

DuPage ROSC Council Meeting

November 13th, 2024

0:00-22:00

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton starts this month's meeting by welcoming everyone and introducing himself. Jarrett asks everyone to put their name and contact information in the chat. Jarrett pointed out that this month marks the 3rd anniversary of the very first DuPage ROSC Council meeting, which took place in November of 2021. Jarrett said that he was surprised that over 70 people showed up for that very first meeting, and told the story of how the tech setup completely fell apart, and he was forced to run around the halls of Serenity House looking for someone that could help him fix the WiFi. Jarrett mentioned a former client of Serenity House, Nick Platania, who was there at the meeting and helped him fix the tech issues by running the rest of the meeting off of a hotspot on Nick's phone. Two days later, Nick passed away from an overdose. Jarrett asked if everyone could please join him in a moment of silence to honor Nick, and all the other friends and family members that we have lost to overdose. Jarrett then gave a brief overview of what a ROSC is and what DuPage ROSC specifically does, and then went into the agenda for the meeting:

Meeting Agenda:

1. Meeting Open - Jarrett Burton
2. Agenda/Preview of upcoming meetings/trainings
3. DuPage RCO updates: Danielle Heffernan
4. What's App referral group and resource guide update: Blake Worman
5. Serenity House CORS update: Danny Sourbis
6. Lisa DeLaura, JUST Of DuPage
7. Break Out Rooms: Strengths and Gaps, Community Survey
8. Organizational updates

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton first promoted the upcoming DuPage ROSC Presentation Series meeting on Eating Disorders by Don Mitckess, Director of Clinical Strategy at Relief Mental Health. Eating Disorders are a challenge that often intersects with substance use and other mental health challenges, so this will be a good primer on the topic.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton next promoted the DuPage ROSC Holiday Party taking place on Wednesday, December 11th at 3pm, at Serenity House Counseling Services in Addison. The holiday party will take place during the usual ROSC Council meeting time, but there will be a shorter check-in meeting for the folks who can only attend on Zoom. There will be food, prizes, games and fellowshiping and the event is open to the public.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then promoted the Winter Coat Drive for the People's Resource Center, which will continue to take donations through the end of December. Jarrett also promoted the Soup + Games event happening that weekend to benefit the Serenity House Alumni Fund.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton next promoted a couple of meetings happening regularly at Serenity House: the Connection Through Loss and Friends and Family SMART Recovery meetings that take place weekly

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then introduced **CORS grant coordinator Danny Sourbis** to promote some of the meetings taking place through that program: a virtual SMART Recovery, virtual Refuge Recovery meeting, a hybrid recovery meeting for Veterans. Danny explained some more about the CORS grant, and how to connect with him to discuss setting up peer support for their organizations. Danny speaks about a brief overview of CORS: CORS stands for Community Outreach and Recovery Support. The priority population are those who are unhoused, at risk of being unhoused, have opioid or substance use disorders, or other mental health challenges that go along with that are those that are at risk for medical complications, incarceration and overdose.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton then introduced **DuPage RCO Coordinator Danielle Heffernan** to promote some of the meetings the RCO handle. Firstly, the RCO has the monthly virtual Narcan training that takes place the third Thursday of every month at 12:30pm, as well as the weekly SMART Recovery meeting that she facilitates at Stonybrook Center in Wheaton. Danielle also gave a special shout out to Trinity Hamilton from Serene Sanctuary Yoga Studio in Naperville for collecting yoga mats and supplies for donation to Serenity House and the RCO. Trinity will be leading a recovery yoga session at Serenity House on January 11th from 3p-5p, which is open to the public.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton now introduces the new **ROSC What's App Referral Hub Coordinator, Blake Worman**. Blake gave a rundown of the WhatsApp Referral Hub, and some of the new additions this month. Blake let us know that the Hub is now up to almost 130 members, with new members from the following organizations: DuPage Health Department,

NIRCO, Kankakee County courts, Loaves and Fishes, People's Resource Center, and Gateway Foundation. This month we were able to provide 44 referrals, including: inpatient womens programs, PHP, IOP, virtual IOP, detoxes, domestic violence support groups, legal aid, sober living and emergency shelter for someone with a service animal. Blake revealed this month's ROSC Referral Hub winner John Skocz from Central DuPage Hospital, who provided nine referrals this month. Blake also gave an overview of the ROSC Resource Guide he's helped create, and how to access that guide.

22:00-36:00

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton now introduces Lisa DeLaura, LCSW, CADAC, and Addiction Program Manager at JUST of DuPage. Jarrett starts by saying he feels fortunate when he gets the chance to introduce people who he has known from the beginning of his own recovery journey, and feels blessed to be able to call them his peers now. He has known Lisa from back when she was a counselor at the Men's Halfway House program at Serenity House, and she is now running programming for addictions at JUST, which provides classes and other services for folks incarcerated in DuPage County jail. Jarrett talks about how when the ROSC first started, they identified justice-involved individuals as a population that could use some more support, which led them to facilitating multiple classes inside the jail with the help of Lisa and JUST. He mentions that he and the other members who have done work inside the jails have commented how it's been some of the most gratifying work they've done in the field.

Lisa tells us that JUST has been doing work inside the jail for almost 35 years, and originally started inside Will County jail. They offer: classes, social services, vocational training, re-entry help, and addiction and mental health programs. Lisa joined JUST five years ago after Mike Berry had taken over as Executive Director, and JUST started with around 20 classes, mostly religious, and some 12 step meetings. Since then they have grown their offerings to around 75 classes a week, with sessions happening in three different time slots throughout the day.

Lisa was very proud of the vocational trainings they offer, which she mentions are almost unheard of in a lot of county jails. She mentions that between 80-90% of the clients they work with enter the jail with some kind of substance use or mental health challenge. They can house up to 900 people, but usually only hold between 500 and 600 people, 90% male and 10% female.

In the past couple of years they have developed a therapeutic community inside, which they call the Re-Entry Pod, where individuals can go to receive extra counseling services, and extra support. They have transformed that entire unit to be more therapeutic, including the furniture, etc. There is also a Vocational Pod where individuals can get work training that will help them gain skills that can assist in finding jobs when they leave.

Lisa discusses the types of recovery meetings that are offered through JUST, including different types of 12-step meetings, SMART Recovery, and Celebrate Recovery. She also mentions how great it's been to have ROSC members and peer support workers to lead some of these classes and meetings, as well as to make connections with individuals while they're still inside the jail,

so it gives them another person they can reach out to if they need it. She also talks about some of the other programs that have been supportive: Act Like Men out of Elgin, NAMI, Naomi's House, etc.

Lisa talks about some of the vocational programs that are available through JUST, including: horticulture, welding, custodial, painting, and more. She says that depending on the program, individuals can also earn college credits.

Lisa mentions that they are working on providing DUI classes inside so folks can start the process of getting their drivers licenses back, which can be a major barrier for people upon re-entry.

Lisa also jokes that when she started working at the jail, she would tell people and they would act surprised or think that it was a dangerous work environment for her to be in and she says that it couldn't be further from the truth—it's a safe, warm work environment that has been created at JUST.

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton asks Lisa about recidivism, and if there's anything she's seen that can best help break that cycle. Lisa states that it takes engagement in classes and recovery programming, which can give them some hope that things can change. The individuals inside often identify as addicts or criminals, so it takes some work to change that at a deeper, subconscious level. Lisa says that not one modality works for every person, so they offer different pathways like CBT, DBT, mindfulness, and more to find out what works best for them. Another big part is "warm handoffs" so when they leave the jail they aren't completely lost and have access to re-entry resources, as well as peer support.

36:00-52:00

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton opens the discussion about the breakout rooms. Jarrett says that the ROSC is always trying to get feedback about the strengths and needs of the recovery community, and so it's important to have these discussions regularly. The questions posed to the breakout groups are:

1. What are the main strengths of the recovery community in DuPage County?
2. What do you see as the gaps in services? What are the main barriers to entry? Have these gaps improved since the formation of DuPage ROSC?
3. What sectors do you think are underrepresented at ROSC? Who should have a seat at the table that doesn't have one currently?
4. How would you describe the public perception of, and attitude towards, recovery in DuPage County? Have the stigmas around substance use challenges improved?
5. Do you feel the stigmas attached to harm reduction have improved in DuPage?

6. If you had a magic wand, and could improve any and all aspects of recovery without regard for cost or logistics, what would you improve?
7. What type of data or information would you like to see collected through our upcoming community survey? What types of questions do we need to be asking?
8. Is there anything that DuPage ROSC can do to improve overall as a program?

52:00-57:00

ROSC Coordinator Jarrett Burton welcomes everyone back from the breakout sessions and asks for some volunteers to report on what was discussed in the groups. Bruce Sewick states that his group touched on the anxiety in many communities about how the election will affect them, especially undocumented people and the LGBTQIA++. He also talked about the need for more advocacy related to harm reduction, especially the Narcan boxes and vending machines. Another attendee mentioned the need for more specialized services for folks living with intellectual and developmental challenges, and also mentioned language as a major barrier. Mike Wood mentioned folks living on the autism spectrum, but also the need for residential care and housing for people primarily with a mental health challenge. Jarrett says that the mental health topic came up in their group as well, and Rory Greene said that some of the places that used to service primarily mental health have closed down and that a lot of those people aren't able to access the services anymore.

57:46-End

Other Featuring Events:

Jarrett promotes the upcoming trainings from **Circle of Care**, which specifically deals with grief and loss for children and adolescents who have lost a caregiver to substance use.

The **DuPage Health Department and Impact DuPage** are hosting a learning collaborative on December 5th, which is a virtual session on substance use treatment options in DuPage County.

The **Spiritual Care Network** has their monthly meeting on November 21st, and that group tries to bridge the gaps between spirituality and treatment.

John Skocz reports that they had a Narcan wall box installed at their BHS building at Central DuPage Hospital, and they also have started offering peer support services at Delnor Hospital in Geneva

Jarrett reminds everyone that the next meeting of the DuPage ROSC Council is on Wednesday, December 11th from 3-6pm, and it is the ROSC Holiday Party.