

Franklin Mayor's Drug Task Force

Task Force Meeting Minutes

Thursday September 11, 2014

5:00pm – 7:00pm

Present: Elizabeth Dragon, Melissa Rizzo, Chief Goldstein, Mayor Merrifield, Joe Giunta, Lynn Haskell, George Dzujna, Rich Masters, Marcia Feener, Josh Lee, Rep Leigh Webb, Gary Hicks, Bruce Robert, Jacqueline Dawe, Chief LaChapelle, Lucy Natkiel, Dr. Racicot

Elizabeth Dragon welcomed everyone to the meeting and passed around the sign in sheet.

Mayor's Minute: Mayor Merrifield noted some statistics from the Office of Drug Control. He noted drug overdose deaths were greater than automobile accidents in 2010. He also noted that under the list of solutions/responses to this epidemic was the Franklin Mayor's Drug Task force. The Mayor thanked everyone for being part of the solution!

Elizabeth Dragon briefly reviewed the recent site visit by the DFC. She thanked everyone for participating and felt that it was a very successful visit.

Speakers Chief Lachapelle & LRGH Dr. Racicot:

Chief LaChapelle reviewed a power point recently given at a heroine symposium in Plymouth. (slide show attached). Drug overdose rates have been rising steadily since 1992. As the mayor mentioned, NH has seen drug related deaths surpass motor vehicle related deaths. Traffic fatalities are down because of all the added safety features in cars now. Heroin is highly addictive. On the Franklin ambulance they have administered narcan 16 times in 9 months. That doesn't mean that each time was an overdose-it could have been a suspected overdose or a different issue causing a breathing problem. Dr. Racicot noted one of things they are seeing at the emergency room is horse de-wormer being added to heroin in attempt to make it even more potent. Members of the task force noted that the information being provided tonight is very timely as we begin the process of reaching out to the community and different stakeholders to determine if the task force priorities need to be adjusted or if we are on the right track for our DFC grant reapplication (years 6-10). Chief LaChapelle suggested we could dig deeper into the 19 incidents and get even more insight. There is a great deal of information and statistics available through the EMS tracking software. Chief LaChapelle noted that the fire/ems services are but one spoke of the wheel. The focus is on combining with other strategies and departments such as police & prevention efforts like the task force. To share information and address issues in a more collaborative manner. Dr. Racicot noted that he has been here for 30yrs in the LRGH emergency room. He has seen how mental health issues and drug issues are intertwined. In the 1900's the opiate epidemic started in soft drinks and everyone was getting addicted. This began the efforts of the FDA to control substances in things we eat & drink. The second epidemic hit in the 1980's when they made oxycontin but didn't make it tamper proof. People began crushing and snorting and all of a sudden pain became huge crises. Everyone said they were pain and it wasn't being relieved. We have since cleaned it up some and made it tamper proof. However, when we clamped down on pills people turned to heroine. The average addict got about 3 grams per day for \$100 vs. a pill taker who needed about 20-30 pills per day for cost of \$150-\$200 per day. Heroin became cheaper and easier to find. In this area many people are going down to Boston to get it half price. Some even take the bus down. He stated that 25% of America is addicted to drugs or alcohol. A lot of these addicts function. So what's the current state of the state- in the emergency room they are seeing less pills and more heroin users? Almost all of the heroin addicts started on marijuana in school. Marijuana kills brain cells needed for complex decision making. The frontal lobe of the brain is still developing until age 30 for males and 25 for females. In his opinion, decriminalization of marijuana is the first step to legalization. The medical field is 100% against legalization. The debate is still around decriminalization. We are making progress-the prescription monitoring system should be ready by October. Police and physicians will have access to

this system. Physicians have also taken the position against new long acting pain meds that aren't tamper proof. Treatment for addicts work the earlier you are involved because the brain is damaged over time. The brain will even give you selective dreams of how wonderful using is and you have to fight your brain the rest of your life. The alcohol addiction cycle takes longer than narcotics. When using narcotics after 30 days you need to continue to increase to achieve the same impact. The high risk kids are the socially outcast kids, the star athlete and the most social kid who feels they are invisible. One out of every ten will get addicted. All of the females that he has worked with say that their boyfriends stated them on it. Addiction impacts work, people begin to steal to feed their habit, and it definitely impacts employee turnover rates. In the Lakes Region hospital we are seeing 20% of all babies born are addicted to drugs. Dr. Racicot said his message is we need more money for treatment, get to them younger (even grammar school), genetics plays a larger role in addiction than we first thought. A 30yr old brain has been so altered that they are being put on maintenance programs using suboxone. In his opinion the government should run those clinics because there is too much of a profit motive to hand out these maintenance medications. Get your unused prescriptions of the house. Drug testing in the work place is a deterrent. He is seeing spice overdose every day in the emergency room. Spice is stronger than marijuana and it hits the brain receptors harder. Chief Lachapelle noted that the Franklin fire department is seeing mostly 21 & 22yr olds overdosing on spice. Crystal meth is easy to solve by making Sudafed a prescription. Bath salts are not a big problem because the high so bad they usually don't purchase it again.

Chief LaChapelle & Dr. Racicot summary points-

Positive things happening- prescriptions are getting harder to get, state of NH is working fast on the spice issue now that the governor is involved, people are working together, employers are involved now, and people are recognizing the huge economic toll addiction takes on a family.

Still need to get more treatment centers, government needs to control dispensing long acting narcotics, suboxone clinics being run privately are not working because of the profit motive, we need to start younger and recognize addiction is intertwined with mental health.

Upcoming events/opportunities to volunteer:

Flyer of upcoming events was handed out... we are still looking for volunteers for several events. This evening Angela Lynch is at the High School open house with Sara Tracy, Jason Vezina. Leigh Webb & George Dzujna left this meeting early to also join them.

Meeting adjourned just after 7:00pm

Submitted by Elizabeth Dragon