

# D&A News

A PUBLICATION OF THE LANCASTER COUNTY DRUG AND ALCOHOL COMMISSION

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## The 521 Club: “People Need a Community. We Provide That.”

The 521 Club is a familiar name to people in Lancaster County who are recovering from addiction. But many outside the recovering community are not aware of this valuable resource. While not a licensed treatment agency, the Club offers support and fellowship to people that struggle with alcohol and other drug addiction.

The 521 Club was begun as a non-profit corporation in 1975. The name comes from the fact that the first location was at 521 East King St., Lancaster. After moves to Harrisburg Ave. and Manheim Pike, it settled in its current location at 2400 Butter Road. When asked how the Club overcame the “not in my backyard” stigma that so many recovery organizations face, longtime member, Bill H. laughingly says, “We were an improvement. Our building used to house a nuisance bar and after hours club. Police were often called.” The Club is also proactive in being a good neighbor. “We’re actually pretty quiet most of the time. I’m not sure a lot of people even know we’re here. When we have an event, we inform our neighbors and keep things during the daytime,” says Bill.

The original purpose of the Club is stated in its charter: “To provide facilities for closer and meaningful relationships among those who hold sobriety to be of prime importance; and to remain always available in assisting the recovery, rehabilitation and growth of the alcoholic and his family.” Bill H. marvels at how much has changed since 1975. The



Club membership has grown far more diverse in many ways. While the majority of the original members were older, male alcoholics, there are now many women in the Club, and more young people. The face of addiction has changed. In addition to

persons addicted to alcohol, many members now struggle with other substances, like opiates and prescription drugs. There is far less shame and cover-up surrounding the disease of addiction than there was 40 years ago. People are more aware and many feel pride and gratitude in their new recovery identity.

One thing that has not changed is the need that people in recovery have for a clean and sober social network. They still need to feel that they have supportive friends who truly understand the struggle, as much now as in 1975. In August, the Club sponsored a Recovery Rocks outdoor concert event, which was well attended by persons of all ages. Although the Club has about 200 members, an estimated 1000 people

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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



*Rick Kastner*

The overdose deaths in Lancaster County continued to rise in 2017, and will exceed 160 lives lost in the current year, as compared to 117 untimely deaths in 2016. The sad news of increased deaths is occurring in Pennsylvania and across our great nation.

Some people are wondering why the deaths due to overdoses and heroin are not decreasing. Sadly, some experts believe the death rate will continue to increase until at least 2020, and maybe as late as 2025. With all the widespread media attention, it would seem that the problem should be improving. However, the situation is not as simple as it looks.

The current epidemic has its roots in an increase in the use of prescription drugs. Increased use of opioid pain killers began over 20 years ago. At the time, doctors were told that the newer opioids were safer and less prone to abuse and addiction. Opioid painkiller prescriptions were easy to obtain and renew. When patients become addicted to these medications, and can no longer fill their prescriptions, they turn to street heroin, and overdoses occur.

Another factor is that although Medicaid expansion covers more citizens with addiction treatment, along with a few new treatment facilities for opioid addicts to enter, not many new resources have yet been given to the D&A field to combat the opioid epidemic. The new D&A resources do not come close in meeting the demand for prevention, education and treatment.

We are dealing with a "weaponized heroin". The street drug heroin is now very pure, strong, and inexpensive. Any use involves a high risk of overdose, but when heroin is laced with another powerful opioid drug like fentanyl or carfentanil, it is like playing Russian Roulette. You never win in the long run.

And finally, it takes time to change societal norms. A good parallel would be the successful campaign against smoking and tobacco addiction, that took place in the latter half of the 20th century. It required change at the individual, institutional, community, and societal levels. Societal beliefs and standards had to change. That required two whole generations. Addiction to opioid drugs will require the same commitment, by the same wide range of systems.

We are developing new services and programs all the time. More people are in treatment than ever before in Lancaster. Progress and new resources are slow to develop, but we are taking steps in the right direction.



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## D&A NEWS

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# LANCASTER COUNTY JOINING FORCES

Coordinating efforts to reduce deaths from opioids and heroin

The Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission joins businesses, emergency medical services, healthcare and treatment providers, community coalitions, law enforcement, and the recovery community as a member of **Lancaster County Joining Forces**.

**Joining Forces** aims to support and coordinate efforts to reduce deaths from opioids and heroin. The goal is to focus on evidence-based practices outlined by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to reduce exposure to opioids, prevent misuse, and treat opioid use disorder. Specifically, we hope to:

1. **Saturate** the community with unified messaging regarding the proper use, storage, and disposal of prescription drugs, as well as where to get help.
2. **Strengthen efforts:**
  - ◆ Expand hospital emergency department warm hand-off to all hospitals.
  - ◆ Increase accessibility to medication-assisted treatment (MAT).
  - ◆ Advocate to health insurers for the need to provide coverage for treatment and alternative approaches for chronic pain, as well as lengthen the amount of time covered in treatment centers needed for opioid treatment.
  - ◆ Increase education and access to Naloxone.
  - ◆ Implement prescribing guidelines throughout health systems.
  - ◆ Increase the number of schools offering evidence-based substance abuse prevention programs.
3. **Improve patient safety** by the CDC's evidence-based guidelines such as:
  - ◆ Maximizing prescription drug monitoring programs.
  - ◆ Increase the use of alternative therapies.
4. **Improve data collection and public reporting** to measure efforts.
5. **Launch** a comprehensive countywide website addressing all aspects of addiction with a focus on community resources.

**Interested in learning more?  
Call (717) 544-3800 or visit the  
Joining Forces website at  
[www.lancasterjoiningforces.org](http://www.lancasterjoiningforces.org).**

## Welcome Robin Goodson

In March, the D&A Commission welcomed Robin Goodson as Fiscal Assistant. Robin attended Lincoln University and Consolidated School of Business, and brings with her a wealth of experience in serving the public. She had previously worked at Magisterial District Justice Court 02-2-01 for 20 years.



*Robin Goodson*

She became interested in the job at the D&A Commission because she wanted more opportunity to use her skills to help people. According to Robin, "Helping others get better is something I truly enjoy."

Robin has a personal interest in empowering parents and helping them become stronger advocates for their children. She and her husband, Tim, have six children and three grandsons. Her hobbies include reading and spending time with her husband and family. In the future, she hopes to be able to continue to help her husband with the family property preservation business and to do more in the area of empowering people and equipping them for life.

## D&A NEWS



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**request any changes, email Lisa Starr at [lstarr@co.lancaster.pa.us](mailto:lstarr@co.lancaster.pa.us). If you have a paper copy with a mailing label, please include the five digit number in the upper right corner of your mailing label.**

# Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission and Lancaster County Prison Pilot Vivitrol Program to Help Transitioning Inmates Remain Clean and Sober

Lancaster County Prison has begun offering some inmates an opportunity to receive Vivitrol injections before they are discharged from Lancaster County Prison. The Vivitrol program began on October 2, 2017.

Vivitrol is an injectable medication used to treat opioid use disorder and alcoholism. Originally used for the treatment of alcoholism, the active ingredient in Vivitrol is naltrexone, an opiate-receptor blocker. It is administered once per month and reduces the euphoric effects of these substances, so that they are no longer desirable to the individual who is using alcohol or opioids. It is a treatment option known as Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) that assists inmates in their recovery process, as they transition from prison back into the community.

Vivitrol offers additional help in avoiding relapse to individuals recovering from heroin addiction and alcoholism. Vivitrol is not intended as a substitute for addiction counseling, but is used in conjunction with counseling and recovery support services, in order to be effective. The goal is to assist inmates in early recovery by reducing cravings to use alcohol and/or opiates (e.g., heroin and/or opioid based medications). This allows them to focus energy on addressing community re-entry needs, such as addiction counseling, housing, employment and family re-unification.

Lancaster County's Vivitrol Prison Program is a referral-based program that will provide inmates the opportunity to receive a Vivitrol injection less than one week prior to their release from Lancaster County Prison. The first shot is at no cost to the inmate and lasts about a month. The program is voluntary. Prison staff will work together with probation and parole officers to follow up with participants, to insure compliance with the program and measure recidivism. In order to receive the Vivitrol injection, an inmate must:

- be returning to the Lancaster County community;



- have a history of alcohol or opiate dependence; and
- agree to remain drug-free and attend any clinically recommended counseling.
- be free of any medical issues that would present a risk to overall health, such as acute hepatitis or liver failure

This program targets inmates who participate in the Door-To-Door Placement Project through the

RASE Project, Lancaster County Prison D&A Programs, Lancaster County Adult Probation and Parole Services, Specialty Treatment Courts, or those inmates who want to remain clean and sober from opioids or alcohol, who plan to engage in addiction treatment and support services upon release. The Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission, T.W. Ponessa's Center of Excellence, and the RASE Project are partnering together with the prison, to identify participants and assist in the completion of the Medical Assistance applications for substance dependent inmates prior to release. Inmates with identified substance abuse concerns who are referred by Adult Probation and Parole Services (APPS) or Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (BHDS) may also be considered, even if not involved in prison offered substance abuse counseling services.

Because this is an injected medication, it could be a better recovery route for some people in early recovery, as compared to medications that are ingested daily, like Suboxone and methadone. Often when people in early recovery feel stressed or discouraged they become impulsive and opt not to take their medications and turn back to using illegal substances to ease their discomfort. With Vivitrol, this is much less likely to happen and it may significantly assist newly released inmates in staying focused on their treatment, their recovery goals and ultimately, a new drug-free and crime-free lifestyle.

For more information, contact Becky Sayeg at the D&A Commission at (717)299-8023.

## Gifts to Celebrate Recovery

Searching for some great holiday activities and gifts to give your loved one who is recovering from addiction this year? Look no further!



- ❁ **The Get Out of Stress Free Card:** This card may be used whenever the stress of the holidays seems too much and the activity just isn't worth the hassle it brings. It gives the user the right to put the activity or event aside and just choose to do something relaxing for a couple hours instead.
- ❁ **Nothing Has to be Perfect Day:** When this day is declared, the recipient is officially off the hook. The tree can be a little crooked, the turkey can be a little dry, the gift can be wrapped in a grocery bag, and the carols can be a little off tune. This day is best celebrated in conjunction with the big annual family gathering. The key to success is a knowing wink and a sense of humor.
- ❁ **We Don't Need More Stuff Certificate:** This certificate can be exchanged for an afternoon of playing games together instead of more toys, a cozy quiet dinner together instead of jewelry, or an evening of sharing memories and photographs with grandma instead of a fruitcake or more embroidered hand towels. Warning: Target and Toys R Us not only do not accept this certificate, they will try to confiscate it at the door, so don't try to redeem it there.
- ❁ **You Don't Have to Pretend Card:** A guest who receives this card is officially relieved from having to put on a smile or pretend to be calm and happy. They may speak honestly about their concerns and even be moody and quiet. The giver doesn't complain that they are ruining the holiday for everyone and even offers to be honest with the recipient about their own fears and concerns.
- ❁ **The Just for Today Game:** This is a fun game that can be played by young and old alike at any holiday gathering. Each person agrees to just enjoy the moment and the companionship of those present. No past conflicts are discussed, no past regrets are mourned. People just celebrate being alive and being together and don't worry about the possibilities of tomorrow or next week. Children are particularly good at this game and adults can learn a lot by watching them and copying their strategy.

*Peace and joy to all in the coming year!*

## The 521 Club

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per week attend meetings at the Club. Twelve Step meetings and other support groups and activities take place seven days a week, from 7 AM through late in the evening. Bill H. says it this way, "We are part of the recovery process. Recovery doesn't end after rehab. People need a community. We provide that."

Rick Kastner, Executive Director of the D&A Commission adds, "Our office has always heard of the great recovery support services that the 521 Club provided in the Lancaster community, during the past 45 years, and we are very excited and honored to have recently partnered with the Club, to help expand and

grow the services. Many people begin their clean and sober life in a professional treatment facility, but the lifelong recovery program for a person requires the ongoing support of programs like the 521 Club. And the Club is partnering with other recovery agencies in our community, like the RASE program, which further strengthens the Lancaster recovery community."

To learn more about the 521 Club, visit the website at [www.the521club.com](http://www.the521club.com) and check out the schedule of meetings and activities.

# Should We Be Able to Commit Someone to Addiction Treatment Against Their Will?

With opioid addiction and overdose deaths skyrocketing, many people have raised the question: Why can a person be committed against their will for mental health treatment, but not addiction treatment? Pennsylvania law allows a person to be committed for an emergency mental health evaluation if he or she is suicidal or presents a clear danger to self or others. But substance abuse alone is not a criteria for commitment. The person must have a history or show signs of mental illness to be committed against their will.



has been done on the effectiveness of involuntary emergency treatment for substance abuse.

◆ It is a violation of civil rights. It detains the person against their will and forces them to subject to medical testing and treatment that they do not want, and perhaps cannot afford. Who will pay for the unwanted treatment?

Before looking at the pros and cons of civil commitment for addiction or substance abuse problems, here are a few facts:

- ◆ Currently, 33 of the 50 states (plus Washington DC) have some kind of civil commitment of adults for substance abuse. Out of these, 13 states either never use this provision or use it only in extreme circumstances.
- ◆ Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Maryland have no provision for civil commitment for substance abuse.
- ◆ In the other 20 states, according to a study published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law* in 2015, the laws and their application vary greatly. In some states, the provision is part of the mental health or behavioral health commitment law. In others, it is part of a public health statute meant to address public drunkenness.
- ◆ In the above mentioned study, data was very difficult to obtain. Records are often kept on a county-wide basis and few states had good records on the number or nature of civil commitments for substance abuse.

The one obvious argument in favor of involuntary commitment for substance abuse treatment is the hope that it will save a life and move the person towards recovery. This argument is a powerful one, especially to worried family and friends. But there are also valid reasons why involuntary commitment may not be a good idea.

- ◆ There is no data that proves that it works. As mentioned above, data is scarce and little to no research

- ◆ In places where there are limited treatment beds and a waiting list for voluntary clients, it seems unethical to use those beds for involuntary clients who don't want to be there in the first place.
- ◆ It may inadvertently increase the risk of overdose and death. If an addicted person stops using a substance and then starts again after a period of time, their tolerance for the substance is reduced. In the event of relapse following their involuntary period of treatment, a person is more likely to overdose.

## If you need help or support in recovery for yourself or your family:

**RASE Project of Lancaster** (717) 295-3080  
[www.raseproject.org](http://www.raseproject.org)

**Compass Mark** (717) 299-2831  
[www.compassmark.org](http://www.compassmark.org)

### Support Groups

**AA - Alcoholics Anonymous** (717) 394-3238

**NA - Narcotics Anonymous** (717) 393-4546

### Faith-Based Recovery Groups

**Celebrate Recovery** [www.celebraterrecovery.com](http://www.celebraterrecovery.com) (Christian)  
Groups in: Manheim, Ephrata, Elizabethtown, New Providence, and Quarryville

**Discovery Recovery**, Lancaster (717) 394-6991 (Christian)

**Refuge Recovery**, Lancaster [www.refugerecovery.org](http://www.refugerecovery.org)  
(Buddhist)

**Step to Freedom**, Leola (717) 656-4271 (Christian)

### Family Support

**Al-Anon/Alateen/Adult Children of Alcoholics** (877) 298-5027

**Nar-Anon Family Group**, Lancaster (717) 285-2909

**Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission**  
**150 N. Queen St.**  
**Lancaster, PA 17603**  
**(717) 299-8023**

## **Fact Sheet: Methamphetamine**

**What is methamphetamine?** It is a highly addictive stimulant drug. It is sometimes called meth, crank, ice, or crystal.

**What does it look like and how is it used?** It can come in the form of pills, white powder, or shiny rock crystals that look like chipped ice. It can be taken orally, smoked, snorted, or injected.

**Does meth have any legitimate medical uses?** Meth is chemically similar to amphetamine, a drug used to treat ADHD and sleep disorders.

**What does meth do to the body?** It increases heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, and body temperature. Appetite is decreased and the user may feel extreme itching. It causes excitability and nervousness. Users may develop a condition of extreme paranoia, hallucinations, and agitation known as "tweaking." Pregnant women who use meth run a high risk of miscarriage, pre-term birth, and hemorrhage.

**What are the long term health consequences?** Weight loss, dental problems, and skin sores. If injected, the user is at risk for AIDS and Hepatitis C. The risk of addiction is very high and there is a risk of death due to overdose. Withdrawal from addiction to meth can produce severe depression, anxiety, fatigue and intense drug cravings.

**Has there been an increase in meth abuse recently?** Yes. Law enforcement officials report that meth is cheaper than it was in recent years and it is often combined with heroin use, which has increased.

**Want information on getting help for addiction in Lancaster County?**

**Contact the RASE Project at (717) 295-3080 or  
contact Compass Mark at (717) 299-2831.**

**Or visit [www.raseproject.org](http://www.raseproject.org) or [www.compassmark.org](http://www.compassmark.org).**



*Meth crystals and a meth pipe*



*Example of what meth use can do to a person's appearance*

LANCASTER COUNTY  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL COMMISSION  
150 N. QUEEN ST.  
LANCASTER, PA 17603

## UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

### LOOKING FOR OUR OFFICE?

We are located at 150 N. Queen St., Lancaster, on the fourth floor.

For the most updated and comprehensive list of local D&A trainings and events, please visit [www.compassmark.org](http://www.compassmark.org). Don't forget to check out the interactive calendar! It helps you search for the workshops and events that interest you!

**Treatment Service Provider Meetings**  
Meetings will be held: April 10, August 7, and December 11, 2018. Meetings are generally held at 3:00 PM at 150 N. Queen St. on the first floor in conference room 102.  
Call (717) 299-8023 to confirm details.

For more information about events, contact the D&A Commission at (717) 299-8023.

**Prevention Service Provider Meetings**  
Prevention service providers will meet on February 13, August 7, and November 8, 2018. Contact the D&A Commission at (717) 299-8023 for times and locations.

### COUNTY HOLIDAYS

The D&A Commission will be closed for the following County holidays: Dec. 25, 2017; January 1, 15; February 19; March 30; May 28; and July 4, 2018.

**Single County Authority (SCA) Meetings**  
Meetings will be held Jan. 22; Mar. 26; Apr. 23; May 21; Jul. 23; and Sept. 24, 2018.  
Meetings are generally held at 6:00 PM at 150 N. Queen St., Lancaster.  
To confirm meeting times and locations, call (717) 299-8023.

For emergency and weather-related closings and delays of Lancaster County offices, please tune in to local radio stations or watch WGAL-TV8. Emergency closings are also announced on the Lancaster County website at [www.co.lancaster.pa.us](http://www.co.lancaster.pa.us).