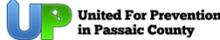


A TOWN HALL SERIES

KNOCK OUT OPIOID ABUSE



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Passaic County Residents and Experts to Discuss Opioid Epidemic at Knock Out Opioid Abuse Town Hall

HAWTHORNE — Passaic County residents are encouraged to make their voices heard in discussions on the statewide opioid epidemic at a Knock Out Opioid Abuse Town Hall organized by the Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey and the Horizon Foundation for New Jersey.

The town hall, which will be open to the public free of charge, will be held from **7-9 p.m. Thursday, May 3** at **Hawthorne Gospel Church, 2000 NJ-208, Hawthorne, NJ 07506**. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for registration. The program will be held with collaboration with Hawthorne Gospel Church, United for Prevention in Passaic County, Desire 4 Hope and the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office.

“Community members will play a major role in finding solutions to this epidemic, and their presence is vital at the Knock Out Opioid Abuse Town Hall to learn more about this issue and to express their concerns and ideas for solving the crisis,” said Angelo Valente, Executive Director of the Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey. “No one is immune to the opioid epidemic, and only by coming together can we effectively find solutions.”

The series, which began in 2017 and has been hosted in 15 counties, focuses on the link between prescription opioid dependency and heroin use and examines the causes and possible solutions of the opioid crisis from several perspectives, including law enforcement, the medical community, prevention, recovery and government.

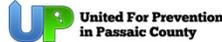
“I look forward to discussing law enforcement efforts to combat the opioid crisis in Passaic County with our partners and community members,” said Passaic County Prosecutor Camelia M. Valdes, one of the event's expert panelists.

In 2016, the most recent year in which complete data is available, 108 people died of drug overdoses in Passaic County, including 66 deaths related to heroin, 42 related to fentanyl and 15 related to oxycodone, according to the New Jersey Office of the State Medical Examiner. The overdose death rate in the county increased by more than 30 percent from 2015.

“Community members are essential partners as we address the opioid crisis,” said Dr. William Kernan, Chairperson of the Department of Public Health at William Paterson University. “We must

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engage the community in discussing potential responses and town hall meetings create a space for these important discussions.”

Speakers will include:

- Passaic County Prosecutor Camelia M. Valdes
- Rachael Honig, First Assistant to the United States Attorney for the District of New Jersey
- Dr. William D. Kernan, Professor and Chairperson, Department of Public Health, William Paterson University of New Jersey
- Steve M. Aydin, D.O. Chief of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and Interventional Pain Management, Kayal Orthopaedic Center
- Adelaide Viguri, D.O. Associate Medical Director, Emergency Medicine Pain Management, St. Joseph's Health
- Tim Stanley, Desire 4 Hope
- Alton Robinson, Lead Peer Recovery Specialist, CARES-NJ

A dedicated website, knockoutopioidabuse.drugfreenj.org, includes the full schedule of countywide town hall meetings and registration information. Knockoutopioidabuse.drugfreenj.org also provides local, county and state substance abuse prevention and treatment resources available.

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Best known for its statewide anti-drug advertising campaign, the Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey is a private not-for-profit coalition of professionals from the communications, corporate and government communities whose collective mission is to reduce demand for illicit drugs in New Jersey through media communication. To date, more than \$100 million in broadcast time and print space has been donated to the Partnership's New Jersey campaign, making it the largest public service advertising campaign in New Jersey's history. Since its inception, the Partnership has garnered 166 advertising and public relations awards from national, regional and statewide media organizations.

