



**Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council Report  
Cecil County Health Advisory Committee  
January 15, 2015**

The following is a list of activities (July through December 2014) which informed and/or advanced the goals and objectives of the Cecil County Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council (DAAC):

**July**

- During July and August, three groups, including approximately 150 students, traveled from Cecil County to the Maryland Science Center to view an exhibit entitled “Target America - Opening Eyes to the Damage Drugs Cause.” The exhibit was designed to “open eyes to the science behind drug addiction and the countless costs of drugs—to individuals, American society, and the world—and to provide food for thought on how each and every one of us can make a difference.” Additionally, a significant amount of printed materials were shared by the exhibit managers with Cecil County Public Schools for student education. The educational trips were initiated by County Councilman and DAAC member Dr. Alan McCarthy, and helped increase participant and community appreciation for consequences of substance abuse.
- Cecil County Sheriff’s Office added three new K-9 units for Cecil County Law Enforcement, (one German Shephard/Belgian Belgian mix, one Malinois German Shepherd, and one Dutch Shepherd) With the addition, the County has five total K-9 units. The dogs provide drug scanning of vehicles, schools and the correctional facility, as well as crowd control and building searches.

**August**

- DAAC Chairman John Bennett hosted meetings with Democratic and Republican candidates for County Council and Sheriff to discuss substance abuse issues in Cecil County. Candidates for elected office later expressed appreciation to the DAAC for organizing the informational events.
- The Cecil Guardian initiated a weekly column that strives to build a healthier Cecil County by better informing the community. Entitled, "Building a Culture of Health," timely information on a health-related topic will be featured each week, with an initial focus on substance abuse. The first story was entitled "Drug Overdose is Preventable."
- Community awareness for overdose risk was enhanced by additional distribution of several resource fliers by the Health Department - “Opioid Overdose Response” and “Deaths by Overdose is Preventable!”
- Members of Voices of Hope for Cecil County and other concerned citizens recognized International Overdose Awareness Day with an overdose vigil. The vigil acknowledged the grief felt by families and friends remembering those who have met with death or permanent injury as a result of drug overdose. International Overdose Awareness Day is a global event that spreads the message that the tragedy of overdose death is preventable.
- News was released that the Cecil County crime rate decreased by 15% during 2013, credited to the Governor’s Office on Crime Control and Prevention-sponsored Safe Streets initiative, expanded Drug Task Force investigations and increased collaboration of all law enforcement agencies.
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**September**

*Healthy People. Healthy Community. Healthy Future.*

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES . . . . .	410-996-5550	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES . . . . .	410-996-5160
ALCOHOL & DRUG RECOVERY CENTER . . . . .	410-996-5106	HEALTH PROMOTION . . . . .	410-996-5168
OFFICE OF EPIDEMIOLOGY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS . . . . .	410-996-5113	SPECIAL POPULATIONS MENTAL HEALTH C.S.A. . . . .	410-996-5112
COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES . . . . .	410-996-5130	TTY USERS FOR DISABLED: MARYLAND RELAY . . . . .	800-201-7165
DISEASE CONTROL . . . . .	410-996-5100	EN ESPAÑOL . . . . .	410-996-5550 EXT. 4680

HEALTH DEPARTMENT TOLL FREE . . . 877-334-9985

- Jack Foraker and Haven House hosted a “Celebrate Recovery Picnic.” A significant number of DAAC members attended. During the event, the September Recovery Month proclamation was presented by County Executive Tari Moore and County Councilman Alan McCarthy.
- During the September 25, 2014 DAAC meeting, the following presentations were highlighted:
  - Resource for Families: STEPS Recovery Resources, Inc. April Foster introduced STEPS, a non-profit program started by her and Carrie Miller. The program strives to reduce the negative stigma associated with addiction and recovery, and provides addiction related support and education for the family. For the individuals and families served, STEPS has made referrals to the health department, Serenity Health and Elkton Treatment Center. Additional information is available on the program’s Facebook page. Informational cards were distributed.
  - Introduction to “The Monarch House” - Pastor Phil Meekins introduced the Monarch House, a Recovery House in North East for up to seven men. Two residents are currently housed in the program. Residents can remain at Monarch House from six to twelve months. Residents are required to attend treatment, participate in community service and search for/obtain employment. The program’s website is [www.monarchhouse.org](http://www.monarchhouse.org). Pastor Meekins also spoke to efforts to organize New Beginnings (a food ministry) in Elk Neck, and facilitate “Celebrate Recovery” support group meetings. Celebrate Recovery meetings will be moving to 117 E. Cecil Ave., in North East. Pastor Meekins hopes to expand the meetings to seven days a week. Pastor Meekins also discussed opportunities to send individuals to long term care for reduced rates.
  - Resource for Families: “The Addict’s Mom” - Jennifer Naylor introduced “The Addict’s Mom,” a web-based support resource for families. Participants have access to free educational and inspiration resources, on-line chat with members, and links to treatment resources. Throughout the United States and 52 other countries, more than 20,000 members are enrolled. The web site address is: [www.addictsmom.com](http://www.addictsmom.com).
  - Introduction to “Recovery Centers of America” - Dorothy Brazel and Jay Youthz introduced Recovery Centers of America (RCA) whose mission is to “inspire and empower individuals suffering from the disease of addiction across America to enter into Recovery, one person, one step, one community at a time.” Ms. Brazel informed the group that RCA anticipated purchase of a 500 acre property in Earleville which will have 50 detoxification and short term residential beds. The facility will be CARF accredited.
  - Update on Overdose Response Activities - Ken Collins provided a brief overview of the overdose response training. The one-hour session is available at no cost, and provides information on opioids, overdose recognition, and overdose response. Those who complete the training are eligible to receive an overdose rescue kit and a prescription for Narcan. To date, 287\* members in the community completed the training. An additional 222\* law enforcement officers including four public safety officers from Cecil College, also participated in the course. Since May 2014, the training helped save several lives. To register for the training, contact Karl Webner at 443-245-3785. [\*As of January 12, 2015]
  - Update on Local Overdose Fatality Review Team – Presentation by Karl Webner on the “Local Overdose Fatality Review Team - Summary of Findings.” Utilizing a multi-disciplinary approach, the LOFRT investigates intoxication deaths within Cecil County in order to determine ways to potentially reduce the overdose rate. Spoke to the observed trends, including the common use of multiple substances of abuse, and statistical significance of alcohol in overdose deaths. Summarized several observations and recommendations of the LOFRT team members.
  - Drug Court - Ninety-four participants reported enrolled in the Cecil County Adult Drug Treatment Court program. The program serves individuals with an extensive criminal history. Criteria for program completion had been set very high.
- More than thirty vendors and 400 community members attended the Fourth Annual Cecil County 12-Step Recovery Walk on the front lawn and parking lot of Cecil County Circuit Court, Saturday, September 27, 2014. The event served to promote recovery and increase awareness of treatment resources.

- Significant disposal of unused and expired prescription drugs reported at six locations during National Drug Take Back Day on September 27, 2014. Additionally, the Cecil County's first permanent drug take back box in Elkton continues to report significant weekly disposal. The fixed drop box provides a safe, convenient and anonymous opportunity to dispose of potentially dangerous medications.

## October

- Unused and expired prescription drugs are also reported disposed at the October 8, 2014, Cecil County Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Day.
- The Cecil Whig announced its partnership with the Cecil County Health Department to launch Voices of Recovery, a new weekly series of stories about recovery from addiction. Inspired by the recent promotion of the film "The Anonymous People," the Whig began a weekly profile of one person with long-term sobriety to try to break stigmas about substance abuse.
- Old Dominion Electric Cooperative pledged donation of \$150,000 over three years to the Health Department to help in the fight against substance abuse in Cecil County, and for a youth summit program at North Bay.
- Cecil County Government was awarded competitive federal funding by Department of Health and Human Services for a Drug Free Communities Coalition. The coalition features active participation from twelve sectors of the community, including, youth, parents, schools, businesses and local media. Coalition goals are to establish and strengthen community collaboration in support of local efforts to prevent youth substance use. Using the newly-awarded grant funds, The Cecil County Drug Free Communities Coalition will achieve its goals by: (a) implementing a prevention and education plan for youth, parents, and community members; (b) providing training for community members and educators; (c) developing a prevention communication plan; (e) developing and implementing a social norms campaign; (f) increasing barriers to underage access to alcohol; and (g) expanding on the current drug take-back program. In the past, significant reductions in youth alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and prescription drug use were observed in other DFC-funded communities.
- On October 23, 2014, Health Department staff Ken Collins, Mike Massuli, and Karl Webner presented to Michael Botticelli, acting director of the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy



(ONDCP). The presentation focused on the County's Local Overdose Fatality Review Team (LOFRT). The LOFRT is multidisciplinary, public health-focused review of local fatal overdose incidents. The team was established in February 2014, and meets monthly to study overdose deaths and advance overdose prevention planning. The LOFRT provides a forum for the sharing of

information essential to the improvement of a community's response to overdose deaths. The review team, consisting of public health officials, law enforcement officers, physicians, nurses, hospital administration, emergency responders, substance abuse and mental health counselors, social service staff, and others, track and analyze drug overdose deaths. Participants report and discuss details related to overdose events, as well as review medical and behavioral health records and treatment history. The LOFRT process may serve as model to expand in other jurisdictions and states.

## November

- County Executive Tari Moore appointed Joe Fisona to the DAAC as her representative. Mr. Fisona is the former Mayor of Elkton.
- John Bennett and members of Voices of Hope attended and spoke in support of the special exception request of Recovery Centers of America to use Bracebridge Hall in Earleville as a "hospital" for in-patient detox and rehab services, starting at 50 beds, possibly expanding to 150 beds. The request was approved unanimously by the Board of Appeals. Mr. Fisona also attended.

## December

- Tyra Kenly and Ellis Rollins were re-appointed to 3 year terms as members of DAAC by County Executive Moore.
  - During the December 4, 2014 DAAC meeting, the following presentations were highlighted:
    - Jacob Owens spoke to the progress of the Voices of Recovery, Cecil Whig Project. The newspaper's project began as a response to a community appeal to involve the newspaper in ways to combat addiction and encourage recovery.
    - Bill De Freitas spoke regarding Cecil Guardian's Building a Culture of Health column. Mr. De Freitas spoke to the initiation of the column as an effort to increase sharing of information to help families.
    - Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) Update – Michael Baier, Director of Overdose Prevention at MD Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DHMH) Behavioral Health Administration informed that the Maryland PDMP is fully operational. PDMP is integrated with CRISP- a state wide health information system that connects enables all hospitals to exchange data. Mr. Baier explained that PDMP is a secure electronic data base on prescribing and dispensing pharmaceutical controlled substances. Data is available to providers to potentially identify indications of prescription drug misuse, addiction or diversion.
    - Father Martin's Ashley – Family Program: Dr. Kristine Hitchens, Director of Family Services at Father Martin's Ashley explained that the Family Program is open to the community, and that when families are part of the treatment process, recovery rates increase dramatically. In the program, family members learn about the neurological and psychological aspects of the disease. On a limited basis, scholarships are available.
    - Voices of Hope for Cecil County - Jennifer Tuerke introduced Voices of Hope (VOH) as a group of recovering people in Cecil County who advocate for support for addiction treatment and recovery. VOH also provides mentoring to recovering youth. This group began as an alumni group for Health Department patients and quickly grew into a vehicle for those in recovery throughout Cecil County. The group meets in the Health Department every Wednesday at 5:30 p.m., and the meetings are open to all.
  - On December 16, 2014, Voices of Hope members presented a request to the Cecil County Council to help fund a short-term in-patient detox program, possibly at Union Hospital. This idea was strongly endorsed by DAAC member and County Council Vice-President Dr. Alan McCarthy.
  - On December 31, 2014, The Cecil Whig identifies "Recovery [from substance abuse]" as the top "Newsworthy Storyline of 2014."
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<b>Drug- Induced Death Rate per 100,000 Population</b>				
	<b>SHIP 2011 (2007-2009)</b>	<b>SHIP 2012 (2008-2010)</b>	<b>SHIP 2013 (2009-2011)</b>	<b>SHIP 2014 (2010-2012)</b>
Cecil County	23.0	21.8	26.7	29.2
Maryland	13.5	12.6	12.4	12.7

• HP 2020 Goal: 11.3

• MD 2014 Goal: 12.4

Source: Maryland DHMH Vital Statistics Administration (VSA)