

Belchertown Opioid Awareness Taskforce – Meeting Notes from 1/10/17

Present: Phyllis DuComb, Kim Dion, Jill Panto, Craig Bodamer, Jason Krol,
Guests: Chief Pronovost, Amy Henderson of “The Sentinel”



BPD’s protocols surrounding responses to calls involving overdose were discussed with Chief Pronovost. Kim shared that in some towns, responding officers were taking not only any leftover drugs and “rigs”, but also Narcan from the scene. We want to make individuals comfortable with calling 911 in an overdose situation, and want to be sure that the public understands that our police officers must prioritize saving the life of the person in an overdose state, then keeping others in the household safe at that time. They are required to secure evidence in case the situation results in fatality, as well, which can include taking any visible drugs or paraphernalia. Unused Narcan, however, would not be something that would need to be seized.

A discussion about harm reduction ensued, with Kim and the Chief agreeing to have a further discussion, and to hold a training session on harm reduction for the department.

“The Sentinel’s” police logs were then discussed. There is concern that having “suspected overdose” in the log at an address or on a specific street could further deter people from calling 911 in the case of overdose. The decision had already been made to log those calls as medical calls in the police log, which will result in “The Sentinel” (Amy) publishing them that way. We further noted that it is important that the public know that overdoses are still happening in Belchertown. Craig will look into how best to track the police use of Narcan along with the Fire/EMS use, so that it can be reflected regularly in the news paper.

The BOAT column will be published in “The Sentinel” on the first Thursday of each month. We will need to come up with an intro and a headline. We will be able to use Hampshire HOPE articles, where appropriate, as long as the original author sends them to us/Amy. She cannot mention “first published in The Gazette.”

Waiting for confirmation of use of the JBMS cafeteria on March 16 for our community panel. (*That confirmation has since been received.*) Phyllis will confirm with Gail Gramarossa that she is available to moderate, once the space is set. (*Gail is available, per Phyllis on 1/17.*)

We hope to have food at the 3/16 event, perhaps funded the QHCTF, and Narcan training will be provided. Hampshire HOPE will be able to hand out vouchers for free Narcan to participants.

Phyllis will work on creating a poster for the event. We will get it to Amy Henderson & TV5. Our official group name will be Belchertown Opioid Awareness Taskforce, and we discussed having a “life saver” style life preserver as our logo. Jay was going to work on getting art work done for that.

The next monthly column will come from Hampshire HOPE and Kim will follow up on that. Jill has written the first article and will submit to Kim no later than 1/27.

Awareness, prevention and treatment resources are being gathered for the Town's web page. It was decided that links to this information will go on the Police Department, Board of Health and main page. Chief Pronovost will also have it placed on the new "MyPD" app. Jill will forward everything to the appropriate people to have these pages added.

Next meeting: January 24, 9am.