulting in cases and arrests piling up. The courts are trying to catch up and find ways to best serve cases. Legislator Sarah Anker offered that the panel is here to provide guidance and support to the court system if needed.

Steve Chassman added that he, like many others on the call, know Edward Gialella well and have worked closely with him, the court system, and the judges. He added that miracles are performed by Ed's team in the drug courts. Steve Chassman stated that as those who work with people who use drugs know, every consequence comes with opportunity.

VI. Introductory Resolutions:

Legislator Sarah Anker outlined the current introductory resolutions in the legislature related to the opioid epidemic:

1. [1990](#). Directing the Department of Information Technology and the Department of Health Services to create a website dedicated to mental health, addiction, substance misuse, prevention and recovery services. (Anker)

IR Reso 1990 has been unanimously passed in the legislature. Legislator Sarah Anker reported that the website launch deadline is set for some time in May 2021. Legislator Sarah Anker added that the website will be fluid and can be adjusted and amended as need. The url for the website has not yet been set. The website will include resources from the Suffolk County Health Department, the organizations/providers on the call, state resources, etc.

2. [1047](#). Amending Resolution No. 704-2017 to update the name and operation of the Heroin and Opiate Epidemic Advisory Panel. (Anker)

IR Reso 1047 has been laid on the table and has not been voted on yet. The name will be updated to Suffolk County Addiction Prevention and Support Advisory Panel to broaden the scope of the panel to include other addictive substance.

3. Another resolution is in the works is to get a comprehensive list of all the Suffolk County physicians and providers that can be utilized to send out mass alerts or information from the Suffolk County Health Department. The Suffolk County Medical Society currently has a list, so Legislator Sarah Anker will work with them to make the list available to the county departments.

Cari Faith Besserman reported that the Suffolk County Division of Community Mental Hygiene Services has worked with the Suffolk County Medical Society for a lot of their outreach. Legislator Sarah Anker would like the Health Department to be able to send out alerts similar to those sent out by the police like the Amber and Silver alerts.

VII. Discussion of Current Topics

1. The Panel's 2020 Final Report

Legislator Sarah Anker reminded everyone that the 2020 final report was released and can be viewed on the Suffolk County Legislature webpage. Cari Faith Besserman and Legislator Sarah Anker discussed the Suffolk County Division of Community Mental Hygiene Services' Behavioral Health Directory, which has various mental health and substance use disorder resources and services. The document is available online. Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn asked if a social media post could be made about the document so the members could share it on their social platforms. Cari Faith Besserman stated that they would work on that and reported that the updated 2021 document would be available by next week.

2. Panel Meeting Schedule for 2021

The Panel meetings for 2021 are as follows:

1. Upcoming meetings:
 - a. Friday, May 7th 2-4 PM
 - b. Friday, July 9th 2-4 PM
 - c. Friday, November 19th 2-4 PM
2. Public Hearings:

- a. Wednesday, September 22nd 5:30-7:30 PM
- b. Wednesday, October 21st 5:30-7:30 PM

3. The Panel's 2021 Initiatives

Legislator Sarah Anker read aloud the panel's 2021 initiatives and conversation occurred as follows:

1. Create a comprehensive Suffolk County addiction awareness and resource website;
2. Prioritize childhood trauma intervention;
 - a. Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn reported that she is working on legislation to work Suffolk County towards being a trauma-informed county so all departments have an understanding of trauma, the history of trauma and how to differently approach interactions.
3. Support Addiction Prevention Awareness Campaigns;
4. Monitor the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on overdose rates;
 - a. Legislator Sarah Anker recalled the panel's work in advocating for the availability and accessibility of telehealth for those in need. Deputy Presiding Officer Kara Hahn emphasized that certain age groups prefer receiving help via telecommunications and the importance of meeting those populations where they are at. Legislator Sarah Anker reported that at the previous meeting, there was a discussion about the telehealth meetings not being followed up by those utilizing them. Advocates had shared that a lack of access to technology could contribute to this. Legislator Sarah Anker added that the panel had written a letter to the state requesting that telehealth options should be included in Medicaid and Medicare receipts' coverage.
 - b. John Venza asserted that younger individuals are more likely to attend session online and find telehealth less intrusive and easier to accommodate into their lives. John Venza added that post-covid, there may be a hybrid model where people utilize both in-person and remote therapy options. He added that there is a need to be further training providers and clinicians in using telehealth to engage with clients. John Venza added that the concerns have mostly been about the high risk population who have not been as good at following up with telehealth.
 - c. Cari Faith Besserman added that at the start of the pandemic there were a lot of agencies that struggled with the switch to telehealth because they didn't have the technology, but that the executive orders included telephonic connections which allowed communication to continue. Cari Faith Besserman asserted that there has always been a challenge of getting people to treatment and that that struggle is not

unique to covid or telehealth. Cari Faith Besserman agreed with John Venza that more training in these types of services is very important.

- d. Legislator Sarah Anker asked if there is training available on the county level. Cari Faith Besserman stated that they have been doing trainings with their own staff to get and use the resources and that the Criminal Justice Addiction Work Group is looking to do one or two trainings on zoom on counseling through telehealth, which will be announced shortly. Cari Faith Besserman emphasized the point about individuals not having access to the technology and the idea of having computers or other devices available for people to utilize. Legislator Sarah Anker suggested that perhaps a donor would be able to donate some laptops or old laptops could be refurbished like they are through SeniorNet.

5. Monitor the growing vaping epidemic;
6. Support early education initiatives;
7. Monitor potential Marijuana Legislation;
8. Commence meetings of the Youth Addiction Panel;
 - a. John Venza is working with Elizabeth Alexander to get a few youth together to form the board. John Venza would like to include youth who are in recovery as well as those who aren't to get multiple perspectives.
9. Continue discussions with the MTA & LIRR regarding a quality of life task force;
 - a. Legislator Sarah Anker reported that this has been delayed due to covid.
 - b. Cari Faith Besserman added that the MTA has been cooperative and at a recent Community Coalition meeting it was discussed that the MTA did a community campaign with the LIRR along with Lindy Cares.
 - c. Guy Calla added that in addition to Lindy Cares, Babylon Cares has officially been launched. The Lindy Cares website has a 3-minute PSA available that the youth put together with Lori Novello. Guy Calla urged everyone to watch the video and that Lindy Cares is looking to expand their efforts more throughout the Town of Babylon.

4. Follow-ups from last meeting

1. Legislator Sarah Anker thanked Legislator Tom Donnelly for having some of the panel members at the last Public Safety Committee meeting. Legislator Sarah Anker extended an invitation to the panel members to present at the various committees such as the Health or the Seniors and Human Services that she is the Chair of.

2. Legislator Sarah Anker asked Dr. Kristie Golden and John Venza to keep the panel posted about any additional studies they were able to find about the effects of length of stay on treatment.
3. Legislator Sarah Anker revisited the letter the panel is working on that is being addressed to New York State Commissioner of Health Howard Zucker asking for the increased required training related to pain management for physicians and providers and reminded panel members to provide feedback and approve the letter. Legislator Sarah Anker stated that the request for training in telehealth should be included in the letter as well.

VIII. Updates from Panel Members

Legislator Sarah Anker asked Inspector Grodski if there is anything new in regards to law enforcement is seeing. Inspector Grodski stated that gun violence, shootings, and possessions of handguns have increased. Inspector Grodski added the potential downsides of legalizing marijuana and the increase it could have on black market sales of marijuana, which would likely be less expensive without the tax. Inspector Grodski added that confiscated marijuana is coming from Colorado and California through the mail.

Legislator Sarah Anker asked if there was a way to work with the postal service agencies to address this. Inspector Grodski stated that they do but that the quantity of it is high and that they are seeing fentanyl and cocaine coming through the mail as well.

Legislator Sarah Anker asked if there is a way to hold these delivery services accountable for the drugs being sent through the mail. Inspector Grodski reported that they are diligent and work in collaboration with the police with package interception and controlled deliveries, but despite the cooperation, drugs have been getting through. Inspector Grodski added that bail reform has contributed to issues of holding people accountable for selling drugs. Legislator Sarah Anker asked if there is a liaison between the District Attorney's office and the police department. Inspector Grodski reported that there is very good communication between the police department, parole, probation, the Sheriff's Office, the courts and the District Attorney's Office.

IX. Public Comment Period

There were no speakers to provide public comment at the meeting.

X. Adjournment

Legislator Sarah Anker thanked everyone for joining the meeting, reminded panel members to review the letter that will be sent out and wished everyone a good weekend.