



## SEOW Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Friday, February 19, 2021

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Time	Friday November 13, 2020; 1:00 – 3:00 pm
Location	Zoom Webinar
Address	-
51 Attendees	

### Meeting Minutes

- 1:00pm-1:10pm Welcome and Introductions
- 1:10pm-1:40pm Presentation on the Hawaii - High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) and the Overdose Response Strategy (ORS) by Rico Witt, Drug Intelligence Officer (HIDTA)
  - ORS - part of HIDTA: treatment and prevention arm
    - Most funds had gone to enforcement
    - Originally started as heroin response, added opioids, and as of 2019, includes methamphetamines
    - Partnered with CDC to reduce overdoses
    - Hawaii does not have public health analyst, so Rico shares the data
    - Projects and provides grants to these types of projects
      - Welcome to contact him for more information
  - Drug Related Death Statistics as part of HIDTA for Hawaii
    - 265 drug related deaths in the state
      - 197 were methamphetamine related - biggest issue in Hawaii
    - Data begins in 2016
    - In (January-September 1) 2020, 11,798 deaths occurred from all causes
      - Drug related are from the entire year
      - Most on Oahu, so more deaths but more comparable death rates
      - 26 deaths from fentanyl -rising, but of these, 5 exclusively fentanyl toxicology screenings
        - Previous years only saw 1-2
        - 19 had poly drug deaths

- Full report should be ready by next week. This presentation is just the raw numbers
  - Most drug related deaths are deemed as accidental
    - Followed far behind by suicide, indeterminate, and homicide (3 total)
  - By gender, much more male than female drug related causes
- 1:40pm-1:50pm      Presentation Q&A
  - Are the drug-related deaths thru December or September?
    - They are for the whole year, through December
  - Are you tracking cannabis-related deaths? Are you including traffic-related deaths?
    - From the drug tox screens, quite a few have THC, but THC is not what kills people. It is not a direct cause of death (except for one swimmer that swam with significant levels of THC in their system in Maui a few years ago)
  - Is buprenorphine being tracked?
    - Not specifically. Part of the tox screens being run. Some had a minor amount, but that is not reported
      - Gary: It is a very mild form of opioids, so how much drug related deaths is questionable
      - Rico: Used for maintenance, not to get high or overdose
  - Is there any data on traffic-related deaths?
    - No, not in data from medical examiners
  - Is Hawaii HIDTA planning to set up an overdose Fatality Review Team like other states?
    - Teams going out when there is an overdose, working on this.
  - Do you have these drug deaths sub-divided by people who were incarcerated at least once?
    - None whatsoever. No PII. Can ask if possible to separate. Contact Rico to contact them

- Can you opine on whether you think the fentanyl-related deaths are from prescribed substances, or mostly obtained illicitly?
  - Coroner investigator found 7% (very high), found the syringe which contained a high level of fentanyl. Points to illicitly obtained.
  - Most fentanyl deaths are poly, so spiked into other drugs (cocaine, heroin, counterfeit oxycodone tablets). Educated guess says mostly from illicitly obtained fentanyl
- Why is so much money being spent on opioids vs meth since meth has been here since at least the 80's?
  - Gary testified to Congress about meth being in Hawaii since '83
  - Working as a mainland federal agent for 20 years, found it hard to communicate with DC about methamphetamine. Believes that fake pills and higher income youths having increasing opioid issues ( large east coast problem). ORS is now allowing some to go to methamphetamines
    - Methamphetamine has always overwhelmed the west coast
- What's the prevalence of drug-related deaths in teenagers?
  - Data by age group will be available in the overall report
  - Over the years, the median age is 40-50
- Do you think that methamphetamine addictions and deaths are derived at all from prior opioid prescriptions as many suggest is true for drug related issues on the mainland?
  - From Dr. Busch, and Mark from ER, have seen shifts in ER cases with chronic opioid users now dealing with methamphetamines. They are guessing this is mostly due to heroin being much more expensive than meth.
  - Prices increased during pandemic, but now going back down
    - People substitute meth for heroin when unobtainable
- Do drug deaths tend to correlate with drug trafficking routes?
  - Don't see that as much in Hawaii

- Do not see correlation with deaths and trafficking routes
- What prevention strategies are you implementing to prevent drug overdose for teenagers?
  - Don't implement but provide funding
  - Gary and Wen have some prevention PSAs that will be on TV, Heather as well
- Tammie Smith: Thank you Hawaii HIDTA your agency is an important partner and we appreciate you sharing the data and look forward to your report. Can you tell us a little about your PSA projects currently running?
  - Gary: Partnered with Tammie for 20 years, she has done much for the opioid initiative. Everyone wants some connection with children. Worried that related to depression and hard times. Want to use people from Hawaii to give a local message. Simple message that we are all related.
    - The CARE contact allows people to go to when they are experiencing drug problems. Want an avenue for help from people who are in the communities and understand. Working with local producers to create recorded content with local actors.
- Have we mapped out substance use (say meth vs opioids) by local geography to determine which communities are most impacted?
  - Not really. We have small population centers, so rural versus urban is only Oahu. Maybe one would think more in Hilo or Kona on Big Island.
- Based on what you know, what do you think should be the priorities related to meth in HI (e.g., prevention, treatment, etc.)?
  - Used to work at the FBI academy and worked with Colombian national police. They lose 1-2 officers every week from assassination and street side murders. They know where all the cocaine labs are and who is involved. Could shut down production of cocaine in one month, but until the US can shut down their demand, then that would not stop the problem

- Regularly grab large quantities of drugs from the streets, but that shows how much drugs are coming into the community
  - Enforcement is necessary but prevention and treatment is the most effective use of resources
  - Need to find a way to present dangers rather than scare tactics
- Do you have this data based on ethnicity?
  - No. Do not know anyone's ethnicities
- 1:50pm-2:00pm      Break
- 2:00pm-2:20pm      Update on the SEOW: 2019 Profile launch, webpage, and SEOW charter by Connie Emory and Bobby Do, UH Epidemiology Team (SEOW core team)
  - SEOW now has a publicly available website: <http://go.hawaii.edu/GrJ>
    - Resources: recently completed projects
      - 2019 Epidemiologic Profile, can view or download
        - Created with an automated and reproducible process, using R statistical software
        - 31 tables of drug and alcohol indicators
        - Appendices include county factsheets and infographics
        - Separately, there is an excel document with all of the data
      - Rapid Literature Reviews: report and infographic for each
        - COVID-19 impacts on behavioral health
        - Underage drinking and pregnancy
    - 2021 Quarterly Meeting Lineup
      - Information and registration links for upcoming meetings
    - Previous Quarterly Meetings
      - Information for each prior meeting, including meeting minutes , slides, and recordings within one week of the meeting, as long as presenters have provided consent and shared their slides
    - UH Epi Team and Current Members listed

- Anyone that is interested in becoming a member, email [phac+uhseow@hawaii.edu](mailto:phac+uhseow@hawaii.edu)
- Future products
  - 2020 Epidemiologic Profile: will expand on the tables to include more substance use indicators and mental health - aiming for May release
  - Additional rapid literature reviews
  - Social Media
- SEOW Charter
  - Will be added to the webpage soon
  - Membership responsibilities (same as previous meetings)
    - Attend quarterly meetings
    - Provide data related expertise
    - Share their organization's substance use data
    - Introduce colleagues who would be a good fit
- 2:20pm-2:50pm      2020 National Drug and Alcohol IQ Challenge
- 2:50pm-3:00pm      Closing
  - Tentative schedule for 2021
    - Next SEOW Meeting (Tentative) Friday, May 28, 2021 from 1:00pm – 3:00pm, Location: Zoom

● **SEOW Quarterly Meeting – 2021 Tentative Schedule**

- Q1 – February 19, 2021 (Friday, 1pm-3pm)
  - Rico Witt (HIDTA)
- Q2 – May 28, 2021 (Friday, 1pm-3pm)
  - 1st speaker - To be invited
  - 2nd speaker - To be invited
- Q3 – August 19, 2021 (Thursday, 1pm-3pm)
  - 1st speaker - Heather Lusk (HHHRC)
  - 2nd speaker - To be invited
- Q4 – November 5, 2021 (Friday, 1pm-3pm)
  - 1st speaker - To be invited
  - 2nd speaker - To be invited

