

# COUNTY OF YORK

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** January 10, 2018

**TO:** York County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Neil A. Morgan, County Administrator 

**SUBJECT:** York County Efforts Related to the Opioid Situation

The growing problem and incidence of opioid overdose and the effect of this disease on the community at large is hard to ignore. It is an important topic that has been brought up for discussion by members of the Board and others many times over the past year.

We are not alone in the fight! Several organizations and partnerships newly formed or already established in York County have recently pivoted to prioritizing education, outreach, and prevention of opioid use. Some of the efforts I'd like to bring to your attention include York County's Community Services' leadership on a regional task force addressing education and awareness and Colonial Behavioral Health's ramping up of treatment services provided to clients which are now mandated by the state. York County Department of Fire and Life Safety and the Sheriff's Office, both on the front line, are actively involved in the task force and doing everything they can to save lives and assist in the fight. All of these efforts include opportunities for public communication and outreach by the stakeholders and the various County-managed communications channels. In addition, there are some planned special events and opportunities for exploring new partnerships. Some of these efforts will be shared in more detail at your January 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Attached is a rundown of the work being done along with the outreach and awareness campaigns and partnerships that have been established and/or underway for the first quarter of 2018. This is just a start. While some of these efforts are still in development, it will take much more than this list to turn the tide. Opioid abuse is a national problem with local implications, and we cannot fix it alone. All we can do is stay committed to working with our partners and colleagues in hopes of lowering the senseless deaths from opioids and keep the emphasis on combining our resources to make a difference.

One initiative that we have been made aware of and is well underway nationally and here in York County is drug take backs. The idea of turning in unused prescriptions, that otherwise could end up on the streets, is being handled on an ongoing basis at our local hospitals, retailers, and now at York County fire stations and the York County Public Safety Building. We are working toward having a list of all the nearby locations verified and making sure it is posted as an easy to find resource online.

There are also other partnerships that we are looking to activate. Staff plans to work with the York County Youth Commission to raise awareness and assist in reaching that critical

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audience of students, coaches, teachers, and other influencers. There are also plans to partner with Dr. Shandor and the YCSD staff in possibly co-hosting their next Community Forum about the crisis.

NAM:ph  
Attachment

### **York County Efforts in Education and Awareness of the Opioid Situation Current- Spring 2018**

There are several efforts and partnerships in York County that have recently pivoted to prioritizing education, outreach, and prevention of Opioid use. York County has leadership participation on a regional task force addressing education and awareness. Colonial Behavioral Health is ramping up treatment services, now mandated by the state, which they provide to clients. York County Fire and Life Safety, the Sheriff's Office, and the Public Affairs Division, are working together to maximize the awareness for public outreach efforts and share information that will hopefully impact the misuse of opioids.

#### **Historic Triangle Drug Task Force (*working title*):**

This task force represents various organizations in the region that are impacted by the Opioid Crisis. They are using this forum to emphasize education and awareness in hopes of reducing addiction and help others recognize the signs of pain killer addiction. The Task Force has met several times to date and is currently working on outreach initiatives to address the Opioid Crisis listed below:

- Identify Public Service Announcements that can be localized and air on the Government and Schools cable channels in the region and are working toward creating a message of their own.
- Planned an event at Tabb Library for January 22, 2018. The Task Force will sponsor a screening of the movie Heroin: The Hardest Hit followed by a Q & A with treatment professionals, those with personal experience and public safety officials.
- Producing resource guide / pamphlets that will be distributed around the county (Jan 2018).
- Support efforts in schools to reach teachers, nurses, athletic trainers, coaches, students for education and awareness including what to look for in Opioid addicts.
- FREE Drug take back kits in public safety locations including the York County Public Safety Building, as well as fire stations in York County, James City County and the City of Williamsburg.

Membership: Sheri Newcomb, Community Services Deputy Director; York County Department of Fire and Life Safety Battalion Chief Tony Prata, Nancy Lemis, Virginia Dept. of Health – Peninsula District; Courtney Dowell and Marsha Obremski with Colonial Behavior Health; Jan Brown, Spirit Works Foundation; Williamsburg Police Chief Sean Dunn and Deputy Chief Andy Barker; Williamsburg Fire Department EMS Captain Brad Beam,; James City County Fire Department Battalion Chief Jason Sweet, Lan Craigal, Williamsburg Police Department; and York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office Major Ron Montgomery.

### **York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office**

As members on the front line, the YPSO has active representation on the Task Force. In addition to their partnership with the DEA for the semi-annual drug take-back events, the PIO office, SRO's, DARE and staff currently use social media and face to face interaction to communicate the dangers of drug use in the community and in the schools. Below are some of the prevention and education efforts currently managed by the YPSO to assist the public in reducing the dependence of Opioids:

- Raise awareness of drug take-back locations.
- Work with Community Leaders to help produce and distribute internal and external communication/training efforts.
- Facilitate grants and awards for anti-drug efforts in education and enforcement.
- Partner 2 times per year with DEA on local drug take-back events. These dates are set by the DEA- next scheduled one is April 28, 2018. YPSO will work with DPW and beautification committee to coordinate this event. To help draw more attention, this event will also include other "recycling"- hazardous waste and electronics.
- Engage with Youth Commission to support efforts before and during event.
- Share materials and event promotion on Social Media page- tagging FLS, PA and other partners.

The YPSO recently benefited from working with Spiritworks Foundation, a local non-profit, that raised monies to supply Narcan kits to all the units.

### **Fire & Life Safety**

The Department of Fire and Life Safety, also on the front lines of this crisis, is actively involved with the Task Force in identifying opportunities to further expand the reach of public education and support the goals. With primary responsibility for providing pre-hospital patient treatment, YCFLS is informing and educating the families involved on the impacts of opioids. To achieve the department's goal of prevention and education and to assist in reducing the dependence of Opioids these initiatives are in place for FLS:

- Facilitate FREE Deterra brand drug take-back bags in each of the fire stations for citizens to dispose of medications in a safe, environmentally friendly manner.
- Assist in dissemination of education and outreach information through social media.

- Utilize prevention activities and direct contact with citizens to advise and educate on the Opioid Epidemic and provide information on treatment and education.
- Assist the Task Force with updated information on Fire & Life Safety interaction in relation to Medication abuse, trends, and current statistics.
- Continue to work with York County agencies and neighboring jurisdictions to facilitate initiatives and programs to improve communication with County citizens on the epidemic.

Additionally, while the Department of Fire and Life Safety has long been supplied with Narcan as an advanced life support (ALS) drug, the department has sought to further expand the availability of Narcan for basic life support providers. Recently FLS was successful in receiving a State grant from the Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services for additional Narcan doses that can be used beyond those currently supplied for ALS providers.

### **Public Affairs**

The Public Affairs Office plans to use the County's various platforms including the County website, TV Announcement Channel, Social Media, Citizen News and media relations to support all of these efforts with external communications some listed below:

- Create and post slides on Announcement Channel
  - Drug Take Back initiative (both for ongoing locations and YPSO events)
  - Jan 22nd Tabb Library screening.
- Promote and share posts on social media
- Create Did You Know TV feature about Drug Take Back ongoing ( and semi-annual events)
- Tag local information on a national PSA
- Assist in the production of local PSA
- Develop webpage with links to local resources and promote it ( Jan 2018)
- Facilitate County participation/support in YCSD Community Forum (Spring 2018)
- Facilitate partnership with Youth Commission to promote and assist with events

### **Board of Supervisors**

On January 16th at the regular meeting, Community Behavioral Health and Spirit Works will be making a presentation to the Board. This will be the second presentation to educate and make the BOS aware of the CBH efforts and mandates concerning the Opioid Crisis. The presentation will recap efforts in treatment, education and outreach.

Following that presentation Sheriff Danny Diggs will include a commendation to York County resident Sue Shekoski. Having family members who struggle with addiction, she has spearheaded campaigns to assist in the fight. Her most recent efforts resulted in funds to supply NARCAN overdose kits in all the YPSO units and is pursuing the provision of the Intra-Muscular Narcan for YCFLS, consistent with that carried by the Sheriff's Office.