



ThedaCare®

NEWS FROM THEDACARE®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 16, 2018

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO FIGHT OPIOID ADDICTION

Reaching Out for Help is First Important Step

The first step is often the hardest. For people addicted to drugs or alcohol and looking for help, that statement is doubly true.

The heroin epidemic hitting the community means more people than ever are in need of help. In 2016, 827 people in Wisconsin died from opioid overdoses, which was higher than the number of people killed in car crashes. Green Lake County recently held a heroin summit.

Opioid addiction is powerful, but it can be overcome.

For addicts, the first step to getting help is to go through an assessment, which reviews the person's past and present history of usage. ThedaCare Behavioral Health provides alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) assessments to anyone. During the assessment, a counselor takes the patient's information and then helps the person find the right level of care. If you are worried about insurance coverage or the cost, grants and other options are available to help so do not let that deter you.

A variety of assistance is available to addicts, including group therapy, individual therapy, medication assistance and referral to additional mental health therapy if necessary. Heroin and opiates are highly addictive and are not easy to quit. Withdrawal is unpleasant with symptoms starting within just hours of the last dosage. Symptoms can include anxiety, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, depression, goose bumps and intense drug cravings. Medication is available to help with the withdrawal symptoms.

For people not ready to go in for a full assessment and receive professional help, there are support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Celebrate Recovery and Smart Recovery, where they can go and talk with other current users and former users. The groups not only give support to the addict, they also provide information and resources.

Addicts are not the only ones affected by their drug or alcohol use. Family and friends bear the impact as well. Being a family member or friend of an addict is very difficult. The first piece of advice I give to loved ones is a reminder that they need to take care of themselves -- making sure they get enough sleep, follow healthy eating habits and get exercise. Some find comfort attending support groups to talk about their loved one and gather information and learn about additional resources. ThedaCare Behavioral Health offers a free affected family program from 5:30 to 7 p.m. every Tuesday at its facility at 1095 Midway Road, Menasha.

With help, patients can beat their addiction. Take that first step today by calling ThedaCare Behavioral Health at 920.720.2300 and asking for an AODA assessment.



ThedaCare®

Faithe Kazik is a clinical substance abuse counselor with ThedaCare Behavioral Health.