

Press Release

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: 5-Point Strategy to Combat the Opioid Crisis

According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in the late 1990s, pharmaceutical companies reassured the medical community that patients would not become addicted to opioid pain relievers and healthcare providers began to prescribe them at greater rates. The increase of prescription opioid medications led to widespread misuse of both prescription and non-prescription opioids before it became clear that these medications could indeed be highly addictive. Each day we are losing more than 140 Americans to overdoses. Millions more are struggling with opioid addiction.

In an effort to comprehensively address the opioid epidemic the following five specific strategies will be addressed by HHS:

- Improving access to treatment and recovery services; 90 percent of Americans struggling with addiction are not currently getting treatment. HHS is sending letters to the governors of all 50 states announcing \$485 million in grants for their evidence-based prevention and treatment activities.
- Promoting use of overdose-reversing drugs; States have also made great strides in expanding access to drugs, like naloxone, which can reverse overdoses, pulling thousands of Americans each year back from the brink. At the same time, HHS will explore new drugs that could save even more lives given the influx of highly lethal synthetic opioids.
- Strengthening our understanding of the epidemic through better public health surveillance; HHS will identify and inform of emerging trends in the opioid crisis using the Center for Disease Controls's Data-Driven Prevention Initiative and Enhanced State Opioid Overdose Surveillance Program to provide grants and technical assistance to state and local authorities to help them track developments and respond in real time.
- Providing support for cutting edge research on pain and addiction; Research on new kinds of treatment, both pharmaceutical and otherwise, new kinds of painkillers that are less addictive and safer and possibly developing a vaccine for opioid addiction.
- Advancing better practices for pain management; Re-visiting the concept of pain to promote safe use of opioids and limit the risk of addiction. The Interagency Task Force on Pain Management, which is in the process of being assembled.

The mission of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) to enhance and protect the health and well-being of all Americans by providing for effective health and human services

and fostering advances in medicine, public health, and social services. To learn more about HHS please visit www.hhs.gov.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition is conducting an opioid prevention awareness campaign entitled "Keeping Glen Cove SAFE" to educate and update the community regarding opioid use and its consequences. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE's website to learn more about the Opioid Epidemic at www.safeglencove.org.