

Tioga County Drug & Alcohol Planning Council

August 7, 2026

1:30 PM

Attendance: Josh Battin, Samantha Brion, Jenny Farrer, Cindy Grand, Ariane Kilburn, Carolyn Moyer, Rebecca Parks, Mellissa Parsons, Commissioner Marc Rice, Sara Rice, Mike Spencer, Sue Sticklin, Commissioner Sam VanLoon, Colleen Wilber

Call to Order- Cindy called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Secretary's Report- Lindsey asked the members to review the June meeting minutes. No questions, concerns or comments. A motion was made to accept the minutes as presented, Commissioner Rice seconded. Motion carried.

Business:

The Single County Authority hosted a Community Listening Session regarding the five-year Treatment Needs Assessment. The group discussed how individuals in the community connect with treatment and recovery services and identified both strengths and barriers.

Strengths Identified:

- A variety of treatment and recovery options are available.
- Short wait lists were identified as a positive factor in accessing services.
- Ancillary services are available and incorporated into treatment.
- The Discovery Tioga resource directory provides information about available resources.
- The Single County Authority (SCA) can come to outpatient providers to complete assessments for funding.
- Medical Assisted Treatment (MAT) assistance is an area that is working well within the county.
- Telehealth provides an additional access option, although technology and internet connectivity can create challenges.

The group identified several barriers that may prevent individuals from receiving services.

Barriers to Access:

- Transportation.
- Funding and insurance-related barriers.
- The additional steps required to go through the SCA for funding.
- The need to complete two assessments in some circumstances.

Several populations were identified as experiencing increased difficulty accessing services:

- Pregnant women due to stigma.
- Individuals living in the Valley area due to transportation challenges.
- Individuals needing childcare.
- Individuals who work and cannot afford to take time off.
- Individuals with probation requirements related to employment and other obligations.
- Individuals who rely on BeST transportation, which stops at 4:00 p.m.
- Individuals requiring methadone, due to limited availability.

The group also noted that EMMA transportation through BeST is not currently being utilized to its full potential.

Priority Barrier: When asked which single barrier would make the greatest difference if removed, transportation was identified as the primary concern.

The discussion then shifted to the quality of services and factors that help individuals remain engaged once connected to treatment and recovery.

Strengths of the Current System:

- Three outpatient treatment options are available.
- There has been a decline in partial hospitalization services in alignment with ASAM standards.
- Partial services are available at Bradford Recovery and Harbor.
- Recovery houses provide an important resource, although they are currently full and have waiting lists.
- Treatment Court provides accountability and helps clients remain engaged.
- Providers work effectively with probation, which was described as responsive.
- Crossroads' co-occurring services allow for stronger, individualized treatment plans and can reduce challenges associated with treating substance use and co-occurring needs separately.
- Virtual services provide another means of maintaining engagement.
- The 12-step community, including sponsors and peer support, was identified as a positive resource.

Gaps and Opportunities:

- Providers are continuing to work through ASAM alignment.
- Recovery houses are at capacity, with many individuals on waiting lists, particularly people coming from outside the county.
- The Drop-In Center is experiencing difficulty getting additional clients to utilize the service.

The group identified high-quality treatment and recovery support as:

- Individualized.
- Trauma-informed.
- Evidence-based.
- Consistent in the delivery of therapy.

The group discussed the broader impact of substance use on Tioga County and priorities for the next five years.

Current Community Impact:

- Approximately 75 children are currently in care through CYS, with substance use disorder identified as a major contributing factor.
- Trauma and stigma continue to affect individuals and families.
- The group identified a need to reduce stigma.
- Safe medication disposal was identified as an important community strategy.

Changes in Recent Years:

- The primary drug of choice has shifted from opioids toward stimulants.
- Overdose rates have been declining.

The group identified several areas for improvement:

- Reduce insurance barriers.
- Improve access to information regarding the SCA.
- Ensure priority populations are clearly identified and understood.
- Reduce barriers related to co-pays.
- Improve transportation options for veterans.
- Increase school-based services.

Services, Partnerships, and Approaches to Explore:

The group suggested:

- Making access to OSF easier.
- Simplifying the process and reducing confusion surrounding the approval process and associated administrative requirements.
- Providing treatment based on the individual's current drug of choice.
- Strengthening the behavioral health workforce.
- Exploring opportunities through higher education to support workforce development.

During the closing discussion, participants identified the legal system as another important area affecting individuals with substance use disorders.

Specific concerns included:

- Challenges associated with probation.
- Difficulties within the drug court/legal system.
- The Harbor PWRC grant.
- Delays for individuals who remain incarcerated while waiting for sentencing.

The group noted that these delays can have a significant impact on individuals attempting to move forward with treatment and recovery.

When asked what single change could have the greatest positive impact on individuals and families affected by substance use in Tioga County, the group identified communication and public information as a key priority.

Particular emphasis was placed on:

- Making information about available services easier for the public to access and understand.
- Ensuring individuals without insurance know what resources and options are available.
- Developing a dual family navigator for substance use disorder and mental health services, potentially through BHARP.

Lindsey made a motion to close the meeting at 2:52 p.m. Cindy seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Roger Bunn

Roger Bunn
Secretary