

SUMMARY REPORT

FRIENDS OF
RECOVERY
New York

ONE COMMUNITY
ONE VOICE

EVENT: Recovery Talks: Community Listening Forum

DATE: 12.05.2018

LOCATION: Ellis Hospital Graham Auditorium
1101 Nott St. Schenectady, New
York 12308

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

COORDINATOR: Allison Weingarten, LMSW, FOR-NY, Interim Executive Director

CONTACT: 518-487-4395 x 22 **LOCAL CONTACT:** Nancy Jones
518-280.9895, njones@newchoicesrecovery.org

About Our Event Activity...

Executive Summary

Friends of Recovery – Schenectady and Friends of Recovery – New York co-sponsored the FOR-NY Recovery Talks Community Listening Forum. It was the 23rd 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** 35

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: 5

Overall satisfaction with outcome: 5

Value to Recovery Community: 5

Recommend Repeat of Event (Y/N): Y

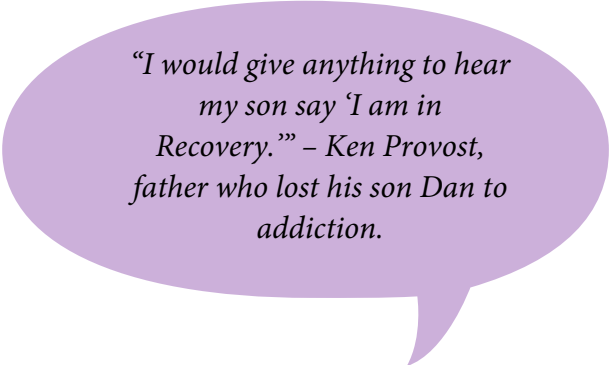
Highlights

- Seven speakers shared either their story, or their child's story of recovery, showing that recovery is possible
- Recovery allowed people on the panel to be mothers, fathers and employed, tax paying members of society.
- With the right resources and supports recovery is possible!

What we Discovered

Findings

- Continuum of care is essential to make sure no one falls through the cracks.
- Discrimination against people with addiction prevents people from seeking and getting the help they need, particularly for the LGBTQ population and young people
- Doctors must be educated better on prescribing addictive medication and must understand if a patient has a history of Substance Use Disorder
- Treatment cannot be universal- it must be individualized based on need
- Harm reduction saves lives
- Prevention needs more resources to help both children and parents attain needed services.
- Co-payments can be a deterrant to getting needed medication for addiction. A person should not have to choose between buying food and buying medication
- Housing is a major barrier to finding recovery.



"I would give anything to hear my son say 'I am in Recovery.'" – Ken Provost, father who lost his son Dan to addiction.

Recommendations

“Do not give up hope on people with addiction. Maintaining services like the COTI program saves lives!” Chad Putnam, Person in Long Term Recovery

- Grassroots organizations like Friends of Recovery – Schenectady must continue to organize boots on the ground to end the negative public perception of people with addiction. People in recovery must continue meeting with local elected officials so their voices are represented in legislation being proposed and moved. The recovery community must continue to reach out to potential allies so that more people will come out of the shadows and help to end the negative public perception of people with addiction.

- Provide services specifically catered towards LGBTQ and Youth Population
- Provide education and training to police force. Police force only sees people at their worst. If the police force were able to see people in recovery, their negative perception of people with addiction may change.
- Recovery must be celebrated!
- Data must be collected to lead to solutions to the Opioid Crisis
- Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder must both be treated. No more silos!
- Doctors must receive education about the dangers of prescribing addictive drugs.
- Harm reduction needs support as a life-saving pathway to recovery
- Prevention needs more attention and resources
- Housing, including emergency housing, must be a higher priority to help people find recovery

Agenda and Participants

- 5:30 pm** **Welcome:** Nancy Jones, Friends of Recovery – Schenectady
- 5:40 pm** **Moderator:** Allison Weingarten, Interim Executive Director, FOR-NY
- Panelists:** Laura Combs, LCSW-R, CASAC-G, CPP-G Associate Executive Director New Choices Recovery Center; Carrie Dunn-Herrera, Department of Health Schenectady County; Sergeant Jeff McCutcheon, Schenectady Police Department; Jonathan Pirro, Director of Policy, Senator James Tedisco, New York State District 49; Dr. J. Antonio Reyes, MD, FAAFP, Chair, Department of Family Medicine and Medical Director, Primary Care and Practice Transformation for Ellis Medicine; Darin Samaha, Director of Community Services Schenectady County; Colleen Williams, District Director, Office of Congressman Paul D. Tonko (NY-20)
- 5:50 pm** **Speakers:** Tele Rabii, Young Person in Recovery; Martina Swiers, Clinical Professional and person in recovery; Lori Teaney, Young Person in Recovery; Nancy Jones, Family Member and Prevention Specialist; Shayna Shazam, Person in Recovery; Rima Cerrone, Family Member; Xavier McDaniel, Person in Recovery; Ken Provost, Family Member; Chad Putnam, Professional and person in recovery
- 6:45 pm** **Comments:** Listening Panel
- 7:25 pm** **Wrap Up:** Allison Weingarten

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:



Wednesday

December 5, 2018

5:30 PM to 7:30 PM

Ellis Hospital Graham Auditorium

1101 Nott St

Schenectady, NY 12308

To register Click here:

<https://app.donorview.com/vD1G>

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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