

SYNAR Stakeholder Meeting
March 24, 2016 from 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.
Blake East, Hood Room

Attendees: See attached RSVP list.

1. Introductions

Those attending in-person introduced themselves. They primarily represented state agencies and organizations serving communities in the Southwest Washington area.

Those attending via webinar typed in their name and organization, which were then read aloud. They represented a wide range of organizations from all parts of the state.

Following introductions, a brief overview of Synar was provided. It included summarizing the different roles and responsibilities the Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR), Washington State Department of Health (DOH) and Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB) have in regards to Synar activities in Washington State.

The **Synar Coverage Study** was mentioned.

- Must be completed every 3 years.
- Is a “census” of tobacco retailers.
- Must be 80% accurate (compared to the list used for potential Synar checks).
- DBHR conducted the Coverage study in December, 2015; with a 92% accuracy.
- Because accuracy was over 80%, DBHR will be able to request a 2 year extension and conduct the next coverage study in 5 years (as opposed to 3 years).

If the state’s tobacco sales violation rate through Synar checks reaches 20%, the state is at risk of losing up to 40% of its Federal Substance Abuse and Treatment Block Grant. In 2015, the Synar rate in Washington State was 17.1%.

2. Immediate, short-term plans to reduce Synar rates for 2016

a. Letter to retailers

A letter to retailers will be sent to retailers within the next 6 weeks. These will target retailers in counties where there are still several compliance checks to occur. If possible, all retailers will receive the letter.

Remaining Compliance Checks for 2015:

- Checks that will count as part of the 2015 Synar rate will be completed by June 30.
- About 270 checks still need to occur (not including those in King County).
- Eyeballing the results so far, it appears the violation rate is 13%.

b. Mobilize local groups to conduct Retailer Education

Several attendees discussed methods they have used in the past for retailer education. Discussion included materials they used, and methods of rewarding/thanking those retailers that did not sell when compliance checks occurred.

c. Other ideas and needs that were discussed during the meeting

(NOTE: Some of these are applicable to both immediate efforts and longer term, sustainability efforts.)

IDEAS:

- Use youth to help with retailer education.
(As done in Cowlitz County with Youth and Family Link.)
- Create handouts and materials in bulk, to realize cost savings from printing, etc.
- Offer positive media/recognition for those stores that did not sell. This could take several forms:
(Longview – recognition at city council meeting) (Mason County – certificate for retailer)
- Local Youth Groups to conduct CANS Surveys (Community Assessment of Neighborhood Stores).
- NEVER DO: press/exposure to stores that failed compliance checks.

NEED(s):

- Materials that are used during retailer education need to be high quality. They need to contain relevant/useful information (ie: getting oriented with necessary info on IDs)
- Return to making actual printed (slick paper) “Year born” signs that retailers can post by the register.
- Ensure retailer education materials are available in a variety of languages and a variety of forms.
(infographics available in other languages) (online resources in addition to printed materials)
- A press release template that local groups can use.

3. Moving Forward: Sustaining youth tobacco prevention efforts

In addition to the ideas and needs listed above, attendees discussed other items, including:

- Revising the script used for alcohol compliance checks for use with tobacco retailers.
- Addressing the amount of signage on a store’s window. Address the safety issues that arise if a store’s windows are mostly covered and visibility is minimal.
- Having on-line trainings available.
(LCB has one for alcohol & tobacco, but it needs to be updated.)
- Use of the STARS (Standardized Tobacco Assessment for Retail Settings) form.
- Availability of mini-grants for groups to carry out retailer education.
- Determine the current status of TATU (Teens Against Tobacco Use) groups.
 - What are the aspects/elements of these types of programs that are effective that make most sense to support/promote? (Something the current Surgeon General talks about.)

Sarah from DBHR mentioned that the SPE Policy Consortium has established the Tobacco Misuse/Abuse Prevention Action Plan Team. This group can provide a vehicle where ideas discussed/generated today can be further explored.

Letty from the LCB mentioned that for a majority of retailers, compliance is not an issue.

4. Next Steps

Representatives from the lead state agencies will be meeting to move forward with the letter to retailers and providing retailer education materials.

Notes were compiled and prepared by Ray Horodowicz. (360) 725-1528.