

BRADD: A regional response to the Opioid Crisis

Background (Where we started)

In January 2023 a group of four regional stakeholders began meeting to discuss the newly formed Kentucky Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission and the regional impact these funds could have in Southcentral Kentucky. The group consisted of Joe Dan Beavers with LifeSkills, Matt Hunt with the Barren River District Health Department, Eric Hagan with Med Center Health, and Eric Sexton from BRADD. Over the course of several meetings, a plan to host a regional Opioid Summit emerged and the group began reaching out to community stakeholders from every sector. As the group continued to meet, other opportunities began to organically develop, demonstrating a need for collaboration and a vision for our region in response to the opioid crisis.

Hart County to Northern Kentucky (A window to recovery)

On June 23, 2023, a group of the following met in Munfordville, KY, and traveled together to Northern Kentucky to tour the Life Learning Center and learn more about the Northern KY Office of Drug Control Policy. State Representative Brandon Reed, Hart County Judge-Executive Joe Choate, AJ Wilson - Hart County Fiscal Court, Daniel London- Lincoln Trail ADD, Richie Sanders, Gilbert Mischel - Senator McConnell's office, Rylee Warden - Med Center Health, Eric Hagan - Med Center Health, Matt Hunt - Barren River District Health Department and Eric Sexton - BRADD. The Life Learning Center is not an in-patient treatment center but presents a unique rolling cohort model that uses an evidence-based curriculum to help candidates become independent from their addiction. It is currently run by Alecia Webb-Edgington serving as their President & CEO. The Life Learning Center provides candidates with a 12-week transformation program focused on five domains; physical, emotional, relational, financial and spiritual. The Life Learning Center model demonstrates quality outcomes and we learned their recidivism is 8% against the national average of 83%. We also learned their model placed 83 graduates in employment equal to \$3.6 million dollars of return and their budget is just \$2million dollars with only a small percent of federal/state funding to operate. This trip also presented an opportunity to learn about the Northern KY Office of Drug Control Policy and how they assist local governments support recovery programs, implementing best practices for those in addiction and working in the prevention field to provide support to the education community.

Nashville Mental Health Cooperative (A solid model for treatment)

On August 24, 2023, a group of the following met in Bowling Green, KY, and traveled together to visit the Nashville Mental Health Cooperative- Crisis Treatment Center. State Representative

Kevin Jackson, Warren County Judge-Executive Doug Gorman, Warren County Deputy Judge-Executive Bryan Downing, Kylie Foushee - Congressman Guthrie's office, Gilbert Mischel, Senator McConnell's office, Hillary Hightower - Bowling Green City Attorney, Joe Dan Beavers, Eric Embry and Karen Garrity - LifeSkills, Eric Hagan - Med Center Health and Eric Sexton - BRADD. The Nashville Center is an excellent model for crisis intervention and response. Partially funded by the Metro Government, its model includes a crisis unit and call center, a mobile operation unit and a detox unit. A 24/7 triage system helps support the law enforcement community by getting officers released within 10 minutes or less and patients directed to an appropriate resource for response. The Nashville model is braided and outlines the process for services and treatment, which includes an onsite pharmacy and respite. Their numbers include less than 4 % arrest rate and less than 8% injury. This impressive model exists in several other states and is a great fit for south central Kentucky. During this summer of 2023, other trips by key stakeholders from Bowling Green and surrounding communities were made to the Nashville Crisis Center, which formed a committee led by City of Bowling Green Commissioner, Sue Parrigin. (See Vision for more information on this initiative)

BRADD Regional Opioid Summit (A beginning to collaboration)

In May of 2023, the group of stakeholders began to brainstorm ideas on hosting a regional opioid symposium that would bring together key partners in sectors of law enforcement, judicial, corrections, legislative, social work, and both faith-based and community mental health partners. A keynote speaker on community, Doug Griffiths, was booked and the agenda for the summit began to form. The summit was held on September 18, 2023, with nearly 200 attendees engaged in the mission of how we can work together as a region to respond to the opioid crisis. Along with the keynote, an experienced panel of practitioners, legislators and first responders provided insight on how opioids relate to their field. BRADD hosted a landing page for the summit, including a resources page found [here](https://planning.bradd.org/opioid-summit/).
(<https://planning.bradd.org/opioid-summit/>)

Next Steps from Summit (Where do we go from here)

At the conclusion of the Summit, the organizers continued meeting and further discussing a strategy and vision for organizing community members and institutions to address the opioid crisis. In part, based on the success of the event, it was determined that a regional opioid advisory group should be formalized with regular meetings to brainstorm, review, discuss, and enact regional solutions and strategies to address the opioid crisis in our region. The four founding organizations all agreed to work together to paint a regional vision for Prevention, Treatment, Recovery, and Assurance of Care associated with the opioid crisis ([Summit Press Release](#)). It should be noted the costs of the symposium were shared by local governments

within the BRADD region using their opioid abatement funds and by the aforementioned four key partners.

Vision (Real opportunity for regional success)

From October 2023 to the present, the four key partners, Med Center Health, LifeSkills, Barren River Health Department District and BRADD continue to convene and discuss the ultimate vision for Southcentral Kentucky as it relates to the opioid crisis. Two regional projects have emerged from the work of many dedicated partners and stakeholders and to help bring those projects to fruition, the creation of the Barren River Office of Drug Control Policy. The projects are defined in summary below with links (attachments) to more detailed info.

Mental Health Crisis Intake Center (Capital Expense - \$20 Million)

The Mental Health Crisis Intake Center would allow a person in crisis to receive immediate treatment while in most cases bypassing the criminal and judicial systems as well as our hospital emergency rooms. This regional model will free up space in our jails and courthouses, decrease our law enforcement involvement with mental health issues and allow for proven and successful targeted interventions by behavioral health professionals. Further, when implemented we feel that this strategy can and will become the standard for our Commonwealth. This crisis facility would have the ability to quickly triage, assess and initiate treatment in a safe location. After the crisis is stabilized and treatment needs identified, the crisis facility would engage with treatment providers in the community to continue care for the individual. A full breakdown proposal of the Mental Health Crisis Intake Center model can be found [here](#) or attached to this document. Additionally, linked [here](#) is the cost estimate. Physical space for this project has been identified at LifeSkills in Bowling Green, KY on the Lovers Lane campus.

Life Learning Center (Non-capital Expense - \$1.3 Million)

The Life Learning Center utilizes performance metrics to take a data-driven approach to graduate Candidates into a substance-free, gainfully employed life. Before, during, and after the 12-week program, Candidates access a plethora of Care Continuum services to mitigate barriers as deemed appropriate. By triaging Candidates' fundamental needs, Candidates have the opportunity and environment to focus on their higher-level needs, supporting their educational success. Upon completion, Candidates become members with continued support and access to resources of the Life Learning Center. The start-up costs for non-capital expenses for two years are estimated at \$1.3 million dollars, which funds five full-time employees and provides a small operating budget of approximately 29%. A full breakdown proposal of the Life Learning Center model can be found [here](#) or attached to this document. A potential space for this project has been identified in Hart County, Horse Cave, KY.

Additionally, the Barren River Area Development District is researching grant opportunities that could create a Barren River Office of Drug Control Policy that would initially act as the point guard and liaison to these projects. Modeled after the Northern Kentucky Area Development District, the office could be housed within the ADD. The primary functions of the office would be to present best practices, work with community leaders and stakeholders as they navigate the process of planning expenditures related to the Opioid Abatement program, work to establish a regional advisory council, help research, educate and inform area leaders on all initiatives and serve as a point guard for the Mental Health Crisis Intake and Life Learning Center projects. A request for start-up costs (operational) of \$1.5 million will allow the Office to have 1-2 full time employees for an inaugural three year period, with an ultimate vision of becoming self-sustaining through other federal, state and local funds.

Ultimately, this region has recognized the need for an improved crisis system, support for individuals in recovery and a desire to assist our workforce. The collaboration, forward-thinking and problem-solving acumen of our regional stakeholders are a testament to the vision of a community that responds responsibly to the needs of those struggling with substance abuse.

Project Name	Investment	Expense Type	Funding Sources
Mental Health Crisis Intake Center	\$20 Million	Capital	Appropriation
Life Learning Center	\$1.3 Million	Non-Capital	Appropriation Federal/State
Barren River Office of Drug Control Policy	\$1.5 Million	Non-Capital	Appropriation Federal/State/Local

