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COVID-19 and the Opioid Epidemic

As the Coronavirus Disease 2019 – more commonly referred to as COVID-19 – continues to sweep across our country and particularly in our home borough of Queens, we must keep in mind that another epidemic was already on the rise and is still one of the greatest public health threats facing this generation. Opioid addiction has led to an increase in overdoses, and the numbers have not subsided during this pandemic. In just 5 months, Queens County has had a 56 percent increase in overdose deaths compared to 2019.

Opioids are extremely deadly, particularly when illicitly manufactured with fentanyl and fentanyl analogs and derivatives. In 2018, Queens County registered 251 overdose deaths; in 2019, there were 265 overdoses. Of those 265 deaths last year, 155 were from fentanyl or fentanyl analogs and derivatives. For 2020, thus far, we have had 86 suspected overdoses in Queens. Overall, our nation is still in the grips of an overdose epidemic. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2018 alone, there were over 67,000 deaths involving opioids in the U.S.

District Attorney Melinda Katz said, “We are living through an extraordinary time. We are fighting battles no one would have expected, but still we push forward with hope and unrelenting resolve to succeed. Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic has made the opioid epidemic even worst for those fighting for their sobriety.”

Still, though, during this time, there are avenues to help those fighting to stay drug free. The New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) updated its outpatient treatment programs to maximize the use of telehealth services with additional guidelines on in-person interactions. In collaboration, both OASAS and the NYC Department of Health have rolled out a methadone delivery program for patients with COVID-19.

Below you'll find a list of treatment programs available to help those in need of assistance.

Queens County Opioid Treatment Resources

Addiction Treatment Centers:

Samaritan Daytop Village
88-83 Van Wyck Expressway
Jamaica, New York 11435
(718) 657-6195

Elmcor Youth & Adult Service, Inc.
107-20 Northern Blvd
Corona, New York 11368
(718) 651-0096

J-CAP Inc.
10733 Sutphin Blvd.
Jamaica, New York 11435
(718) 322-2500

Harm Reduction Services:

AIDS Center of Queens County (ACQC)
89-74 162nd Street
Jamaica, New York 11432
(718) 896-2500

Dept. of Health and Hygiene
Harm Reduction Coalition
(212) 213-6376

Medical Detox

Cornerstone of Medical Arts
159-05 Union Tpke
Fresh Meadows, New York 11366
1-800-233-9999

Flushing Hospital
4500 Parsons Blvd
Queens, New York 11355
(718) 670-5000

Phoenix House Parkside
3425 Vernon Blvd
Long Island City, New York 11106
1-844-815-1508

**New York State Office of Alcohol and
Substance Abuse Services (OASAS)
24/7 HOPEline 1877-8HOPENY**

Medication Addiction Treatment (MAT)
Far Rockaway Treatment Center
1600 Central Ave.
Far Rockaway, New York 11691
(718) 868-1400

Narco Freedom-Bridge Plaza
18-34th Street
Long Island City, New York 11101
(718) 786-3474