



COLORADO
Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Behavioral Health Work Group

Tuesday, January 27: 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Virtual on Zoom

Meeting Attendance

Working Group Members:

Clinton Wilson
JC Carrica
Richard Harland
Liz Thomas
Chad Reznicek
Councilman Mike Olguin
Jacob Walter
Leova Mascarenas
Dymond Ruybal

CDA Support Staff:

Robert Sakata
Rosie Skovron
Sonia Jacquez
Maria-Elisa (Interpreter)


External Community Members

Tami Valentine
Andrew Jarvies
Kirsten Wulfsberg

Meeting Minutes

Meeting commenced at 1:01pm

Introduction/Overview (Clinton Wilson)

- Introduce Spanish language interpreter for explanation of translation services
- General Public participation welcome via Q&A function or written comment via email anytime
- Member Introductions:
 - New appointees:
 - Leova Mascarenas, San Luis Valley Behavioral Health
-  Ag Behavioral Health Work Group December 16th Meeting Minutes
 - **Action: December Meeting Minutes approved.**

Hope in the Valley (Tami Valentine & Andrew Jarvies)

Trauma-informed treatment in Alamosa, offering a full continuum of care: detox, residential, outpatient, telehealth. Care designed for rural schedules and distances.

Shared data from Southern Colorado: suicide rates from Alamosa, Conejos, Rio Grande are high above the state average. Higher rates of methamphetamine involved overdose deaths, higher stimulant and alcohol use, etc. Hope in the Valley focuses on the impact on families as well as individuals, treatment supports family stability and safety.

A focus has been placed on meeting the needs of migrant and seasonal workers through bilingual therapists and meeting workers where they are physically.

What has worked: early screening and intervention, local and trusted rural-responsive providers, integrated mental health and substance use treatment, and reduced stigma through community partnerships. Created a Rural Recovery Scholarship Fund to help individuals and families afford treatment, support ag workers and migrant families, bridge gaps when insurance or finances prevent care. Looking to local businesses, individuals, and organizations for fundraising. Hosting a [symposium on March 27th](#) in Monte Vista at Ski Hi with breakout sessions related to mental health and substance use.

How can ag leaders help? Support awareness and reduce stigma, partner with local providers, advocate for accessible services, invest in scholarship and community solutions.

Are food and nutrition being integrated into recovery efforts? (Public Question) Tami Valentine answered that yes, the medical director created an evidence-based menu for patients. Her bachelor's was in food and nutrition so this was a focus. Order meat through a local purveyor!

Lethal Means Study (Kirsten Wulfsberg & Maya Haasz)

Firearms Injury Prevention Initiative at CU Anschutz

Dr Maya Haasz is studying youth who have had access to firearms, up to 19 years of age. [Share this flyer wherever possible!](#) The survey is over Zoom and offers \$40 of compensation.

Studies have been largely in urban areas so we want this study to encompass rural youth as well and use language that people respond to from ag communities.

Chad Reznicek suggested reaching out to probation officers and division of youth services. However, acute illness is a disqualifying factor. Must be a few months from a suicidal crisis. Hoping to lift current restrictions on youth involved in the justice system. **Clinton Wilson** suggested 4H and FFA.

Big Picture Annual Planning (Clinton Wilson)

In reference to the 2026 Goals outlined in the [Annual Legislative Report](#), what does this group need to do to make the goals happen?

- Work to identify Spanish regional COMET trainers
- Look out for funding opportunities. Mike Olguin has connections to legislators and also a large grant contracting office that can keep an eye out for funding opportunities.
- Nominate a lead for the policy sub-committee. Recommendations from the group were made for: JC Carrica, Wendy Buxton-Andrade, Tim Miller.
- Outstanding questions to address to meet our goals included:
 - How do we make sure that each sub-committee has representation from the ag community?
 - Can we expand participation in the sub-committees? Perhaps to community members like youth 4H leaders and FFA leaders?

How many people do you need to be interested in getting trained in COMET to do the training? Is it in person or is there also a virtual option? (Public Question) **Clinton Wilson** answered that as small of a group of 6 would suffice and virtual training are available. Clinton can connect anyone to COMET folks to find available training.

CO Dept of Ag Updates (Rosie Skovron)

Reminder that new attendance expectations are in effect. Please assign a proxy to attend the meeting in your place if you are unable to attend!

Community Updates (everyone)

- Colorado and Wyoming Young Farmers and Ranchers leadership conference, **Chad Reznicek** is hosting a breakout session, next week.
- Shauna Brown, an agriculture teacher in Holyoke coordinated a Legacy showing on January 24th.
- Legacy screening at Colorado Water Congress and a panel discussion featuring Chad, Kirsten, Jacob, and Tony!
- Agribility health team winter workshops sharing info for people with disabilities to stay in agriculture, Steamboat (4th) & Holyoke (9th).
- Southern Rocky Mountain Ag Conference
- Mental Health Colorado, suicide prevention day on March 19th
- Land Logic virtual trainings for behavioral health providers (email **Liz Thomas** or **Chad Reznicek** for free code to take training)

Meeting adjourned at 2:30pm