

SUMMARY REPORT

FRIENDS OF
RECOVERY
New York

ONE COMMUNITY
ONE VOICE

EVENT: Recovery Talks: Community Listening Forum

DATE: 06.15.2018

LOCATION: Forest Hills, Queens, New York

ACTIVITY: Forum for individuals and family members
on alcoholism/drug addiction

COORDINATOR: Allison Weingarten, FOR-NY Policy Director

CONTACT: 518-487-4395 x 22 **LOCAL CONTACT:** Laurie Lieberman, Peer Alliance Recovery Center

About Our Event Activity...

Executive Summary

The Samaritan Daytop Village Peer Alliance Recovery Center and Friends of Recovery - New York, with the support of Queens Community House co-sponsored the FOR-NY Recovery Talks Community Listening Forum. It was the 22nd in a series of local forums being held across New York State to provide community members the opportunity to share their personal experiences with legislators, law enforcement and other leaders in dealing with alcohol and drug addiction, the loss of a family member or friend, as well as recovery from addiction.

Category Public Policy **Number of participants** 33

Purpose

- Provide a safe space for individuals and families in recovery to voice their experiences around addiction, loss and recovery.
- Help individuals and families overcome the stigma that prevents many people from seeking help.
- Engage the community in a productive discussion with local leaders that allows for more effective policies on addiction/recovery.

Satisfaction Summary (Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent...)

Overall ease of event: 3

Overall satisfaction with outcome: 5

Value to Recovery Community: 5

Recommend Repeat of Event (Y/N): Y

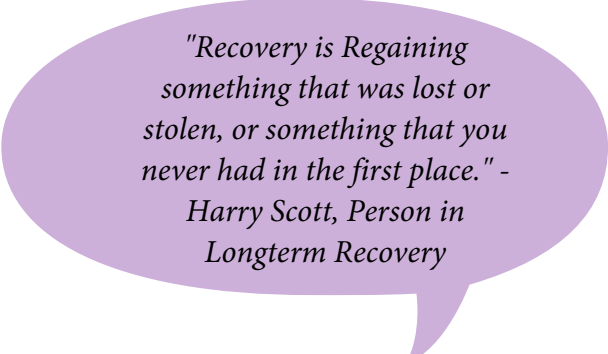
Highlights

- Speakers strongly demonstrated the power and promise of recovery—that recovery is possible.
- Speakers highlighted the importance of families in the process of recovery of their loved ones and also the importance of family members seeking their own pathway to recovery.
- Speakers uniformly attested to the unfortunate fact that the negative perception of people with addiction is still alive and well but through forums like this where people can share their stories, that negative public perception is slowly shifting.
- Many members of the diverse listening panel were able to share a personal connection to recovery from addiction.

What we Discovered

Findings

- People in recovery can attain amazing things including furthering their education and reconnecting with family.
- Family support groups are extremely beneficial.
- Nalxone (Narcan) training can save lives.
- People in recovery need a support system when they leave treatment.
- People seeking recovery need all different options as pathways to recovery including treatment, traditional 12 step groups, medication assisted treatment and access to the faith based community.
- People in recovery need to learn a new way to socialize sober—they need support to change “people, places and things.”
- Many people in recovery have been involved in the criminal justice system.
- People in recovery give back by helping others who are also seeking recovery.
- People in recovery benefit greatly from the support of family members.
- Mental illness often co-occurs with addiction.
- People seeking recovery and people in recovery still feel the negative public perception, which keeps people from getting the help they need. Listening to others share their stories is empowering to the recovery community.
- Certified Addiction Recovery Coaches and Certified Recovery Peer Advocates can help people when all other bridges have been burned.
- Safe and affordable housing is extremely important to supporting a person in recovery.
- It is important to give people enough time in early recovery and not to rush the recovery process.

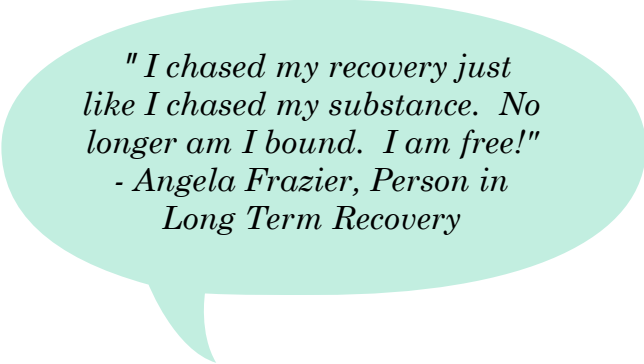


"Recovery is Regaining something that was lost or stolen, or something that you never had in the first place." - Harry Scott, Person in Longterm Recovery

What we Discovered (Continued)

- NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is engaging in an ad campaign to spread the message of the importance of carrying and using Narcan by highlighting real New Yorkers who have saved lives utilizing the life saving treatment
- NYC Health and Hospitals will be launching the Consult for Addiction Treatment and Care in Hospitals (CATCH) program. CATCH includes linking Substance Use Disorder patients with a peer specialist and providing medication assisted treatment.
- Thrive NYC includes 54 initiatives—including connecting people with a mental health or substance use disorder to a peer specialist and offering mental health first aid courses.

Recommendations



*" I chased my recovery just like I chased my substance. No longer am I bound. I am free!"
- Angela Frazier, Person in Long Term Recovery*

- The first step is for community decision makers to acknowledge that there is actually a problem with addiction in our community.
 - Wraparound services including Medication Assisted Treatment and Peer Services must be funded for those seeking recovery.
 - Recovery Housing needs to be funded and better regulated.
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- Young people need the education on what alcohol and other drugs can do to a young person's brain and body in order to prevent misuse.
 - At least one Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention/intervention (SAPIS) Counselor is needed in every NYC public school.
 - Mental illness must be treated along with treatment for addiction. Mental health and Substance Use Disorder services must no longer be in kept in siloes.
 - Services should not be one-size-fits all. Services should be tailored to individual needs.
 - Insurance parity must be enforced so that those seeking treatment can access the care they need.
 - Policy makers and the media need to change the way addiction is talked about so that the negative perception of people with addiction/in recovery, changes.
 - Addiction must be treated as a chronic disease and not as crime.

Agenda and Participants

- 5:30 pm** **Welcome:** Laurie Lieberman, Director, Peer Alliance Recovery Center
Stephanie Campbell, Executive Director, FOR-NY
- 5:40 pm** **Moderator:** Allison Weingarten, Director of Policy, FOR-NY
- Panelists:** NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo Jr, 15th Senate District; NYS Assemblyman Brian Barnwell, 30th Assembly District; Barney Chow, ThriveNYC, Public Health Educator; NYS Assemblyman Michael DenDekker, 34th Assembly District; Stacey Eliuk, Queens Outreach Coordinator for Letitia James, NYC Public Advocate; Elaine Xiaojiang Fan, Queens Director, Office of NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer; David Fritz, Social Work Supervisor, Legal Aid Society, Criminal Defense Practice; Yvette Jeanty, Queens Program Director for Substance Use Prevention Services, NYC Department of Education; Katherine Mooney, Office of NYC Council Member Adrienne Adams, 28th Council District; Jacqueline Rodriguez, NYC Health + Hospitals/Queens; Nilova (Tina) Saha and Mindy Nass, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; Talya Skolnik, Office of Queens Borough President Melinda Katz; Henry Yam, Office of NYC Council Member Rory Lancman, 24th Council District; Jordan Goldes, Office of US Congresswoman Grace Meng
- 5:50 pm** **Speakers:** Community Members
- 7:10 pm** **Comments :** Listening Panel
- 7:25 pm** **W r a p U p:** Stephanie Campbell

Co-Sponsor



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RECOVERY TALKS:

Community Listening Forum on Addiction and Recovery

This is a series of local forums being held across New York State to provide community members the opportunity to share personal experiences in dealing with alcohol and drug addiction, loss of a family member or friend, as well as recovery from addiction.

The Listening Forums will engage the community in discussion with local leaders and result in a report titled, The State of Addiction Recovery in New York to better inform the public and policy makers.

CO-SPONSORED BY:



**Friday, June 15, 2018
5:30 PM to 7:30 PM**

**Russell Sage Junior High School (J.H.S. 190)
Auditorium
68-17 Austin Street
Forest Hills, NY 11375**

To register email: aweingarten@for-ny.org

Speaker's remarks will be limited to 3 minutes in order to allow as many people as possible to speak

For more information contact:

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