

CONSORTIUM FOR A HEALTHIER MIAMI-DADE

Tobacco-Free Workgroup Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 30th, 2025, 9:30am

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION NEEDED
Members Present	Dr Zinzi Bailey, Chair, University of Minnesota Bill Amodeo, All Star Media Natalie Gray, Research Fellow, Pharmacy School at Larkin Christabel Egemba, Intern, University of Miami Olatokunbo Osibogun, Florida International University Alan Benoit, Program Director, Hope for Miami Erin Brolley, Children's Case Management and Clinician, Jewish Community Center SSG Christopher Pierce, Florida Army National Guard Squad Leader, Florida National Guard Counterdrug Program South Florida Region Zadymon Moore, OPS Senior Health Educator, Florida Department of Health Vicki Zou, Senior, Health Educator, Florida Department of Health Natouchka Murray, Health Service Representative, Florida Department of Health Eunice Mesumbe, Senior Health Educator, Florida Department of Health Melody Espinozacordova, Senior Clerk, Florida Department of Health Islamiyat Adebisi, Public Health Service Manager, Florida Department of Health Candice Schottenloher, Government Operations Consultant, Florida Department of Health Simisola Olowodola, Research and Statistics Consultant, Florida Department of Health Laurie Varona, Senior Health Educator, Florida Department of Health Candace Williams, Program Manager, Florida Department of Health Nakeisha Hendricks, Senior Health Educator, Florida Department of Health	
Welcome and Introductions	The Tobacco-Free Workgroup Meeting was called to order by Dr. Zinzi Bailey at 9:32 AM, with all members welcomed and introduced. All members were invited to introduce themselves and answer the ice breaker question.	
Review and Approval of Minutes	The minutes from the Tobacco-Free Workgroup meeting held on July 29 th , 2025, were reviewed. No changes to the minutes were noted. Dr. Zinzi Bailey made the motion to approve the minutes. Bill Amodeo motioned to approve the minutes and Allan Benoit seconded the motion. Members of the Tobacco-Free Workgroup unanimously approved the minutes from May 27 th , 2025.	
Partner Updates	During the partner updates portion of the meeting, Alan Benoit from Hope for Miami's Coalition Esperanza announced plans for the upcoming Community's Talk: Health Uncovered – The Anatomy of Substance Misuse event, scheduled for October	

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	15 at SLAM Miami Charter School. The event will include interactive exhibits demonstrating how different substances affect various parts of the human body, with booths hosted by partners such as the American Heart Association, the Florida Department of Health, and potentially the City of Miami Police Department. The goal is to establish the initiative as an annual community-wide event engaging both students and parents in substance misuse prevention. Natouchka Murray from the Office of Community Health and Planning presented the Journey to Wellness Prescription program, a non-pharmaceutical initiative designed to promote physical activity, healthy living, and chronic disease prevention. The prescription pad, available in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole, is distributed free of charge at community and workplace events to encourage healthy lifestyle choices. Additional updates emphasized continued collaboration between the Tobacco-Free Workgroup and the Healthy Start Coalition to strengthen referrals for tobacco cessation among expectant mothers, along with discussions on expanding mental health partnerships to address underlying factors contributing to tobacco use. The meeting also included planning for future community-based efforts to advance smoke-free parks and recreational spaces across Miami-Dade County.	
Executive Board Updates	The Executive Board received presentations from NAMI Miami-Dade County on workplace mental health and from the Florida Health Justice Project on state and federal healthcare updates. Discussions centered on planning the 22nd Annual Consortium Event & Worksite Wellness Awards, including sponsorship, agenda, and promotion through a new digital brochure with planned translations. The Board also reviewed the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), which set five priority areas, Access to Care, Chronic Disease, Behavioral and Mental Health, Maternal and Child Health, and Healthy Weight, Physical Activity, Nutrition, and began developing its strategic and work plans, while noting that the Children Issues and Elder Issues Committees had already started drafting their own.	
Action Planning	The workgroup convened to discuss the action plan for the next five years as it aligns with the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) 2025–2030. The primary focus of the meeting was to develop the new five-year Tobacco-Free Workgroup plan, which supports the CHIP framework and centers on five priority areas: Access to Care, Chronic Disease, Behavioral and Mental Health, Maternal and Child Health, and Healthy Weight/Physical Activity/Nutrition. The discussion emphasized tobacco	

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	prevention and control strategies consistent with Miami-Dade County’s public health goals. Data from the 2024 Florida Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) indicated that 11.2 percent of adults in Miami-Dade County reported current tobacco use, below the statewide rate of 14.5 percent. While adult cigarette smoking has continued to decline, the presenters noted a concerning rise in the use of electronic vapor products among youth. According to the 2024 Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), 17.8 percent of high school students in Miami-Dade reported using an electronic vapor product in the past 30 days, compared to 15.7 percent statewide, highlighting the need for stronger prevention efforts. Maternal smoking rates in Miami-Dade remain among the lowest in Florida at 2.9 percent, yet the group emphasized the importance of maintaining cessation outreach and educational initiatives to sustain this progress. During the meeting, participants took part in an interactive Menti activity to identify key areas of concern and develop strategies to strengthen tobacco prevention efforts. The activity revealed that participants prioritized youth vaping prevention, improved access to cessation services, and policy enforcement in multiunit housing and public spaces. Attendees also stressed the need for culturally relevant outreach in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole to effectively engage diverse communities across the county. The discussion underscored the importance of environmental design and community policies, such as smoke-free parks and housing, in reducing secondhand smoke exposure and fostering healthier living environments. A shared commitment to expand youth engagement through the Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) program, strengthen partnerships between local organizations and the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County, and implement evidence-based strategies supported by Tobacco Free Florida to further reduce tobacco and nicotine use countywide.	
Previous Action Items	Annual SWAT Training Update Two Miami-Dade Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) trainings were held during the quarter, one at the University of Miami and another at Wilde Park. Both sessions brought together youth from across the county to strengthen their advocacy and leadership skills while increasing awareness of the harmful effects of tobacco and nicotine use. A total of 142 participants attended the trainings, including 121 youth and 24 adults representing SWAT	

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	clubs from schools throughout Miami-Dade County. The events featured interactive presentations, team-building activities, and discussions focused on countering tobacco industry influence, understanding the impact of electronic vapor products, and promoting community-based prevention initiatives. Participants collaborated on strategies to raise awareness in their schools and neighborhoods, developed action plans for future SWAT events, and demonstrated strong enthusiasm for advancing a tobacco-free generation in Miami-Dade County. Intercoastal Beach Cleanup Update On September 20, 2025, the Miami-Dade Tobacco Prevention and Control Program participated in the annual International Coastal Cleanup event at Virginia Key Beach. The cleanup brought together students, youth leaders, and community volunteers to raise awareness about the environmental impact of tobacco and nicotine product waste, particularly cigarette butts and vape pods. A total of 122 attendees participated in the event, including youth from Miami-Dade County schools, program staff, and community partners. Together, they collected 308 pounds of trash and debris from the shoreline while learning about the connection between tobacco litter, marine pollution, and public health. The event successfully combined environmental stewardship with tobacco prevention messaging, empowering youth to take an active role in promoting cleaner, healthier, and tobacco-free public spaces.	
Upcoming Events	- Communities Talk: Health Uncovered - The Anatomy of Substance Misuse – October 15th, 2025 - Expo de Salud, Prosperidad y Mas – October 17th, 2025 - SWAT Movie Night – TBD - Tobacco Prevention Summit – November 21, 2025	
Adjourn	The meeting concluded with closing remarks expressing appreciation to all attendees for their active participation and continued collaboration in advancing tobacco prevention efforts throughout Miami-Dade County. Partners were encouraged to remain engaged in community outreach, youth involvement, and smokefree policy initiatives in preparation for upcoming events. The meeting was officially adjourned by Chair Zinzi Bailey at 11:28 a.m. The next Tobacco-Free	

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Tuesday, September 30th, 2025, 9:30am

	Workgroup meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2025, where partners will reconvene to review progress, share updates, and continue planning future tobacco prevention initiatives.	
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