

**Alliance Lethal Means Subcommittee Meeting**  
**Minutes – February 12, 2025**                      **1:00pm – 2:15pm**

**Attendees – Members:** Co-Chair Kelie McWilliams, Co-Chair Pam Pearce, Casey Curry, Mike James

**Attendees – Staff:** Jenn Fraga

**Meeting Purpose**

[VIEW RECORDING - 58 mins \(No highlights\)](#)

**Meeting Purpose**

Discuss and plan focus group and survey development for youth suicide prevention research, with a specific focus on 18-24 year olds in Oregon.

**Key Takeaways**

- Plan to conduct an initial survey via text message to 18-24 year olds, followed by targeted focus groups based on survey responses
- Aiming for 750-2,000 survey responses, with a target of 15-20 participants per focus group
- Budget constraints of approximately \$10,000 through June require careful planning of incentives and survey/focus group structure
- Survey to cover demographics, risk factors, access to care, substance use, firearms access, and other relevant topics
- Team will meet again on February 26th at 12pm to finalize survey questions for March distribution
- Considering innovative approaches like phone banking and involving other subcommittees to maximize response rates and data collection

**Survey and Focus Group Planning**

- Idea of an initial survey to be sent via text message to approximately 25,000 young adults ages 18-24
  - Targeting 3-5% response rate minimum, with potential for up to 50% based on youth engagement with mobile devices
  - Survey to cover demographics, risk factors, access to care, substance use, firearms access, mental health resources, and future outlook

- Focus groups to be planned based on survey responses, targeting specific issues identified in the initial data
- Considering raffle-style incentives (e.g. \$200-500 gift cards) vs. smaller individual payments (\$10 for initial survey, \$25 for focus group, \$15 for post-survey)
- Need to balance survey length and depth with likelihood of completion to ensure quality data
- Discussed potential for 14-17 year old focus groups in addition to 18-24 year olds
- Considered involving recovery high schools for additional perspectives

### **Budget and Logistics**

- Approximately \$10,000 total budget through June, need to plan for biennium
- Estimated \$400-500 for initial text message distribution to 25,000 individuals
- Estimated \$5,000-6,000 for survey incentives if paying per response
- Remaining funds allocated for focus group incentives, data analysis, and consulting
- Discussed potential for using budget as leverage to request additional funding from OHA based on response rates and data quality

### **Data Collection Strategy**

- Plan to use branching survey logic to tailor questions based on responses, reducing survey fatigue
- Potential follow-up with phone banking for incomplete surveys to increase response rates
- Intention to share data with other Alliance subcommittees to maximize utility of collected information
- Discussed using results to advocate for more funding and research from OHA
- Considered using JotForm platform for survey distribution due to its branching logic capabilities

### **Youth Mental Health Concerns**

- Physician reported potential doubling of suicide rate this year if current trends continue
- Need to assess youth hope, access to resources, future plans, and peer attitudes towards mental health
- Particular interest in rural youth experiences and challenges, given that 70% of Oregon is rural
- Discussed recent increases in veteran suicide rates and potential parallels to youth populations

- Interest in understanding impact of current events and societal changes on youth mental health

### **Potential Policy Recommendations**

- Discussed possibility of recommending creation of a statewide mental health network for Medicaid recipients
- Considered advocating for Medicaid waivers to cover substance use and addiction treatment more comprehensively
- Interest in expanding approved treatments that don't require prior authorization to reduce barriers to care

### **Next Steps**

- Kelly to draft initial survey questions based on discussion points
- Team to meet February 26th at 12pm to review and finalize survey questions
- Aim to distribute survey in March to maximize response before end of fiscal year
- Plan follow-up focus groups based on survey results and identified areas of concern
- Consider involving other subcommittees in phone banking follow-ups to increase engagement
- Explore potential for using data to advocate for increased funding and research from OHA
- Investigate logistics of involving recovery high schools in focus groups or survey distribution

### **Action Items**

- Draft initial survey questions for 18-24 yr olds. Include demographics, risk factors, resource access, substance use, firearms. Use JotForm for conditional questions. - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)
- Send substance use stats for 18-25 & 12-17 age groups in Oregon to Kelie for survey question development. - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)
- Email Megan to inquire about timing of next Student Wellness Survey. Report back to group. - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)
- Schedule mtg for 2/26 @ 12pm. Send invite to Kelie, Casey, Pam. Topic: Finalize survey questions. - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)