

INITIATIVE

Addressing Substance Abuse in Dare County



Summer 2017
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What Can You Do?

As you see so much in the news and around the community about Substance Use Disorder (SUD), it may be overwhelming. Often you may feel as though you want to help but are not sure what you can do that would make a difference. Hopefully we can convince you that there are several things that you can do to be involved and create a positive impact!

First and foremost, you can help prevent substance abuse. Serve as a positive role model for the youth in your life. Maybe you have children, grandchildren, or neighborhood kids that you can take under your wing and offer guidance about healthy, safe choices. This can be as easy as helping them get involved in a sport, club or other group activity. It may be taking them to a baseball game. Most importantly, just spend time with them and let them know you care.

Another key part of prevention is being responsible for your own medications. Keep all your medications put away or locked up safely. If you have any medications that you no longer need, there are a number of disposal options in the county! Please check savinglivesobx.com.

The next thing you can do is be aware of the many treatment resources available in Dare County. You may know someone who has a family member or friend who is suffering from SUD, or you may know someone personally who is struggling. Please check out our website savinglivesobx.com for resources. Be aware that a lifesaving

medication, Naloxone (aka Narcan), is available without a prescription and could potentially save someone from a heroin or opioid overdose. It is also available for free at the health department.

Another important way to help is through advocacy. Write, call or email our legislators about needed funding for prevention and treatment. We know that SUD is a disease and can be successfully

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SAVING LIVES TASK FORCE

*A Quarterly Newsletter Presented
By The Saving Lives Task Force*

- **About the Task Force**

The Saving Lives 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 residents in need of help.

The goal of this newsletter is to educate, inform and engage the citizens of Dare County in this effort.

- **For More Information**

on this newsletter or the Saving Lives Task Force, please contact Roxana Ballinger, Co-Chair, at 252.475.5619 or roxana.ballinger@darenc.com.

savinglivesobx.com



Ongoing Events

- NAR-ANON | Every Thursday**
7:00 pm | Source Church in Manteo
The NAR-ANON program is a means of coping with the challenges brought about from having a family member or friend struggling with addiction. (AL-ANON Family groups are suggested for relatives of those who suffer from the disease of alcoholism). For more details, please contact Debbie at 703-402-3501.

August 2017

- Town Hall Series | August 31, 2017**
5:30 pm | Dare County Center in Manteo
The Town Hall offers a welcoming format and is a great opportunity for residents to learn more about the substance abuse issues in Dare County, become familiar with local resources and get involved by learning how to become part of the solution. August 31 is International Overdose Awareness Day—this day is set aside to raise awareness of overdose and reduce the stigma of a drug-related death. In addition to presentations from an expert panel covering issues of substance abuse prevention, treatment, medical community support and law enforcement efforts, we will be honored to have Brandon Novak, professional skateboarder and actor, sharing his story.

September 2017

- 8th Annual Walk Against Addiction**
September 9, 2017 | 9:00 am
First Flight High School
Guest speakers Dr. Christine Petzing from Outer Banks Hospital and keynote speaker Kurtis Taylor – Outreach worker and Reentry Coordinator for Oxford Houses of NC will begin at 10:00 am. Following the dove release participants will walk the approximate one mile course. Mighty Wind United Methodist Church will be grilling hot dogs and hamburgers, compliments of Gene Perry and Dirty Dick’s Crabhouse. Vendors from the community will have tables with pertinent hand outs and information on alternatives to drug use will be available.



The Saving Lives Task Force, previously the Substance Abuse Prevention & Education Task Force, was first convened on August 6, 2014 under the leadership of Commissioner Wally Overman. At that time, many groups were working in Dare County to address concerns about substance abuse across a continuum of care, but too often they were working in disconnected silos.

Today over 50 participants representing governmental and non-profit organizations, churches, private providers, the recovering community and other concerned citizens from throughout the county join together to maximize their collective impact. This team aims to present a united message on the challenges of substance use disorders and to advocate continuously for identified strategies of prevention, education, treatment, access, and recovery that work.

A sampling of accomplishments made possible by this collaborative work includes:

- holding two community forums and two town hall meetings, with two other town hall meetings planned;
- promoting appropriate disposal of unused drugs and drop-off sites, services and events;
- training and equipping law enforcement, first responders, and public health clinic staff with life-saving Naloxone;

- becoming the first county in NC to place Naloxone in all schools;
- advocating for expansion of school-based mental health services;
- supporting implementation of a local legalized needle exchange program;
- providing education to teens and parents as part of sentencing in Teen Court;
- piloting an “Access Point” Kiosk at the Health Department;
- supporting expansion of Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) services;
- exploring and implementing recovery programs in the detention center and post-discharge;
- providing updated Keeping Current programs for adults in school and community settings;
- hosting continuing education events for prescribers;
- researching and supporting appropriate legislation; and
- identifying programs of promise for the future.

The Saving Lives Task Force meets monthly on 3rd Tuesdays from 3-5PM at the Dare County Administration Building unless otherwise noted. Meetings are open to the public.

How to Navigate Treatment

Navigating the treatment options in search of substance use disorder services can be confusing and intimidating. Being armed with a knowledge of the basics can go a long way to assisting you in making a good choice.

In selecting the correct service for yourself or your loved one please follow the following tips. Start with an evaluation by a Licensed Clinical Addictions Counselor (LCAS). This credential ensures that the professional you meet with is a trained expert in the field of addictions. Locally there are many practicing therapists and counselors with this credential. It is always a good idea to check with your insurer for a list of individuals with the appropriate credentials, who are also in your network. The state of North Carolina provides access to services for individuals who do not have insurance. PORT Health Services is the local provider who takes insurance as well as the selected provider for individuals who are uninsured. PORT Health Services can be contacted for an appointment or individuals can walk in if the need is urgent.

The state of NC provides Mobile Crisis Services, which are free to all NC residents. Mobile Crisis Services are provided locally by Integrated Family Services. Mobile Crisis Services will respond 24 hours a day / 7 days a week to where the person in need of assistance due to a mental health/substance use or developmental disability crisis is in the community. Trillium Health Resources Access line is also available 24/7 to provide direction and referral for services.

When you meet with the counselor, they will conduct an assessment and make a recommendation as to what level of treatment would most benefit the person seeking help. The most basic level of treatment is outpatient. Outpatient treatment involves the individual coming to the office to meet with the counselor individually or as part of a group.

Medical services such as psychiatric evaluation or medication prescription or monitoring may or may not be part of an outpatient treatment program.

The next level of treatment available locally is Substance Abuse Intensive Outpatient (SAIOP). The only local provider of SAIOP is PORT. It is an intensive program in which the individual participates in a minimum of 9 hours of group counseling per week. Case management, individual and family counseling are also included in this treatment. Individuals participating in this level of treatment are able to stay at home throughout this treatment.

At times outpatient treatment does not provide enough support to assist the individual; in those cases, individuals may be referred to inpatient rehabilitation. It is recommended if you are insured you refer to your list of in network providers to select a provider. There are no local providers of this service. PORT Health Services can provide a list of low cost or no cost providers. Inpatient rehabilitation is much like SAIOP, except the treatment is 7 days a week and the individual lives at the facility in which the treatment is to occur. Treatment will include group, individual, and family therapies and often psychiatric evaluations. Inpatient programs vary greatly and can be from 14 days to 24 months in length depending on the program.

Detoxification is an emergency medical admission. There are no local detoxification centers. The closest inpatient detoxification center for individuals with insurance is Virginia Beach Psychiatric Center. PORT

Health Services currently runs three Facility Based Crisis Centers located in Greenville, Ahoskie, and Beaufort, which provide detoxification services for individuals who are not insured in addition to those with insurance. Withdrawal from some substances can be life threatening and seeking treatment at The OBX Hospital is appropriate to evaluate and stabilize medical symptoms prior to securing admission to a facility that specializes in detoxification services.

Additional Resources Include:

PORT Dare County office
252-441-2324 | Porthealthservices.org

PORT FBC Admissions
252-561-6084 | Porthealthservices.org

Mobile Crisis Team
1-866-437-1821 | www.integratedfamily services.net

Trillium Health Resources
1-866-998-2597

Virginia Beach Psychiatric Center
757-627-5433 | www.vbpcweb.com

Saving Lives Task Force: Advocacy

Each year the North Carolina legislature votes on bills that can dramatically impact substance abuse prevention and treatment. Your voice can make a difference. To become informed there are a number of websites that provide information on pending bills. To search bills currently in the legislature that address substance abuse go to ncleg.net, the website for the North Carolina General Assembly. Enter the specific issue you are concerned with in the search box.

There are a number of organizations that address the issue of advocacy on substance abuse issues. Some but not all include: the Association of Recovery Community Organizations at RCNC.org, the North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition at nchrc.org, and the Addiction Professionals of North Carolina at apnc.org

Two specific bills that are currently in the legislature are Senate Bill 175 the Strengthen Opioid Misuse Prevention (STOP) Act. This legislation is aimed at curbing the state's opioid abuse epidemic and puts limits on prescriptions of opioids. (As this article went to press, the Bill was signed into law by the Governor on June 29, 2017 with Task Force members Brenda Thacker and Donnie Varnell present at the signing ceremony.) House Bill 725 addresses the need to study how to fund school-based mental health and substance abuse services. Nearly 1 in 5 NC students have a mental health and/or substance use disorder; of those, 75% will NOT receive treatment in the current system.

Our local legislators are Representative Beverly Boswell, 300 N. Salisbury Street, Room 531 Raleigh,

NC 27603-5925 (919) 733 5906

beverly.Boswell@ncleg.net and Senator Bill Cook, 16 W. Jones Street, Room 1026 Raleigh, NC 27601-2808 (919) 715 8293 bill.cook@ncleg.net

When contacting your legislator by phone: Be brief and get to the point quickly. Be specific about why you are contacting them. If you are concerned about a specific bill, give them the bill number and subject. State your position on the bill and a brief reason for that position.

If you are contacting them by email or letter: Include the bill number and what the bill is about at the beginning of your email or letter. Include your address and telephone number. If you want to comment on more than one issue, send a separate message for each one. Invite the legislator to contact you to talk about your position on the bill or issue.

What Can You Do? Continued from Cover

treated, but there are not enough facilities available to meet the demand.

Get involved in our community efforts. The Saving Lives Task Force is sponsoring a number of Town Hall events to inform the public about our work from law enforcement, the medical profession, treatment providers and the health department. The next Town Hall is on August 31st at The Dare County Center in Manteo at 5:30pm. Also you can join the Saving Lives Task Force. We meet the third Tuesday of most months at 3 pm in the Dare County Administration Building.

These are just a few of the ways that YOU can make a difference in our community! Let's all work toward a happy, healthy and safer Outer Banks!

THE INITIATIVE Resources:

savinglivesobx.com

PORT/New Horizons

2808 S Croatan Hwy,
Nags Head, NC 27959
252.441.2324

Trillium Health Resources

www.trilliumncaccesspoint.org
877.685.2415 – 24 Hours a Day

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

Mobile Crisis Team

24 Hours a Day / 7 Days a Week
866.437.1821

2-1-1 Directory

www.nc211.org