

Press Release
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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: National Institutes of Health HEAL Initiative

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is one of the world's foremost medical research centers. Last year, NIH launched the HEAL (Helping to End Addiction Long-term Initiative), an aggressive, trans-agency effort to speed scientific solutions to stem the national opioid public health crisis. This Initiative builds on extensive, well-established NIH research, including basic science of the complex neurological pathways involved in pain and addiction, implementation science to develop and test treatment models, and research to integrate behavioral interventions with Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorder (OUD). Successes from this research include the development of the nasal form of naloxone, the most commonly used nasal spray for reversing opioid overdose, and evidence for the use of nondrug and mind/body techniques such as yoga, tai chi, acupuncture, and mindfulness meditation to help patients control and manage pain.

NIH has worked with experts from public and private organizations to identify the areas that would most benefit from focused efforts by NIH alone or in partnership with outside organizations. To that end, NIH plans to increase their research efforts on the opioid epidemic to more communities in areas of the country that are severely impacted by expanding the National Drug Abuse Treatment Clinical Trials Network (CTN).

The Network facilitates collaboration between government researchers, scientists at universities, and treatment providers in local communities with the aim of developing, testing, and implementing new addiction treatments. Through its work to date, the Network has contributed to broad-reaching changes in medical practice, including the development of the opioid use disorder (OUD) treatment medication buprenorphine.

The expansion effort will: Strengthen the CTN's capacity to conduct trials by adding new sites and new investigators; Expand existing studies in the network, and initiate research with new investigators, in settings such as primary care and criminal justice, and new locations hard hit by the opioid crisis; Facilitate the development and implementation of new studies to improve access to high-quality addiction treatment, including by facilitating delivery of OUD treatment in general medical settings; Create new opportunities for clinical and research training.

Researchers anticipate the HEAL Initiative will improve treatments for opioid misuse and addiction and enhance pain management.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is the nation's medical research agency and includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIH is the primary federal agency conducting and supporting basic, clinical, and translational medical research, and is investigating the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov

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.

