



The SCORE Report

“Everyone’s task is unique as is his specific opportunity to implement it.”
-Viktor E. Frankl

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Summary: Faith Community Meeting on August 6th

The Surry County Opioid Response Team met with representatives from Faith Community on August 6th at the Surry Center. The objective was to complete the details for a network that will provide transportation to treatment for Surry County residents with limited resources suffering from Substance Use Disorder.

The meeting was very productive. Guidelines were developed and a “Transportation Network Grid” using Google Sheets was developed. The treatment provider will input the relevant information for the client requiring transportation and the volunteer transporter will confirm transportation by inputting contact information. Success will depend on volunteer transporters who are willing to drive people to and from the client’s appointments at the treatment provider. If you or your faith organization are willing to volunteer vehicles and/or drivers, please contact Mark Willis, the Opioid Response Director. An e-mail address is required so that you can access the “Transportation Network Grid”.

Access to on-line learning opportunities was offered by the SCORE Team through the State Targeted Response Technical Assistance (STR-TA) initiative. Attendees requested instruction in the areas of eliminating stigma, recognizing addiction, evidenced based treatment and Narcan.

Feedback/RSVP

Please let us know your thoughts at willism@co.surry.nc.us or (336) 401-8218

Education and Prevention Corner

You may have heard of Naloxone (Narcan). This is the drug that can reverse an opioid overdose and keep someone from dying. It can be given by nasal spray or injected into muscle tissue. Naloxone is used regularly by first responders in Surry County and many other communities. It is also available to lay people in pharmacies and through non-profits like Olive Branch Ministries. There are trainings held periodically to teach people how to use Naloxone. To learn more about Naloxone, visit www.naloxonesaves.org.

-Amanda Clark, Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist, Surry County Health and Nutrition Center

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Next Meeting: September 24, 2019

The next Faith Community meeting is co-sponsored by the Elkin-Jonesville Ministerial Association and Partners Behavioral Health and will provide lunch on September 24, 2019 from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm, in Room B/C, Surry Service Center, 915 E. Atkins Street, Dobson.

The Elkin-Jonesville MA requested the opportunity to speak to pastors, or their representatives, about public advocacy for more programs targeting the County’s substance use crisis. Please try to attend this meeting if you are interested in an active role in addressing the growing impact of substance use on our community.

Neither public advocacy, nor the volunteer transportation network, will succeed without your effort and dedication to the cause. **Thank you!**

CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK! *Surry County Opioid Response Effort*

www.facebook.com/surrycountycares

Dear Denise:

I read all the time about people suffering from overdoses and multiple overdoses. I thought if you overdose you die. Please explain.

Sincerely,

Janice

Dear Janice:

A few years ago when I was still producing my weekly radio show I asked the same question. I thought that overdose meant you died too. So, I brought an expert on my show and interviewed him to find out what I was confused about. It was kind of a complicated question then but as time has progressed is even more complicated and controversial now.

The short answer is this. When a person overdoses from drugs, and what happens can depend on the type of substance overdosed on, many things can happen. Organs can shut down, cardiac arrest can occur, the respiratory system can slow to almost stopping, kidneys can fail, etc. This doesn't necessarily mean you will die. It means your body is in major distress and you need emergency help. Depending on the level of distress and the help available, one can be saved. Some people do die.

As I mentioned, nowadays it is more controversial than it used to be. It used to be treated as any of these issues would be. Over the years a drug has been developed and used in emergency rooms called Narcan, which can instantly reverse an opioid overdose. It can often bring a person back to a relatively normal state quickly. First responders now carry this drug and can use it on overdose victims. Recently it has become available for anyone to buy and use. Statistically, here in Surry County, just over the past year many lives have been saved by the more regular use of this drug. There are still many overdoses yet a reduced number of deaths from overdoses.

Here is where the controversy lies. There is a very big stigma still around those who use and abuse illegal substances, prescription drugs included. It is very common to believe that these people are bad people, make bad decisions and must suffer the consequences, and that these kind of people are not related to us, we would not have these kind of people in our lives. Helping people to reverse overdose is the controversy here. Some of those able to give the Narcan believe that there should be a limited amount of times we should try to keep these people alive. Some don't like the idea of keeping them alive at all. There are those people uncomfortable with allocating government money to pay for this life saving drug to keep people with substance abuse and use disorders alive.

I understand the controversy. I don't usually express my thoughts on these topics since I do understand both sides. But, I will admit, after working in the field of addiction for many years and meeting so many families and loved ones who suffer from addiction, I have developed a simple attitude. If someone is alive they have a chance to one day make a good decision and turn around their life and become a contributing member of society. If they are dead there is no chance for this. Sometimes it takes multiple chances.

I have been out in the community talking to lots of people in Surry County in all walks of life and have come across both ways of thinking. Some think that these people who suffer from substance abuse disorder choose this life and should suffer the consequences even if it means death. Others, like me, have hope that things will change in a person's life and they decide to move on a more positive path.

What do you think? I would love to hear from everyone who has an opinion to understand the pulse of Surry County on this issue. Think about it, please.

Regards,

Denise Krochta