



BCPO News

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"Straight ... to Treatment" Addiction Treatment Program Begins Next Week in Burlington City

Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina and City of Burlington Police Chief John Fine announced today that the drug treatment program that allows people to walk off the street and into a police station to seek help with addiction will expand to the City of Burlington beginning May 1.

The Straight ... to Treatment program will operate every Wednesday and Thursday at the City of Burlington police station on High Street from noon to 6 p.m., in conjunction with Solstice Counseling and Wellness Center and Garden State Treatment Center.

The program was launched in March 2018 in Evesham Township and expanded to Pemberton Township in late September.

"With the addition of the City of Burlington location, we have greatly increased the program's coverage area and can better serve people who seek help overcoming their addiction and escaping the deadly clutch of substance abuse," Prosecutor Coffina said. "I'm thankful to Chief Fine, the City of Burlington Police Department, Solstice and Garden State Treatment Center for their willingness to undertake this life-saving venture."

Chief Fine said the program "will enhance our effectiveness addressing substance abuse in our community."

"We cannot arrest our way out of drug addiction," Chief Fine said. "While addressing narcotic distribution with strict enforcement, assisting individuals with substance abuse issues with programs such as Straight ... to Treatment, and by offering resources to those who are trying to put their lives back together through training and job placement, we will continue to move our community in the right direction."

Evesham Township has been moving in the right direction since Straight ... to Treatment was unveiled there 13 months ago. A total of 86 people seeking assistance and guidance with addiction-related issues have been screened at the Evesham Township Police Department through Oaks Integrated Care.

While overdose deaths in Burlington County crept upward from 141 in 2017 to 152 in 2018, the number has decreased significantly in Evesham since the program began operating.

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“I am proud to report that our agency has experienced a 67% reduction in opioid-related fatal overdoses and a 21% decrease in nonfatal overdoses during this time frame compared to the year prior to the launch of the Straight ... to Treatment program,” Chief Chew said. “The program has exceeded my expectations in our continued efforts to reduce opiate abuse and to provide those who suffer from addiction with help and guidance to recovery.”

Insurance is not necessary to receive help through Straight ... to Treatment, and neither is residency in Burlington County. The program focuses on making sure that help is available at the critical moment someone has decided to seek assistance.

That was crucial for Kevin, a tremendous success story who is one of 48 people who have been helped by Solstice since the program opened at the Pemberton Township Police Department.

“I still can't believe that total strangers would work so hard and go out of their way to help me better myself,” said Kevin, whose last name is being withheld. “These people helped save my life. I owe them everything. The Straight ... to Treatment program really works for anyone who wants to recover from addiction, rejoin society, and learn to live a healthy life.”

Pemberton Township leads the county in the number of Narcan administrations, with 34 since the beginning of the year. Police officers there approach addicts on the street and encourage them to come in and take advantage of Straight ... to Treatment, Pemberton Township Police Chief David H. Jantas said.

“They offer them hope,” Chief Jantas said. “Our officers support and understand the benefits that this program offers in helping to stem the tide of the local opioid epidemic and to help save lives.”

City of Burlington police, Solstice, and Garden State Treatment Center expect to do the same for those who seek treatment through their branch of the program.

“We believe in quality and individualized care for every person afflicted with addiction, alcoholism and their counterparts,” said Cheryl Semiz, Garden State’s Director of Marketing. “We are looking forward to collaborating with other leading treatment providers and members of the community to conquer this widespread epidemic.”

Straight ... to Treatment locations

Evesham Twp. Police Department, 984 Tuckerton Road, Mondays: noon – 7 p.m.

Pemberton Twp. Police Department, 500 Pemberton-Browns Mills Road, Tuesdays: noon – 6 p.m.

City of Burlington Police Department, 525 High Street, Wednesdays and Thursdays: noon – 6 p.m.

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