

Press Release
March 18, 2019
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT:
Dr. Sharon Harris 516- 676-2008
safeglencove@yahoo.com

SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Law Enforcement Crack Down on Opioid Prescriptions by Health Professionals

New efforts have been put forth on Long Island to decrease the amount of prescriptions health professionals can prescribe. Law enforcement has cracked down on doctors, as well as a state mandated electronic prescription system. Many have agreed that the decrease in the opioid epidemic and opioid prescriptions are due to the states new law and electronic system. The mandated electronic prescription system was established in March of 2016.

A law called the 'internet system for tracking over prescribing' or also known as I-Stop was also established to record information of health professionals when prescribing medication to a patient. Efforts to continue to decrease the prescription of opioids include educational awareness and having doctors try other alternatives before prescribing painkillers. In fact, prescriptions of oxycodone, hydrocodone and oxymorphone have decreased on Long Island since the law was established.

According to statistics from the New York State Department of Health, prescriptions declined nearly 35 percent on Long Island between 2011 and 2017. The New York Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) office arrested 30 clinicians including pharmacists, nurse practitioners, dentists, and medical assistants between 2014 and 2018. Targeting the suppliers is a main goal for law enforcement when it comes to cracking down on prescriptions. Clinicians typically charge individuals \$100 to \$300 per prescription. But with the state mandated electronic prescription system and law enforcement efforts, there has been a significant decrease in clinicians prescribing opioids to patients. Additionally, a practice known as "doctor-hopping" where addicts would go from doctor to doctor to see which one would prescribe them opioids has also been curbed with the implementation of an electronic database that includes the patient's prescription history allowing doctors to see what others have previously prescribed.

In terms of arrests, the New York DEA's office reported nearly 2 million pills were apprehended from suspects on Long Island. Electronic surveillance and undercover law enforcement efforts were used in solving cases of this nature. Due to strategic policing efforts, Prescribers will no longer be able to issue wrongful opioid prescriptions to individuals without being charged. Health professionals should not be fearful of prescribing if it is appropriate for that individual to be taking the drug.

The New York State Department of Health is the department of the New York state government responsible for public health. For more information please visit <https://www.health.ny.gov/>.

The mission of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is to enforce the controlled substances laws and regulations of the United States and bring to the criminal and civil justice system of the United States, or any other competent jurisdiction, those organizations and principal members of organizations, involved in the growing, manufacture, or distribution of controlled substances appearing in or destined for illicit traffic in the United States; and to recommend and support non-enforcement programs aimed at reducing the availability of illicit controlled substances on the domestic and international markets. The New York division serves all of New York State. For more information please visit <https://www.dea.gov/domestic-divisions/new-york>.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition is joining in the fight against this epidemic by 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 or visit SAFE's website to learn more about the Opioid Epidemic at www.safeglencove.org.