

**Minutes of the WPCNA Meeting: 11/14/17**  
Education House, 5 Homeside Lane

Guest Speakers:

Dennis Andrews - National Council of Alcohol and Drug Dependence (NCADD)

Carol Fraiser - NCADD

Johanna Acosta - Westchester Medical Center

WPCNA Board Members attending:

Todd Gordon Co-President

Bill Brady Co-President

Ron Palmer Co-Vice President

Tom Osbeck Treasurer

Ruthmarie Hicks Recording Secretary

Not in attendance: Michael Kraver - Co-Vice President

The meeting was brought to order and it was announced that the next meeting would be on December 12 with Mayor Tom Roach as the guest speaker.

Dennis Andrews talked about the fact that today we are battling technology in the war on drugs. Young people have cell phones and hear about what's "good" on the internet. YouTube is one source that they use. This is exacerbated by a lack of interpersonal relationships making it easier for young people to be isolated.

The addiction process often begins with prescription drugs such as oxycontin. But at \$25/pill, youngsters are likely to move up the ladder quickly to more affordable but dangerous hard drugs.

Once addicted, young people end up living double lives trying to sustain their drug habits.

Some dangerous combinations include heroin with fentanyl and PCP laced marijuana.

A bit of history:

This is the 3rd wave of massive addiction. The first wave happened early in the 20th century and the second was in the 60's. We are in the thick of the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave.

Some facts:

- Every 3 weeks we equal the deaths of 9/11 nationally
- In Ohio, there were 20,000 drug-related deaths so far in 2017.
- Deaths from heroin will surpass the deaths from Vietnam this year.

Johanna Acosta discussed the situation in White Plains:

White plains schools are not involved in this issue. There are several shooting galleries in White Plains alone.

Johanna knows these galleries because of her involvement with the needle exchange program through the medical center. The medical center is also involved in providing doses of Narcan (an opioid antidote).

These galleries are by "invitation only" Drug users find these galleries through the web. There are also pill parties where everyone pours pills (often prescription drugs) into a bowl and the kids pop the pills.

Question: The trend seems to be favoring legalization of marijuana ...is this really a good idea?

Marinol, the medicinal form of marijuana is used for chronic diseases. The trouble in the street that is laced with other things is very addictive.

Dennis Andrews:

There confirmed that there were two places to get Marinol in White Plains legally. You do need a card to purchase it.

The trouble with Marinol is that it stimulates Dopamine (a pleasure neurotransmitter) The Risk factors vary from person to person. But those susceptible to addiction will start to lose the ability to feel pleasure. Pleasure becomes something of a flatline. They need the drug to alleviate this because it saturates their receptors. This process is biochemical and it creates a physical dependence. Susceptibility varies.

Electronic prescriptions are going to help the situation. Doctors now have to enter they license number. It also stops people from claiming that they "lost their script" while trying to double up on the number of pills.

Chris Price mentioned that pharma has treatment guidelines. Recommendations for providers for patient profiles. All of this is supposed to influence the amount of medication given.

Johanna also mentions that doctors can no longer prescribe for off-label purposes.

Dennis mentions that most doctors prescribe appropriately. Pain management clinics need to be aware of the addiction potential.

In the old days we had PAL (Police Athletic League) We don't have programs like this anymore where school children had mentors that weren't necessarily parents.

Johanna responded that many programs have been cut throughout the county due to budget cuts.

Also, parents need to be educated before attempting to educate their children.

Chris Price asked about destigmatizing addiction.

Dennis responded the people have to be made accountable for change. The biggest gift you can give an addict who is a friend of family member. They need a toolbox for when they hit the wall.

Addict have an insatiable appetite for drugs and they can create a euphoria that we don't bounce back from.

Carol Fraiser mentions that parents have to control the situation. It's the parent's rules regarding looking in bedrooms, backpacks and controlling cell phone access.

Dennis adds in closing that young people are scared to death that they won't have a decent job. They are vulnerable. And this vulnerability opens the door for drugs.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 PM.



