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Recovery Month Has Arrived!

I am so excited to kick-off the statewide celebration of September as National Recovery Month! I know that you all have many activities planned within your communities. I hope you are planning to attend our [event](#) at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 6, in the Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg, and invite many others who support recovery to come with you.

If you are searching for other recovery events in Pennsylvania you can check this [statewide calendar](#) or postings on the [national recovery day website](#).

I encourage you to support those working toward recovery in as many ways as possible. That could mean advocating for people in recovery to reduce the stigma they feel, supporting them as they move along their journey to rebuild connections, perhaps searching for a job or housing, or simply building relationships with friends and family.

You may be able to help by supporting a recovery group interested in using a community facility or a church, or volunteering to lead a recovery or support group. Or, you could simply take the time to talk to someone in recovery and listen to his or her story.

In Harrisburg, DDAP continues to be a partner with different state departments to facilitate drug and alcohol education and outreach. The opioid crisis is a priority of Governor Tom Wolf, and he and his administration will continue to support, encourage and work for increased prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts. As you know, the \$26.5 million in the 21st Century Cures Act grant funding will be distributed throughout the state with the bulk of the money going to single county authorities to fund new and enhance existing treatment programs in counties. Watch on our website for more information.

I look forward to meeting you on Wednesday in Harrisburg! Let’s celebrate together the successes we’ve seen in recovery and keep working toward even greater success.

Jennifer Smith, Acting Secretary



Jen Smith speaking at press conference at Geisinger Holy Spirit Hospital, Camp Hill.

The Phoenix is a monthly newsletter produced by the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs. To submit story ideas, comments, or feedback, please contact Carol Gifford, the editor, at cagifford@pa.gov



State News

Wednesday, Sept. 6, is the Statewide Kick-Off Celebration of National Recovery Month



Please join us at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 6, for the Pennsylvania kick-off celebration of National Recovery Month in Harrisburg at the Capitol Rotunda.

People in long-term recovery will tell their stories. DDAP Acting Secretary Jennifer Smith and Acting Secretary of Health and Physician General Dr. Rachel Levine will speak. Guitarist and humorist Seamus Kelleher will perform. There will be fun activities – show your “face” supporting recovery by getting your photo taken at a photo station, and use props to take fun selfies with your friends.

You may want to bring your own sign of support with appropriate language and images please, (e.g. I’m a person living in recovery; I’m a Mom supporting recovery for my child; This is what recovery looks like, etc.), or arrive early and make your own sign at our table.

Visit our [National Recovery Month page](#) for more information on the Sept. 6 event. Hope to see you soon!

National Recovery Month – Celebrating Our Successes

The importance of celebrating our shared successes in the battle against the opioid crisis and substance use disorders was the topic of a recent Wolf administration guest blog posting by Jennifer Smith.



Read [more](#) about how to recognize and support the efforts of those trying to recovery and the people who help them in their recovery journey.

Help others in their recovery journeys by sending us your [personal recovery story](#). A story could include information about your treatment and recovery journey and advice that could be helpful to others. You can also upload a photo or other image. These stories may be included on the DDAP website and social media. Posted stories will not contain identifying information. Some individuals may be asked to share their stories in upcoming events.



The participants at the recent Geisinger Holy Spirit Hospital, Camp Hill press conference stand in front of the Pennsylvania DUI Association’s DUI Victims’ Moving Memorial. The mobile memorial tours the state and includes names of 3,000+ Pennsylvanians who lost their lives because of impaired drivers.

Celebrate Holiday Weekend Safely

Acting Secretary Jennifer Smith encouraged Pennsylvanians to celebrate safely over the Labor Day holiday weekend, in a recent [press event](#) with the state Department of Transportation and other partners.

“Don’t drive while impaired,” said Smith. “No one should risk their own life or the lives of others by getting behind the wheel while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.”

She encouraged people to be careful taking prescription drugs and over-the-counter drugs that might have adverse effects if taken along with other medications or when consuming alcohol.

Smith added that those suffering from substance use disorder (SUDs) should not drive if under the influence of a substance. Those seeking help can call 1-800-662-HELP, the state’s 24/7 toll-free hotline for resources and direct access to treatment.



DDAP News

DDAP, SCA Partners Urge FASD Awareness, Prevention

September is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Month

By William Lelik, DDAP
Bureau of Treatment, Prevention, and Intervention

September is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Awareness Month, and DDAP is working to encourage awareness of FASD and assist all 47 Single County Authorities (SCAs) in reaching out with the message of FASD prevention throughout Pennsylvania.

The leading known cause of developmental disability and birth defects in the United States, FASD is 100 percent preventable when pregnant women abstain from alcohol. Up to 1 in 20 U.S. school children may have FASDs. The department's 2017 FASD Awareness Project involved the printing of over 10,000 refrigerator magnets with an FASD prevention message, accompanied by infographic cards with important facts about FASD, for distribution by SCAs and their contracted prevention providers commonwealth-wide.

DDAP works with designated county-level FASD Coordinators to ensure that every SCA delivers at least two FASD prevention services in their areas every September. DDAP also offers FASD training classes, information referrals, programmatic guidance and other technical assistance to SCAs, supporting them in their mission to raise awareness and prevent FASD.

A Healthy Baby Begins with You. Drinking Beer, Wine, or Liquor when you are pregnant or nursing can be harmful to your baby.



Pregnancy and Drinking do not Mix!



For more information, go to www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd

More information about FASD Awareness Month is available at <https://www.nofas.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/2017-FASD-Awareness-Month-Packet-FINAL.pdf>. Another good source of FASD information is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/index.html>.

Learn More About Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)

Alcohol use during pregnancy can lead to lifelong effects.

Up to **1 in 20** US school children may have FASDs.



People with FASDs can experience a mix of the following problems:

Physical issues

- low birth weight and growth
- problems with heart, kidneys, and other organs
- damage to parts of the brain



Which leads to...

Behavioral and intellectual disabilities

- learning disabilities and low IQ
- hyperactivity
- difficulty with attention
- poor ability to communicate in social situations
- poor reasoning and judgment skills



These can lead to...

Lifelong issues with

- school and social skills
- living independently
- mental health
- substance use
- keeping a job
- trouble with the law



Drinking while pregnant costs the US **\$5.5 billion** (2010).



SOURCES: CDC Vital Signs, February 2016. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, November 2015.



County News

Dauphin County's Warm-Handoff Program Recognized

Wolf administration officials recently visited PinnacleHealth's Harrisburg Hospital to recognize its mobile case management program to help get drug overdose survivors directly into treatment.

Recognizing the dire public health emergency that opioids present in Pennsylvania, DDAP Acting Secretary Jennifer Smith said that 2016 state overdose death numbers equate to the loss of 13 people a day to drug overdoses.

"The first step in this process is using naloxone to reverse overdoses," said Smith. "Thanks to police and other first responders, we've reversed more than 3,800 overdoses since the law allowing them to administer this overdose reversal medication was implemented in 2014."

While saving someone's life from overdose death is the absolute first step, it cannot be the only focus in the current crisis, said Smith.

"The hours following revival from a life-threatening overdose is a prime opportunity for an individual with a substance use disorder to recognize the need to address his or her issue. A personal discussion about the need for help may be key to getting the patient connected to drug treatment," said Smith.



Dauphin County overdoses claimed the lives of 85 people in 2016, an almost 20 percent increase from the previous year and more than died in car accidents, said Dauphin County Commissioner George P. Hartwick, III, who oversees the county's Human Services.

Dauphin County hired two mobile case managers to respond 24/7 to overdose scenes – in emergency rooms, bars, homes and other locations – and the caseworkers have done 116 assessments and referred 50 users to treatment in this "warm handoff" program, said Hartwick.

"When someone has nearly died from an overdose, that is the time to get them into treatment that can save their life," said Hartwick. He stressed the message that treatment works, and people who need help should not be afraid or feel stigmatized by coming forward.

Read more about Dauphin County's in-house [warm hand-off program](#).

Want to know more about what's going on at DDAP? Follow us on social media:

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/PennsylvaniaDDAP/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/padrugalcohol>

