



Orange County Opioid Advisory Committee and Settlements Funds
Friday, May 8, 2026
9:00am-10:30am
BCC Chambers 201 S. Rosalind Ave. Orlando FL 32801



In Attendance: Name – Organization

Panel:

Dr. Josef Thundiyl - Orlando Health
Lt. Shane DeJarnett - Orange County Sheriff's Office
Paul Maxwell – Central FL HIDTA
Dr. Robert Karch – FL Dept of Health in OC
Abraham Morris- City of Orlando
Maria Bledsoe – Central Florida Cares

Presenters:

Dr. Thomas Hall, Director - OC Drug-Free Office
Ronique Bain - FL Dept of Health in OC
Chief, Anthony D. Phillips, Sr. – OC Fire Rescue Department
Paul Maxwell - Central FL HIDTA
Lt. Shane DeJarnett - OC Sheriff's Office
Michelle Dodson – AdventHealth South
Jaime Bridges - Orlando Health
Cheryl Bello – STEPS
Shayni Sloan – Recovery Connections of Central FL
Dr. Connie Briscoe – Rollins College
Abraham Morris – City of Orlando

Welcome & Introductions: Dr. Josef Thundiyl, MD.

Meeting Summary

There was no public comment at the meeting, and the Committee approved the drafted minutes.

The Committee received updates regarding opioid surveillance trends, overdose response activities, law enforcement intelligence, opioid settlement-funded initiatives, and community-based prevention efforts. Presenters reported continued decreases in opioid-related emergency department visits, overdose incidents, and overdose deaths throughout Orange County while emphasizing the importance of maintaining prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction efforts. The Committee also reviewed outcomes from opioid settlement-funded programs and heard funding presentations from Rollins College and the City of Orlando.

Public Safety and Public Health Surveillance

Ronique Bain, MPH - The Florida Department of Health in Orange County

The Florida Department of Health presented first-quarter 2026 opioid surveillance data for Orange County. Staff reported continued declines in opioid-related emergency department and urgent care visits compared to previous years. Males remained the predominant population seeking care, and adults ages 55–74 represented the largest age cohort during the reporting period. Presenters reviewed demographic trends by sex, ethnicity, race, age, facility utilization, and geographic distribution. All-drug mortality trends were also reviewed and continued to show a downward trajectory.

Chief Anthony D. Phillips Sr. - Orange County Fire Rescue Department

Orange County Fire Rescue presented overdose response data for the period January 2025 through May 2026. Staff reported continued declines in suspected overdoses and naloxone administrations compared to previous years. Data was reviewed regarding overdose incidents by day and time, naloxone administration routes, demographic trends, and geographic hotspot locations. Presenters noted that overdose activity remains concentrated in historically impacted areas of the county and that hotspot locations remained generally consistent with prior reporting periods.

Paul E. Maxwell, Jr. - Central Florida HIDTA

The Central Florida High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Program presented regional drug intelligence information and first-quarter 2026 seizure data. HIDTA reported fentanyl remains the primary drug threat in Central Florida, followed by methamphetamine and cocaine. During the first quarter of 2026, participating agencies seized approximately 34 kilograms of fentanyl, 64,018 fentanyl pills, 77 kilograms of methamphetamine, and 425 kilograms of cocaine. Presenters also discussed emerging synthetic drug threats, including cychlorphine and phenazolam, which may present future overdose and detection challenges.

Lt. Shane DeJarnett - Orange County Sheriff's Office

The Orange County Sheriff's Office provided an update regarding overdose trends and enforcement activities. Staff reported continued reductions in overdose deaths and overdose incidents compared to previous years, including a 28% decrease in countywide overdose deaths during the reporting period. Recent enforcement efforts resulted in seizures of approximately 4.5 kilograms of fentanyl, 15 pounds of methamphetamine, and 12 kilograms of cocaine. Discussion focused on trafficking patterns, interdiction efforts, naloxone deployment, and the continued availability of illicit substances within the region.

Opioid Settlement Fund Activities

Dr. Thomas Hall provided an overview of the County's Better Access to Treatment (BAT) initiative and opioid settlement-funded strategy. Presentations highlighted the continued expansion of medication-assisted treatment, behavioral health services, peer recovery support, housing assistance, and intensive case management. Providers discussed ongoing collaboration to improve treatment access, support justice-involved individuals and other high-risk populations, reduce barriers to care, and strengthen long-term recovery outcomes throughout Orange County. Dr. Hall also provided updates regarding East Orange County service expansion, transitional housing initiatives, Transformation Village, and development of the Living Room model.

Michelle Dodson, LCSW - AdventHealth

AdventHealth reported continued implementation of hospital-based and community-based services through the Better Access to Treatment initiative, including medication-assisted treatment, behavioral health services, community navigation support, and wraparound recovery services.

Emergency Department Outcomes:

- 64 opioid-related emergency department encounters.
- 29 opioid-related encounters provided education and offered buprenorphine.
- 24 opioid-related encounters were induced on buprenorphine in the emergency department.

Inpatient Outcomes:

- 59 opioid-related inpatient encounters were initiated on buprenorphine.
- 409 opioid-related inpatient encounters were referred to medication-assisted treatment services.
- 59 opioid-related inpatient encounters were referred to Community Navigators.

Community Outcomes:

- 58 enrolled clients served.

- 34 clients enrolled in MAT services.
- 21 clients enrolled in behavioral health services.
- 43 clients enrolled in wraparound support services.

Client engagement included:

- 11 clients active 0–29 days.
- 3 clients active 30–59 days.
- 6 clients are active for 60–89 days.
- 33 clients active 90+ days.

Jaime Bridges, LCSW – Orlando Health

Orlando Health reported continued expansion of medication-assisted treatment, peer recovery support, behavioral health services, and community navigation through the Better Access to Treatment initiative. Staff highlighted ongoing collaboration among healthcare, treatment, and recovery providers to improve treatment engagement and long-term recovery outcomes.

Emergency Department Outcomes:

- 111 opioid-related emergency department encounters.
- 111 opioid-related encounters provided education and were offered buprenorphine.
- 65 opioid-related encounters treated with buprenorphine in the emergency department.

Inpatient Outcomes:

- 20 opioid-related inpatient encounters were initiated on buprenorphine.
- 98 opioid-related inpatient encounters were referred to medication-assisted treatment services.
- 18 opioid-related inpatient encounters were referred to Community Navigators.

Community Outcomes:

- 68 enrolled clients served.
- 35 clients enrolled in MAT services.
- 26 clients enrolled in behavioral health services.
- 39 clients enrolled in wraparound support services.

Client engagement included:

- 29 clients active 0–29 days.
- 13 clients are active for 30–59 days.
- 8 clients are active for 60–89 days.
- 18 clients active 90+ days.

Cheryl Bello - STEPS

STEPS reported serving 176 clients through medication-assisted treatment and case management services. Staff highlighted expansion of behavioral health services, community outreach activities, housing initiatives, East Orange County services, Transformation Village activities, and implementation of the Living Room model.

MAT participation included:

- 24 clients active 0–29 days.
- 23 clients are active 30–59 days.
- 19 clients are active for 60–89 days.
- 110 clients active 90+ days.

Case management services included:

- 176 referrals to case management.
- 118 clients were seen once during the quarter.
- 54 clients were seen twice during the quarter.
- 19 clients were seen three or more times during the quarter.

Orange County Medical Clinic Behavioral Health Services reported:

- 57 new behavioral health referrals.
- 46 clients were seen once during the quarter.
- 18 clients were seen twice during the quarter.
- 9 clients seen three or more times during the quarter.

Mobile Unit Outcomes:

- 60 HIV tests conducted.
- 20 outreach events attended.
- 18 recurring community outreach events.
- 2 Better Access to Treatment outreach days.

Shayni Sloan – *Recovery Connections of Central FL*

Recovery Connections reported receiving 2,375 helpline calls from Orange County residents and serving 514 unduplicated individuals during the reporting period. Staff highlighted continued peer recovery support services, transportation assistance, and coordination with treatment providers throughout Orange County.

Program outcomes included:

- 60 referrals to Better Access to Treatment providers.
- 6 referrals to MAT services.
- 8 referrals to behavioral health services.

Youth Substance Use Prevention Campaign – Funding Proposals

Dr. Connie Briscoe - *Rollins College* -Find Your Bearing Initiative

Dr. Connie Briscoe presented the Find Your Bearing initiative, a prevention-focused program designed to support student well-being through resilience-building, substance misuse prevention, mental health awareness, and early intervention strategies. The proposal would establish a campus-wide prevention framework utilizing education campaigns, resilience programming, brief interventions, and coordination

outreach efforts targeting students at increased risk for substance misuse and mental health challenges—**Total Proposed Budget:** \$74,701.

Abraham Morris – *City of Orlando – Bubble Youth Pilot Program*

Children, Youth, and Families Division staff presented the Bubble Youth Pilot Program, a prevention and early intervention initiative designed for middle school students identified as being at risk for substance use, behavioral concerns, and negative peer influences. The proposed program would utilize mentorship, social-emotional learning, family engagement, and individualized support services to strengthen protective factors and promote positive youth development before higher-risk behaviors emerge.

Committee Discussion and Adjournment

Committee members discussed both funding proposals and agreed to continue reviewing the requests before making funding recommendations at a future meeting. Staff indicated that a follow-up meeting should be scheduled before the next quarterly committee meeting to evaluate the proposals and funding requests further. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m. The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for August 28, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

Addendum

City of Orlando and Rollins College Proposals were reviewed on June 9, 2026. The Committee voted to approve the City of Orlando proposal. The Committee voted to decline approval for the Rollins College proposal.

Minutes Prepared By

- Janet Rivera - 5/22/2026
- Approved 8/28/2026