



NATICK BOARD OF HEALTH
13 East Central Street
Natick, MA 01760

Phone 508-647-6460
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MEMO

DATE: May 30, 2019

TO: Michael J. Hickey, Jr., Chair, Natick Board of Selectmen

FROM: Cheryle Lucenta, Natick Opioid Task Force Chair
James M. White, Jr., Natick Opioid Task Force Vice-Chair

RE: Restructuring of Natick Opioid Task Force Work

Dear Chair Hickey,

The Natick Opioid Task Force (OTF) has completed the Board of Selectmen's charge to:

- *Seek to build a sustainable, coordinated, multi-disciplinary system of support, education and treatment for those affected by this public health crisis;*
- *Ensure for the effective coordination and enhancement of local resources; and*
- *Make recommendations on programs and/or service expansion based upon current knowledge.*

The Task Force shall develop partnerships with key stakeholders in the community and meet with this group at least quarterly. Such partners may include but shall not be limited to a recovery coach/recovering addict, a specialist in senior citizen addiction issues, a representative from SPARK Kindness, a representative from Faith-based organizations, and others who offer informed perspectives in support of the Task Force's mission.

The Task Force members recommends the creation of a unified coalition overseen by the Board of Health in collaboration with the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee. The new coalition will coordinate the Town of Natick's effectiveness and efficiency in preventing and reducing substance use disorders. The OTF respectfully recommends that the Board of Selectmen vote to dissolve the OTF and support the creation of a unified coalition that includes Natick Together for Youth (NTY) and is managed by the Natick Board of Health.

Progress Summary

The OTF is proud to report the following:

- The Natick Police Department (NPD) in collaboration with Advocates, South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC) and Justice Resource Center (JRI) Health established a post-overdose and follow-up protocols. This grant funded projects connected 25 individuals to services at no additional cost to the Town.
- Funding from the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Advocates Jail Diversion Program provided funding to hire a mental health clinician. In April 2019, the clinician began 'ride-alongs' during NPD responses. The clinician provides mental health assessments, crisis counseling, treatment referrals and coordinates post-overdose follow-up visits with Advocates, SMOC and JRI.
- The Natick Health Department developed an intranasal naloxone (Narcan) and distribution program that trained more than 200 individuals in responding to an opioid overdose. Seventy-five (75) Narcan kits have been distributed. Those

trained include family members of individuals with opioid use disorders, Town employees, volunteers, local businesses and community organizations.

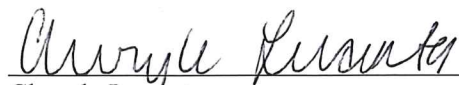
- More than 2,500 cards were distributed in identifying Natick resources and supports for those experiencing substance use disorders. The cards included input from SOAR Natick parents, the Natick Police and Fire Department.
- Natick Public Schools (NPS) expanded their grade 5-12 health education curriculum to enhance current opioid and other substance use prevention programs.
- NPS implemented Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) and depression screenings in the middle and high schools to screen students for substance use and depression and provide referrals.
- Approximately 2,000 pounds of unused medications were collected and destroyed through the medication disposal program sponsored by the NPD and Natick Health Department.
- In 2016, the Natick Community Services Department created and disseminated over 16,000 informational booklets about opioid use disorder and treatment resources to Natick residents.
- To support Natick parents and families impacted by substance use disorders:
 - In 2017, a Natick resident who lost a child to overdose, created “The Journey Bereavement Group”. The Journey meets monthly in space provided by the Natick Community Senior Center and supported by the Health Department.
 - *Learn a Better Way* is a parents/guardians’ workshop series for young person experiencing substance use disorder. A Natick trained parent coach for the Partnership for Drug Free Kids facilitates a meeting in a space provided by the Natick Service Council. Meeting materials are funded by the Natick Rotary Club.
- The OTF in partnership with Natick Together for Youth, SPARK Kindness, SOAR Natick, Natick Public Schools, Natick and Charles River Rotary Clubs and the Natick Interfaith Clergy Association supported more than a dozen community education events and resource tables. These events provide the distribution of research-based information about substance use prevention, treatment and recovery to more than 1,000 community members.
- The Town of Natick has been awarded more than \$700,000 in grant and private donations supporting Natick’s efforts to reduce substance use disorders. Funding includes \$625,000 in federal Drug Free Communities (DFC) grant, \$60,000 in FY2019 Massachusetts legislative earmarks, and \$10,000 in grant funds from the MetroWest Health Foundation. The NPD secured \$20,000 in substance use prevention funds from the non-profit PhRMA. Additionally, Natick community organizations and businesses have donated more than \$10,000 to the Town of Natick in response to the opioid crisis.

Sustainability of OTF Mission and Goals

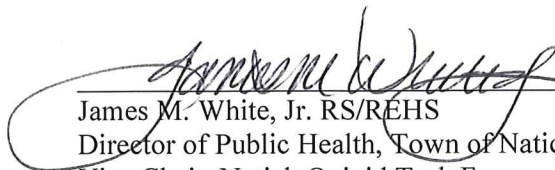
The OTF completed a four-month strategic planning process that yielded recommendations for staffing, organizational development, and programmatic needs. As such, we believe that a formal dissolution of the OTF as it currently exists and an integration of its work with the prevention work of NTY will yield long-term results that are in the health interests of Natick residents.

As members of the Natick Opioid Task Force, we are grateful to the Board’s establishment and support of the OTF. The creation of the OTF has been instrumental in increasing Natick’s capacity to address substance abuse issue and that the Town is better for the collaborations that have been built. We look forward to further sustaining these efforts and integrating them into a comprehensive, communitywide approach that promotes the prevention of, treatment of, and recovery from substance use disorder.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Lucenta
Co-Founder, SOAR Natick
Chair, Natick Opioid Task Force



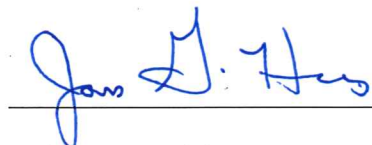
James M. White, Jr. RS/REHS
Director of Public Health, Town of Natick
Vice Chair, Natick Opioid Task Force



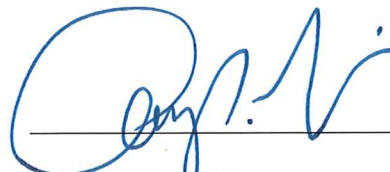
Susan G. Salamoff
Vice-Chair, Natick Board of Selectmen



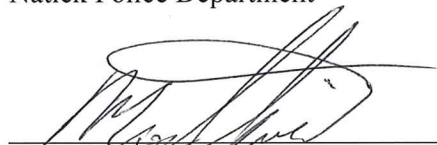
Ian L. Wong, MSPH
Chair, Natick Board of Health



Chief James Hicks
Natick Police Department



Anna Nolin, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Natick Public Schools



Chief Michael Lentini
Natick Fire Department