



## PARSE FULL COALITION MEETING

**AUGUST 15, 2023**

### **Moderators:**

**Chris Assini (Policy Director, Friends of Recovery, NY)**

**Allison Weingarten (LMSW, Communication & Outreach Consultant, National Clearinghouse for Worker Safety & Health Training)**

### **Opening Remarks:**

**Allison:** Update on Recovery Friendly Workplace Report published at <https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/index.cfm?id=2621>

This was a national landscape analysis of Recovery Friendly Workplace programs, conducted by PARSE Coalition members Allison Weingarten and Jonathan Rosen, along with several other colleagues in the field. They found a significant lack of resources going to states. While 15 states had established programs, most states did not have any established programs. Even among the 15 states who do have programs, there is a need for more support from the federal level.

In addition, they are working with the NY State Senate Committee on Substance Use Disorder and Senate Committee on Labor to publish an op-ed to bring attention to the need for a unified program in New York. Chris adds that Senator Fernandez has already co-signed the op-ed and they are waiting for Senator Ramos to sign as well. They will approach the New York Times to publish the op-ed.

Two Goals for the PARSE Coalition at this time: One is to gain support for Legislation for Recovery Friendly Workplace policies. The second is to get the PARSE Symposium off the ground. Today's meeting tackles the latter.

Chris has taken the lead on the Symposium planning. Meeting activities will address symposium objectives and break out groups will begin working on an agenda for each section:

- a. Prevention in the Workplace
- b. Supporting Recovery in the Workplace
- c. Employer Role in Establishing Recovery Ready Workplace Programs
- d. Labor Role in Establishing Recovery Ready Workplace Programs
- e. Building Organizational Capacity to Facilitate Establishment of RRW Programs

**Jenn Ritchie** (District Office Manager for Assemblyman Keith Brown, District 12 on Long Island) shares they are currently working on bills that address Co-Occurring Disorder, Substance Use Disorder, among others to reintroduce them as amendments or new bills in February. Leading up to February 2024 there will be dedicated days to focus on Co-Occurring Disorder and Substance Use Disorder. They would like to connect with additional colleagues in government and the coalition to move the legislation along before presenting in February.

Chris reviews the Symposium Agenda and invites Jennifer Donadio to discuss speaker roster. Jennifer polls meeting attendees on whether we should have speakers address attendees both days or for just for one day.

Allison feels our more talented PARSE Coalition speakers can do a longer presentation on the first day and a shorter presentation of about 90 minutes on the second day. Invites Coalition members to either round up speakers for the symposium or become a speaker at the event.

Chris and Allison review the symposium agenda schedule and topics. Invites meeting attendees to select their preferred break out group in the chat.

Questions in the chat asked what part of the agenda would address the medical issues in addiction, drug testing (will be covered in labor group), and general health and wellness (will be covered in supporting recovery in the workplace).

Break-out rooms assigned accordingly:

Prevention – led by Kristen Chalmers

Recovery –led by Jennifer

Labor – led by Chris Assini

### **Recap results from each breakout room**

#### **Prevention:**

Kristen sums up prevention agenda progress: Julie Dostal had recommended Dr. Joel Bennett as speaker for about an hour or more. He is a passionate speaker about organizational well-being and is an advocate of recovery friendly workplaces. He would be a great dynamic national speaker. Also have Jeanette Zoeckler speak for about 15 or 20 minutes about injured workers and professions where workers are exposed to physically demanding conditions. Kristen Chalmers to discuss for 15 minutes about workplace stress. Julie Dostal to speak for about 15-20 minutes on prevention work and connecting it to RRW. Julie recommended we have one more speaker from ARC Inspire Grant to speak about Recovery to Work and Recovery to Work Ecosystem.

#### **Recovery:**

Jennifer sums up recovery agenda progress: Invite Micheal Askew to discuss SAMSHA definition of Recovery in general and in the workplace. Offer a tangible action piece at the end of the talk. How will we take this information and make RFW inclusive and responsive in our work settings. Will get additional names for speakers and follow up within a week after the meeting.

#### **Labor:**

Angelia feels we need to address the safe use of public health management for substance use disorder and approach it as it would be done with other medical conditions.

Sara Couch (HEP/1199/GHNYHA): her union is looking into other contracts to add Employee Assistance Programs to their other statewide contracts. Unfortunately, EAP would likely be used as a bargaining chip and would be the first to be thrown away to gain wage concessions. Sara will continue to help plan the symposium agenda and will bring more labor leaders to the coalition.

Sara Bollinger has contacts with a business group that she can connect with us.

Dr. Karl Auerbach of EmblemHealth Health@Work has offered to speak at the Symposium. (side note: Dr. Auerbach is a board-certified occupational physician. His primary activity is seeing patients, including complex workers' compensation cases, surveillance evaluations, disability and fitness-to-work evaluations, World Trade Center cases, and veterans' examinations, among a wide variety of occupational medical evaluations.)

Closing remarks by Allison.

**Meeting adjourned**