

D&A News

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New Resource for Adolescents and their Families

Lancaster County teens and their families have a new resource to assist in the treatment of addiction and related behavioral problems. Mazzitti & Sullivan Counseling Services opened a new location at Liberty Place in September. The new office provides individual, family and group programming aimed at guiding those in need to a better life.

Mazzitti & Sullivan Counseling Services is a Pennsylvania licensed drug and alcohol treatment facility, and has been providing outpatient treatment for mental health issues and substance abuse and addiction in Central Pa, since 1983. They were able to expand into Lancaster County thanks to funding from the Capital Area Behavioral Health Collaborative and support from the Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission. Their programs will help meet the growing need for more outpatient and intensive outpatient treatment for adolescents and their families in the area.

The new Lancaster office specializes in Contingency Management, an evidence-based treatment approach grounded in the principles of behavior management and cognitive-behavioral therapy that aims to weaken the rewards associated with using drugs by substituting them with healthier activi-

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Why Teens Need Specialized Treatment

Substance abuse treatment for adolescents has come a long way. Prior to the 1950s, there were few treatment resources for adults, much less for teens. Most addicted persons were “treated” by being incarcerated in correctional institutions or asylums. Although better treatment techniques evolved through the 1960s and 70s, the treatment field had not yet realized the special needs of young persons and a “one size fits all” approach was the norm.

In the 1980s research identified that there were significant differences between adolescents and adults

when it came to addictive behavior. More thorough assessment techniques and specialized treatment approaches have led to more effective treatment and higher recovery rates for teens. Here are some of the unique challenges counselors face when working with adolescents.

Adolescent substance abusers have:

- ✓ Higher rates of binge drinking than adults.
- ✓ Higher rates of risk-taking behavior.
- ✓ Lower problem recognition.
- ✓ Higher rates of co-morbid problems, such as depression, suicide, and eating disorders.
- ✓ More susceptibility to peer influence.
- ✓ More focus on immediate concerns, rather than future consequences.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Rick Kastner

Our office made the local news recently since we ran out of D&A residential rehab treatment dollars back in November, just five months into the fiscal year. Although running out of treatment funding early in the year is not new to the Lancaster County D&A Commission, it did occur early, since the demand for treatment skyrocketed.

What caused this unprecedented increase in demand? The heroin epidemic, compounded by the overdose deaths in the county and state. More people are using heroin, or one of the opioid-related drugs, and becoming addicted to this “sicker quicker” chemical (see graphic on page three). Since it is very potent and relatively cheap, more people are using and overdosing on heroin. When a person uses dope, it is like playing Russian Roulette; you have no idea whether you will wake up from the high.

We were fortunate last month to receive an additional \$300,000 from the Lancaster County Commissioners, and from other human service directors in Lancaster, to re-open D&A rehab treatment. This funding came from surplus county block grant dollars, which is unlikely to be available next year. This unexpected relief will provide rehab for about 110 addicts between now and June 30.

Unfortunately, we will be in the same budget shortfall next year, beginning on July 1. The public allocations for substance abuse treatment are about four times less than the demand for services.

We continue to assist clients in accessing the Medicaid card, which provides a large amount of D&A treatment. But the Medicaid application often takes weeks to process, and addicts usually do not wait around while the paperwork is being processed. So overdoses continue and some people do not win in Russian Roulette.

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Rick Kastner".

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D&A NEWS

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Grant from D&A Commission Brings Changes to Gate House

A \$100,000 matching grant from the Lancaster County D&A Commission has allowed The Gate House to perform some much needed physical plant and technology upgrades. The Gate House is a non-profit organization that provides behavioral health services to men and women recovering from addiction, including outpatient counseling, halfway house, and recovery house services.

The grant, which was matched with donations and funds from private foundations, was used to replace a 40 year old kitchen, address cosmetic and structural issues in the Mountville and Lititz locations, and provide computers that residents can use to assist in job search and education.

According to Gatehouse Executive Director, Don MacIntyre, "The Gate House serves clients engaged in the life and death struggle to recover from addiction. Our purpose is to help clients return to productive, satisfying lives, contributing to their families and communities. We need every tool available to help in this struggle including a safe, dignified, home-like place for clients to live. The grant from the Lancaster County Drug & Alcohol Commission made an enormous difference in our ability to provide this kind of home. Because of the Commission's generosity, we're proud of the environment we can provide to the women and men we serve."



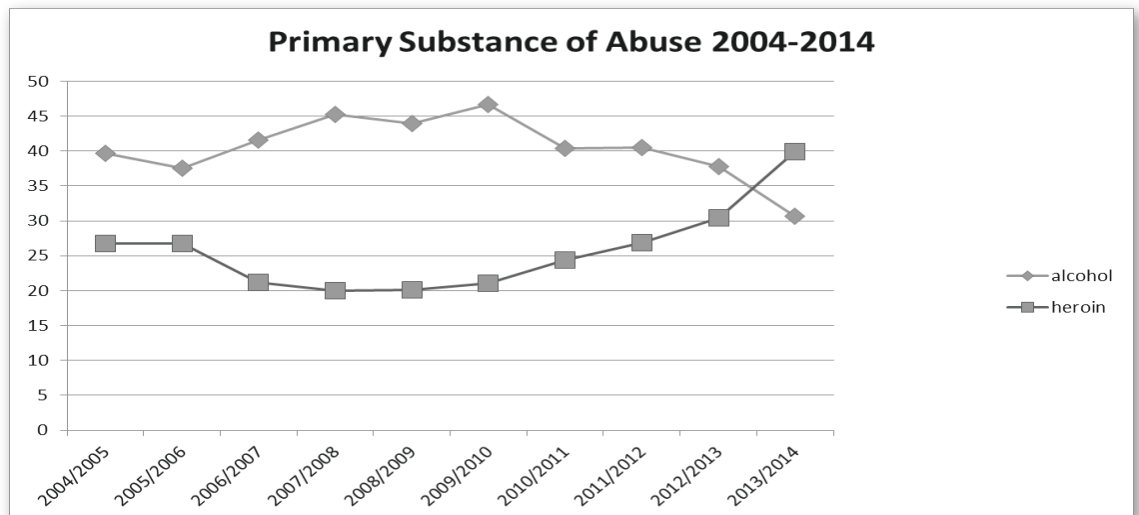
Cabinets and countertops replaced in the men's house kitchen courtesy of the grant.



The living room at the men's house. All living room furniture was replaced via the grant.

Heroin has Become the Primary Substance of Abuse Among Lancaster County Funded Clients

Over the past ten years, while alcohol declined as the primary drug of choice for Lancaster County-funded clients, heroin increased. As of 2013 it is the most often reported primary substance of abuse among SCA-funded clients.



NALOXONE: SAVE A LIFE!

Act 139 What You Need to Know

Act 139 is a law that went into effect in Pennsylvania on November 29, 2014. It allows Naloxone, a life-saving opioid overdose reversal medicine, to be prescribed to a third party, such as a friend or family member, and administered by law enforcement and firefighters. In addition, it provides legal protection for witnesses, or “Good Samaritans,” seeking medical help at the scene of an overdose.

Naloxone is a non-narcotic, lifesaving medication that can reverse the effects of a heroin or other opiate overdose and save the life of the user. It does not treat addiction or withdrawal symptoms, but rather restores respiration so that further treatment can take place.

According to Act 139, police officers, firefighters, emergency responders, family members, friends, and others in a position to be able to help someone who is overdosing, may be prescribed naloxone and may lawfully administer the drug to someone who is experiencing an overdose. Additionally, under the Good Samaritan provision, fellow drug-users may call 911 to get help for someone who is overdosing, without fear of prosecution for drug possession, so long as they comply with the requirements of the Act (e.g. remaining with the overdosing individual until help comes).

Friends and family members can obtain Naloxone by requesting a prescription from their physician. A free state-approved online training on the use of this lifesaving drug can be found by visiting <https://www.pavtn.net/act-139-training>. The PA Department of Drug and Alcohol programs also provides a Friends and Family Toolkit. Visit their website at www.ddap.pa.gov.



Signs of an opioid (heroin or narcotic pain reliever) overdose:

- ✓ Slow and shallow breathing.
- ✓ Very sleepy and unable to talk or unconscious.
- ✓ Blue lips and fingertips.
- ✓ Snoring or gurgling sounds.

**Want to know more about
Naloxone?
See the fact sheet on page 7!**

PA State Police Will Carry Naloxone

Acting State Health Secretary Dr. Karen Murphy announced that Pennsylvania State Police troopers will now carry Naloxone, the lifesaving overdose reversal drug. PA Physician General Dr. Rachel Levine signed a standing order for Naloxone nasal spray, which will be distributed to state troopers. The supply of Naloxone is being funded by a combination of grants from Aetna, Geisinger Health, Health Partner Plans, and Highmark.

Need to know more about helping someone who is addicted to heroin or prescription drugs? For help in Lancaster County visit Compass Mark at www.compassmark.org or call (717) 299-2831.

The Possible Impact of Legalization: What Can We Learn from Colorado?

As Pennsylvania wrestles with the question of marijuana legalization, several other states are already confronting the challenges of legal cannabis sales. A recent series of articles in the Colorado Springs Gazette highlighted problems that have been encountered during the first year of legalization in that state. Although this series was editorial in nature, there is much that can be learned from the facts and figures presented. Legalization clearly has a significant impact that goes far beyond the consumers of marijuana. Here are some of the problems being experienced in Colorado.

Revenue is Not What was Promised

The tax “windfall” that legal marijuana was supposed to bring has been less than expected. This is largely due to conflicting legislation and the fact that many consumers have been obtaining their marijuana through medical dispensaries and home growing (neither of which are subjected to tax). The \$100 million in projected revenue has actually been about \$33 million. New programs (health, education, etc.) that were proposed have been drastically cut or are on hold.

Regulatory Measures are Inadequate

One of the often repeated slogans in the campaign for legalization was “Regulation Works.” However, many of the basic regulatory mechanisms have not happened. Some remain unfunded. Some are simply inadequate. For example, potency levels are tested in over-the-counter sales, but not in medical sales, where most of the marijuana is sold. Despite promises, there is little adequate data on sales, distribution, and use. It is believed that a lot of marijuana is diverted and illegally resold after initial sale, but there is no way to know how much. State agencies do not have the funding, training, or tools to track this.



Driving Under the Influence

It is illegal to drive under the influence of marijuana just like alcohol. But unlike alcohol, there is not yet a standardized,

consistent method of determining impairment. This also makes it difficult for employers, who are still subject to federal Dept. of Transportation drug testing regulations. Some construction and trucking companies have had to advertise out-of-state to find truck drivers who can pass a pre-employment drug screen. The Colorado Department of Transportation is not currently equipped to even begin to measure the impact.



Drug-related Crime

The idea of legal marijuana eliminating the black market drug trade has not panned out. Forty other states have reported seizures of Colorado marijuana products. Seizures of outward bound marijuana have risen 400%. The Mexican drug cartels, who were supposed to have been put out of business by legalization, have simply switched to opium and methamphetamine. Mexican heroin seizures have tripled since 2009 and meth has increased 5 times.

Preventing Use in Children

Marijuana is legal for adults only, just like alcohol. But a June 2014 survey of school resource officers showed that 89% have seen an increase in marijuana-related problems. Little is known about the effects of marijuana on newborns and nursing infants because little data has been collected up to this point. While it is known that THC, the chemical in marijuana, is delivered from mother to baby through breast milk (in fact, THC concentrations are often higher in breast milk than the mother's bloodstream, due to the chemical's fat solubility), it is not known how many infants are THC-exposed. Data is collected on “illicit drug” exposure, but there is currently no code for THC-exposed infant.

One thing is very clear. The impact of legal-

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New Resource for Adolescents and their Families

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ties and abstinence. CM is an effective way to enhance motivation among substance abusers by leveraging their personal strengths and focusing on positive gains. Mazzitti & Sullivan staff are also trained in other types of evidence based treatment modalities.

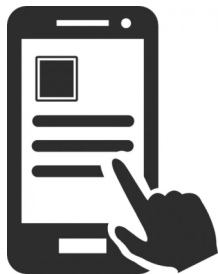
“We saw an immediate need in Lancaster County, and are honored by the opportunity to become a resource to this community,” said Andrew Sullivan, president of Mazzitti & Sullivan. “We look forward to building strong relationships and successful collaborations to provide adolescents and their families with the treatment needed for positive life change.”

For appointment scheduling or for more information about Mazzitti & Sullivan, please call 1-800-809-2925 or visit www.mazzittiandsullivan.com.

Receive D&A News electronically!



The D&A News can be sent to your email address as a PDF. To receive our newsletter this way, (or to request any other changes to our mailing list) please send an email to Lisa Starr at lstarr@co.lancaster.pa.us. To assist us in managing our mailing list, include the five digit number in the upper right hand corner of your mailing label.



Did you know that the PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs now has a mobile site? PA residents can get valuable information about addiction services in their community with a touch of their smart phone.

Visit <https://apps.ddap.pa.gov/GetHelpNow/>.

Impact of Legalization: What Can We Learn from Colorado?

(continued from page five)

zation for either medical or recreational use is widespread over many different systems: economic, criminal justice, education, medical, to name just a few. Legalization of recreational marijuana has some vocal proponents, but is not widely supported in Pennsylvania. However, the medicinal uses of marijuana are of great interest to many, particularly those with loved ones who suffer from debilitating diseases that have not been relieved by other medical treatments. What should be done? The Pennsylvania Association of County Drug and Alcohol Administrators has chosen to be guided by the opinion of medical experts from the following organizations. It should be noted that none of these medical experts support the legalization of smoked marijuana.

American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM)

ASAM recognizes the therapeutic potential of cannabis and cannabinoids, given the recent discovery of the human endocannabinoid receptor system, and supports increased funding for research on marijuana that explores mechanisms of its action, its effects on the human body, and the potential for its clinical application. However, ASAM insists that marijuana, like any other drug, be subject to federal standards for drug approval that establish safety, efficacy and purity and distribution that limits nonmedical uses and diversions.

American Psychiatric Association (APA)

Further research on the use of cannabis-derived substances as medicine should be encouraged and facilitated by the federal government. The adverse effects of marijuana, including, but not limited to, the likelihood of addiction, must be simultaneously studied. If scientific evidence supports the use of cannabis-derived substances to treat specific condition, the medication should be subject to the approval process of the FDA. With regard to states, medical treatment should be evidence-based and determined by professional standards of care.

American Medical Association (AMA)

The AMA calls for further adequate and well-controlled studies of marijuana and related cannabinoids in patients who have serious conditions for which preclinical, anecdotal, or controlled evidence suggests possible efficacy and the application of such results to the understanding and treatment of disease.

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP)

Adolescents are especially vulnerable to adverse consequences of marijuana use. Medical marijuana dispensing is associated with reduced perception of marijuana-related risks and increased rates of marijuana use among adolescents. AACAP thus opposes medical marijuana dispensing to adolescents.

American College of Physicians (ACP)

ACP supports programs and funding for rigorous scientific evaluation of the potential therapeutic benefits of medical marijuana and the publication of such findings. ACP supports increased research for conditions where the efficacy of marijuana has been established to determine optimal dosage and route of delivery. Medical marijuana research should not only focus on determining drug efficacy and safety but also on determining efficacy in comparison with other available treatments.

Drug overdoses are a major killer of young adults in Pennsylvania:

- According to coroners' reports there have been more than 3000 deaths in Pennsylvania due to overdose since 2009.
- Overdose has now surpassed motor vehicle accidents as the number one cause of death for persons age 25-64.



Naloxone can save lives:

- Naloxone is a prescription medicine that reverses opioid (prescription or heroin) overdoses. It has been used successfully in hospitals since 1971.
- When administered during an overdose, naloxone blocks the effects of opioids on the brain and restores breathing within two to eight minutes.
- Naloxone is safe and is not addictive. You cannot get high from Naloxone.
- Naloxone is NOT a substitute for emergency care. Persons who have received the drug still need to get medical help immediately. Sometimes additional doses of the drug will have to be administered by the hospital.
- Naloxone can trigger withdrawal in a person who is addicted to heroin or other opiates. This means they will experience pain, agitation, and drug cravings upon regaining consciousness. This is another reason why it is essential to seek emergency help when administering Naloxone.

Naloxone is now available by prescription:

- The enactment of Act 139 provides first responders, friends and families access to Naloxone. It is hoped that increasing access to this lifesaving drug will prevent deaths and lead addicts toward the substance abuse treatment they need.
- Naloxone can be obtained by requesting a prescription from a physician and having it filled at any pharmacy. For free online training to help friends and family learn how to administer Naloxone safely, visit <https://www.pavtn.net/act-139-training>.
- The PA Department of Drug and Alcohol programs also provides a Friends and Family Toolkit. Visit their website at www.ddap.pa.gov.

For overdose or other medical emergency call 911.

For more information on substance abuse and addiction and how to get help for yourself or a loved one in Lancaster County, contact Compass Mark at (717) 299-2831 or visit www.compassmark.org.

LANCASTER COUNTY
DRUG AND ALCOHOL COMMISSION
150 N. QUEEN ST.
LANCASTER, PA 17603

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

LOOKING FOR OUR OFFICE?

We are located at 150 N. Queen St., Lancaster, on the fourth floor.

For the most updated and comprehensive list of local D&A trainings and events, please visit www.compassmark.org. Don't forget to check out the interactive calendar! It helps you search for the workshops and events that interest you!

Service Provider Meetings

Meetings will be held: April 14, August 11, and December 8, 2015. The August meeting is a joint meeting for both treatment and prevention providers. The April and December meetings are for treatment providers only. Meetings are generally held at 3:00 PM at 150 N. Queen St. on the first floor in conference room 102. Call (717) 299-8023 to confirm details.

For more information about events, contact the D&A Commission at (717) 299-8023.

COUNTY HOLIDAYS

The D&A Commission will be closed for the following County holidays in 2015: Jan. 1, 19; Feb. 16; Apr. 3; May 25; July 3; Sept. 7; Oct. 12; Nov. 11, 26, 27; Dec. 25.

Single County Authority (SCA) Meetings

Meetings will be held April 27, May 18, July 27, Sept. 28, and Nov. 16, 2015.

Meetings are generally held at 6:00 PM at 150 N. Queen St., Lancaster.

To confirm meeting times and locations, call (717) 299-8023.

For emergency and weather-related closings and delays of Lancaster County offices, please tune in to local radio stations or watch WGAL-TV8. Emergency closings are also announced on the Lancaster County website at www.co.lancaster.pa.us.