

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT:

Dr. Sharon Harris 516- 676-2008

safeglencove@yahoo.com

SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Opioid Epidemic- Addiction Recovery Transitional Housing in Rural Communities

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently announced their partnership to implement addiction recovery transitional housing in rural communities. The opioid epidemic is a nationwide crisis, but rural communities have been affected even more. Strong and healthy communities are foundational for prosperity in rural America. USDA is committed to building innovative partnerships and driving more effective and efficient use of their resources to address the opioid epidemic at the local level. HHS is aware that the opioid epidemic has hit rural communities hard, and will commit to leverage all possible partnerships to support these communities as housing plays a vital part in the recovery process for those living with opioid use disorders.

USDA and HHS formalized their partnership through an official Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Nonprofit organizations will be able to purchase homes from USDA and convert them to transitional housing for people recovering from opioid use disorder.

USDA RuraDevelopment and HHS' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) will coordinate efforts to sell USDA's Real Estate Owned (REO) single-family housing properties at a discount to non-profit organizations that provide housing, treatment, job training and other key services for people in treatment and recovery. This will further enhance the two organizations' formal collaboration. It began in 2018 with SAMHSA's supplementing of USDA Cooperative Extension grants to expand technical assistance and training on opioid use disorder prevention and treatment.

The Trump administration has been mobilized to address opioid misuse by declaring the opioid epidemic a nationwide Public Health Emergency. To help local leaders respond to this epidemic, USDA has worked to build infrastructure for prevention, treatment and recovery, facilitate partnerships, and drive innovation in rural communities. In 2018, USDA worked with the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to establish a White House Rural Opioid Federal Interagency Working Group which is improving the coordination of federal resources in rural America. In December, USDA launched the Community Opioid Misuse Toolbox. This initiative includes the Community Resource Guide, a comprehensive directory of federal resources that can help rural communities address the opioid crisis, and the Community Assessment Tool, an interactive database to help community leaders assess how and why the opioid epidemic is impacting their regions.

The United States Department of Agriculture is the U.S. federal executive department responsible for developing and executing federal laws related to farming, forestry, and food. For more information please visit <https://www.usda.gov/>.

The United States Department of Health & Human Services, also known as the Health Department, is a cabinet-level department of the U.S. federal government with the goal of protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services. For more information please visit <https://www.hhs.gov/>.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and healthcare; and high-speed internet e-Connectivity in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is a branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is charged with improving the quality and availability of treatment and rehabilitative services in order to reduce illness, death, disability, and the cost to society resulting from substance abuse and mental illnesses. For more information about SAMHSA please visit www.samhsa.gov.

The Office of National Drug Control Policy is a component of the Executive Office of the President of the United States. The Director of National Drug Control Policy, colloquially known as the Drug Czar, heads the office. For more information please visit <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/>.

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 or visit SAFE's website to learn more about the Opioid Epidemic at www.safeglencove.org.