

THE INITIATIVE

Addressing Substance Use in Dare County



Spring 2019
Vol. 03 Issue 02

SAVING LIVES TASK FORCE

The Initiative is a quarterly newsletter presented by the Saving Lives Task Force, the goal of this publication is to educate, inform and engage residents of Dare County.

- **Our Task Force is**
a team of professionals and community members working toward the prevention of substance use disorders and the availability of effective treatment for all Dare county citizens in need of help.
- **Join us for our Meetings**
on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 3:00 pm at the Dare County Administration Building in Manteo.
- **For More Information**
please contact Roxana Ballinger, Saving Lives Task Force Co-Chair, at 252.475.5619 or roxana.ballinger@darenc.com.

savinglivesobx.com
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Call to Action For Faith Leaders on the Outer Banks

The Saving Lives Faith Leader subcommittee has been established to bring together leaders of the faith community to address the substance abuse challenges on the Outer Banks. This is an opportunity for faith leaders to share ideas on addressing stigma, providing education, identifying treatment resources, and providing support in recovery. Reverend Gina Miller, pastor of St. John United Methodist Church in Avon, tells her congregation every week, "There is a broken heart in every pew, and each of us has wounds that need to be healed." On the Outer Banks, there are examples of faith communities embracing this challenge but more must be done.

Reverend Miller states, "Throughout history, the Church has done a poor job in ministering to those struggling with substance abuse issues. Whether due to lack of knowledge, fear and/or misunderstanding, as followers of Jesus Christ we have often failed to emulate our Master. In John 1:14 we read that, "The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Ongoing Events

- Alcoholics Anonymous - District 93 | 3rd Wednesday of each month | 7:00 pm | Grace By The Sea Lutheran Church**
 4212 S Croatan Hwy., Nags Head, NC 27959
 Outer Banks AA Hotline: 252.256.0850
www.aaobx.com
- NAR-ANON | Every Thursday | 7:00 pm | 111 W. Carlton Avenue in Kill Devil Hills**
 The NAR-ANON program is a means of coping with the insanity brought about from having a family member or friend struggling with addiction. For more details, please contact Debbie at 703.402.3501.
- Dare Community Child Collaborative | 2nd Tuesday of the Month | 1:30 - 3:00 pm | Dare County Administrative Building at 954 Marschall C. Collins Drive, Manteo**
 The Dare Child Collaborative is a partnership among providers and families of children and youth with mental health or substance use issues. Together, they identify services, support needs and try to find ways to meet those needs. For more information, please contact Keith at keith.letchworth@trilliumnc.org.

April

- Medication Drop Off Event | April 26, 2019 | 9:00 am - 12:00 pm Southern Shores Marketplace**
 Bring all unwanted and unused medications to assure their safe disposal.

May

- 12th Annual KidsFest | May 3, 2019 9:30 am - 12:00 pm | Festival Park**
 KidsFest will be a morning of hands-on crafts and activities for young children. We will have fire trucks, EMS & police vehicles, face painting, bubbles, ice cream, snowballs, music, arts and crafts, and much, much more. For more information, contact Children & Youth Partnership at 252.441.0614.

September

- Annual Walk Against Addiction September 21, 2019 | 8:00 am - 12:00 pm | First Flight High School**
 The 5K begins at 8:00 am and the other activities begin at 9:30 am. Lunch will be provided. Contact Brenda Thacker at 252.202.1110 for more information.



Outer Banks Dare Challenge, located in Wanchese, is a Christ-centered residential discipleship program for men experiencing life-controlling problems.

The Dare Challenge program consisting of 15 to 18 men and lasting 8 to 10 months is conducted in two phases designed to help these men work through the issues that have led to addiction. Dare Challenge is based upon the fact that man's basic need is a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. People use drugs and alcohol to fill the void in their lives that only Jesus can fill. While in the first phase, students participate in a variety of activities such as but not limited to, Biblical education, spiritual counseling, work projects, ministry outreach to the local community, and several community service projects. During phase one each student is introduced to the benefits of incorporating into their daily life spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Bible reading and meditation, Christian fellowship,

regular church attendance, worship, and Christian service to their family and community.

During the second phase of their journey, students will continue to receive spiritual support and counseling, theological training, SA counseling and education, and GED classes (when applicable). Because this is a Christ-centered program all training and education is scriptural in its approach and content. Dare Challenge also offers an optional third phase - a structured, halfway house kind of transition back into the community, with assistance in building a resume, finding a job and housing, and handling personal finances.

The opioid and addiction crisis that has hit many families across our community is a fight many fight silently daily. However, there is hope. If you or someone you know is struggling with addiction, don't hesitate to call Outer Banks Dare Challenge at 252.473.6462.

Call to Action For Faith Leaders on the Outer Banks

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the neighborhood." (The Message translation) "Jesus, God with skin on, comes to proclaim the reign of God and heals every kind of disease and illness." (Matthew 9:35)"

On the Outer Banks, there are a variety of faith communities and though there may be disagreements on doctrine, all must agree that we have people in our congregations and communities that are hurting from addiction. It is Reverend Miller's greatest desire to not have to preside over any more funerals due to drugs.

In a recent survey, Dr. Richard Martin, a Licensed Clinical Addictions Specialist, asked 101 patients receiving Medication Assisted Treatment for Opioid Dependence about their experience with the faith community. In response to the question "Would you find it helpful to have access to a minister during treatment?", 52 of 101 patients responded "Yes". Another 33

of 101 patients responded that they were "Not Sure". This indicates that an overwhelming number of patients either saw a role or were open to the possibility of a role for a faith leader in their treatment. Dr. Martin, a graduate of Duke Divinity School, found that 87% of patients could identify a faith community that they were a member of as a child. The survey highlighted the ways faith leaders could help to address the substance abuse problem in their community.

The Saving Lives Task Force is open to any member of the Dare County community. The Faith Leader Outreach subcommittee is designed to support faith leaders in responding to the substance abuse challenges within their communities. For more information, please contact Reverend Gina Miller at gmillier@nccumc.org or Dr. Richard Martin at rjmconsults@gmail.com.

She gets her hair from her mom.
 Her eyes from her dad.
 And her drugs from her home medicine cabinet.

53% of people who abuse prescription drugs get them from family or friends. Prevent children, friends and relatives from abusing medication by securing your meds in safe places they cannot access.

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 AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

Supported by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services, with funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Grant #5U49CE000178-01A0001. ©2018. All Rights Reserved.
 Lock Your Meds is a registered trademark of the Department of Health and Human Services. ©2018. All Rights Reserved. This campaign was developed in partnership with the 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

Saving Lives Task Force Advocacy:

Proposals to Continue the Fight against the Opioid Epidemic

We have been fortunate in North Carolina to have the benefit of leadership throughout the state that is not only aware of the continuing opioid crisis but also willing to develop and implement policies to combat the problem and reduce the harm caused by it. Recently the state enacted the STOP Act and the HOPE Act to continue this extremely progressive approach to helping those affected by the opioid epidemic. Along this same vein, the NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is promoting the following policy and legislative changes.

DHHS believes the most important action that can be taken at this juncture is to close the coverage gap caused by the lack of Medicaid expansion. While there are evidence based, effective treatments available for those addicted to opioids, research shows that the vast majority of those who use these substances cannot pay for the treatment due to the lack of insurance. These same statistics show that approximately half the persons hospitalized with an opioid overdose in NC didn't have health insurance, which caused these victims to incur costly emergency room care. The negative ripple effect from this lack of coverage results in unpaid ER costs often passed onto others.

We know that states that have used Medicaid expansion to close this coverage gap have seen an increase in coverage and treatment use for people with substance use disorders. As an example, Kentucky saw a 700% increase in Medicaid substance use disorder treatment utilization after expanding Medicaid. Also last year, Ohio, which had one of the highest opioid overdose death rates in the country, saw a 54% reduction in opioid overdose deaths. Ohio's Medicaid expansion is credited as a key piece to this improvement. Dayton's Mayor Nan Whaley stated, "It (expansion) is the basis for everything we've built regarding treatment."

While there would certainly be political hurdles to navigate to enact the expansion, the benefits it would offer to those most affected by the opioid crisis are not debatable. DHHS states that if NC were to close this coverage gap, an estimated 150,000 people with mental health and substance use needs would gain access to healthcare coverage. Additional policy proposals will follow in upcoming articles.

THE INITIATIVE Resources:

savinglivesobx.com

PORT Health

2808 S Croatan Hwy.
Nags Head, NC 27959
252.441.2324

Trillium Health Resources

www.trilliumncaccesspoint.org
877.685.2415 – 24 Hours a Day

Mobile Crisis Team

24 Hours a Day / 7 Days a Week
866.437.1821

2-1-1 Directory

www.nc211.org

Highlife 252

Syringe Exchange Program
252.457.7242

Contact your insurance company to find out more information on local providers and your plan's benefits.