

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT:

Dr. Sharon Harris 516- 676-2008

safeglencove@yahoo.com

### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Correctional Facilities and Medication Assisted Treatment**

Earlier this year, a study published by the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) revealed that individuals addicted to prescription opioids or heroin also have complicated health profiles and high levels of involvement in the criminal justice system. Data indicated that individuals who use opioids, including heroin, were up to 13 times more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system.

The argument for the need to engage and involve the criminal justice system in dealing with the opioid epidemic, including reducing overdose deaths had therefore been put forth. Researchers further maintained most jails did not offer medication-assisted treatment (MAT) using the three FDA- approved drugs for the treating opioid use disorder: buprenorphine, methadone and naltrexone- the most effective option for people addicted to opioids.

A correctional facility in Rhode Island is taking the leadership role in addressing the opioid epidemic from within their four walls. They have implemented a MAT program that screens inmates for opioid use disorder and provides medications to those inmates in need of treatment. MAT has been proven effective in avoiding relapse and fatal overdose as well as staying in recovery. The program consists of the two drugs that reduce withdrawal symptoms: methadone and buprenorphine, naltrexone to block the high normally associated with opioid use and clinical criteria for each individual patient.

The Rhode Island program has seen a 61 percent decrease in incarceration overdose deaths and is made available to those inmates that fit the criteria. JAMA maintains the Rhode Island study could be implemented across states as an effective strategy to combat the opioid epidemic.

Providing treatment to incarcerated individuals helps them as well as communities and families for healthier and safer communities. Upon release, patients are also enrolling in health insurance plans to make sure that when the individual returns to the communities they continue to stay in recovery.

The Journal of the American Medical Association is a peer-reviewed medical journal published 48 times a year by the American Medical Association. It publishes original research, reviews, and editorials covering all aspects of the biomedical sciences. For more information about JAMA, please visit <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama>.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition is conducting an opioid prevention awareness campaign entitled, "Keeping Glen Cove SAFE," in order 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](https://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or visit SAFE's website to learn more about the Opioid Epidemic at [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org).