

CONTACT:
Sarah Hayden
Mental Health and Recovery Services Board
(330) 430-3931
shayden@starkmhrs.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STARK COUNTY OPIATE SYMPOSIUM SET FOR MON., DEC. 14

Day long event focuses on community solutions for prescription opioid abuse and heroin use

Stark County, OH (Nov. 23, 2015) – The Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Stark County is hosting their second annual Opiate Symposium on Mon., Dec. 14 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Walsh University Barrette Center, 2020 E. Maple St. in North Canton. Stark County medical professionals, attorneys, law enforcement, criminal justice teams, health and human service providers, school staff, business and human resources staff, parents, families and students are invited to learn about new solutions from across the country and our community's strategies to combat the heroin epidemic.

Register online by Dec. 9 at www.StarkMHRsb.org/OpiateSymposium. Cost is \$15 per person which includes registration and a boxed lunch. Event and lunch sponsors are Prism Health System and Staples Advantage with in-kind support from PPI Graphics.

National and regional presenters include advocates and experts Dr. Christina Delos Reyes, Robert Garrity, JD, LISW-S, LICDC-CS, Chief Leonard Campanello, MACJ, author and mother Sandy Swenson, Keith Hochadel, M.Ed., Donna Eleo, LPCC, Dale Batdorff, founder of SOLACE of Stark County, and Sarah Nerad of the Collegiate Recovery Community from The Ohio State University. Continuing education credits including CEUs, RCHs and CMEs through Mercy Medical Center are pending for applicable sessions.

Dr. Christina Delos Reyes, morning keynote presenter, is board certified in both adult psychiatry and addiction psychiatry. With 19 years of experience, she has a wealth of knowledge to share on substance use disorders and the disease of addiction. Dr. Reyes will be discussing the brain science behind opiate addiction to explain why this addiction so different than others and why the relapse rate so high.

Robert Garrity, JD, LISW-S, LICDC-CS will be presenting his personal story as a medical professional who used opioids and is now in recovery. Robert will share his experience in the legal system as both an attorney and as an individual in long-term recovery.

Chief Leonard Campanello of the Gloucester Police Department in Massachusetts will be presenting the Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (P.A.A.R.I): Gloucester ANGEL Initiative. Along with 34 police departments in nine states, Chief Campanello is changing policy in his community by helping those addicted to drugs instead of charging them with a crime. Chief Campanello will bring his knowledge, experience and lessons learned from the field as he discusses the Gloucester ANGEL Initiative.

Sandy Swenson, author of *The Joey Song* will be presenting the afternoon keynote presentation. By the age of twenty, Swenson's son Joey has overdosed, attempted suicide, quit college, survived a near-fatal car accident, done time behind bars and had been kicked out of rehab. Swenson will share a mother's lessons of love and loss, while surviving her son's addiction.

For questions or more information about the event, please contact Training Coordinator Carrie Long at clong@starkmhrs.org or 330-455-6644.

A highly addictive opioid drug, heroin use has been steadily rising nationally, across the state and in Stark County. The Mental Health and Recovery Services Board is tracking this upswing and working with local service providers, criminal justice and law enforcement, medical professionals and business leaders, families and students to educate the community about the destructive effects and costly medical consequences of opioid abuse and heroin use. In 2014, accidental opiate overdose deaths (49) outnumbered motor vehicle traffic deaths (46) in Stark County.

About Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Stark County

Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Stark County is a multi-faceted organization of expert professionals, dedicated volunteers and concerned community leaders close to mental health and addiction needs right here at home. MHR SB is responsible for planning, funding and monitoring public mental health and addiction prevention, early intervention and treatment services delivered to the residents of Stark County. It is one of about 50 Boards coordinating the public behavioral health system across Ohio. The Board also advocates for residents with behavioral health issues at both the local and state levels and provides educational opportunities for local providers and other community stakeholders. For more online about the work of the Board, visit www.starkmhrs.org.

###