



RECOVERY TALKS:

Community Listening Forum
on Addiction and Recovery

Thursday, April 30th

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Saratoga Springs Public Library

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Saratoga Recovery Talks Community Listening Forum was the first in a series of local forums being held across New York State to provide community members the opportunity to share personal experiences in dealing with alcohol and drug addiction, the loss of a family member or friend, as well as recovery from addiction.

“Recovery is made up of many miracles, but finding a place for help should not have to be one of them.”

- Phyllis
Clifton Park, NY

PURPOSE OF FORUM: CELEBRATE THE JOY OF RECOVERY AND IDENTIFY BARRIERS TO RECOVERY

- ❖ Listen to the voices of people and families in Recovery; people struggling with addiction and to families and friends who have lost someone to addiction
- ❖ Help individuals and families overcome the stigma that prevents so many from seeking help
- ❖ Break down barriers and discrimination created by stigma that interfere with achieving and sustaining recovery
- ❖ Engage and empower Recovery advocates in communities across the state
- ❖ Create an organized advocacy effort to change state policies to expand access to Recovery

HIGHLIGHTS – COMMENTS, PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED, OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED:

- We need to focus on recovery as the solution and increase funding for programs so people can get the help they need to recover;
- Stigma and discrimination of addiction affected our ability to get treatment and achieve sustained recovery;
- Major problems in accessing treatment- wait, payment, no services
- There is a desperate need for community-based recovery supports once we leave treatment
- As a family we were desperate and frustrated because we did not get education and support
- We need more education and resources for prevention and treatment
- We need access to treatment immediately
- We found no support programs and resources for family members struggling to help loved ones
- People who addicted need for treatment on demand- immediate access
- We need additional resources for Recovery Coaches and addiction focused family counselling

FINDINGS: COMMON THEMES

- Individuals need access to Detox and treatment facilities
- Family members need support, education, counselling and continuing care
- Individuals need more prevention and early intervention, beginning with adolescent care
- Policy makers need to address gaps in services that include community recovery supports once a person leaves treatment
- Insurance companies need to be held accountable and pay for addiction treatment
- Too few programs and community recovery supports result in more overdoses and relapse
- Family members feel abandoned and confused with where to go for help and what to do
- Preliminary suggestions include:
 - Immediate increase in funding and community recovery resources
 - More Information on addiction and recovery services for individuals and families
 - More support to address impact on individuals and families
 - More NYS treatment options- too many referred out of state – FL, PA, MN, CA etc.
 - Greater access to information and resources to help individuals and families navigate the system and access treatment
 - Post treatment follow-up and recovery support services for individuals and families

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Increase funding** and more programs for prevention, treatment and recovery supports
- **Physician Education** on prescription drugs and treatment of addiction
- Recognize that **family members** living with addiction are primary clients, not just a way to help the person addicted to alcohol and drugs
- Expanded **Continuum of Care** to close gaps in services, especially after treatment
- More funding to help **local communities** who want to get involved in local Recovery Community Organizations (RCOs)
- Work to break down **barriers** created by stigma that block and interfere with recovery
- Require **insurers** to cover the cost of addiction specific family treatment and recovery support services
- Create an **organized advocacy effort** to change policies and funding support in order to expand access to prevention, treatment and recovery supports
- **Provide family treatment** and recovery support services in every addiction program



(Left to Right): Members of Listening Panel: Bob Lindsey-FOR-NY, Brian Farr-Recovery Advocacy in Saratoga (RAIS), Janine Stuchin, The Prevention Council, Kathleen Fyfe-Saratoga Springs Chamber of Commerce and Tom Lewis- Chief of Staff- Senator Kathleen Marchione

EVENT AGENDA:

- 7:00 pm: Welcome remarks – Robert. J. Lindsey: CEO – Friends of Recovery New York (FOR-NY)
- 7:10 pm: Moderator – Janine Stuchin: Executive Director – The Prevention Council
- 7:15 pm: Speakers – Lead Speaker: Brian Farr – RAIS Chair
- 8:15 pm: Open to Anyone Who Wants to Speak
- 8:30 pm: Listening Panel Members: Comments and Remarks
- 8:45 pm: Wrap-Up – Robert. J. Lindsey: CEO – Friends of Recovery New York (FOR-NY)

PANELISTS:

- ❖ **Brian Farr, MS, CASAC**- Chair- Recovery Advocacy in Saratoga (RAIS), Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC) at St. Peter's Hospital, Coordinator of Addiction Studies at Hudson Valley Community College, Board Member- The Prevention Council and a person in long-term recovery.
- ❖ **Kathleen Fyfe**, Kathleen Fyfe, VP of Community Development and Program Director of Leadership Saratoga, works to provide opportunities to connect people and organizations in the community so that collaboratively we can achieve so much more than we can independently.
- ❖ **Tom L. Lewis**, Deputy Chief of Staff for Sen. Kathleen Marchionne- 43rd District- parts of Rensselaer, Saratoga and Washington Counties, and all of Columbia County. Sen. Marchione is former County Clerk of Saratoga County and serves on these Senate Committees: Aging, Banks, Consumer Protections, Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks & Recreation, Elections, Labor, Chair- Local Government, and Racing, Gaming and Wagering.
- ❖ **Robert J. Lindsey, M.Ed.**, CEO- Friends of Recovery New York (FOR-NY), former President/CEO- National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence (NCADD); VP- Longview EAP; Community Relations Director- Betty Ford Center; Ex. Dir.- NY State Council on Alcoholism & Drug Addiction (NYSCADA); Therapist/Unit Manager at Spofford Hall and Ex. Dir./Clinical Dir- Allegany County Council on Alcoholism & Substance Abuse (ACCASA)

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This is the first in a series of local forums being held across New York State to provide community members the opportunity to share personal experiences in dealing with alcohol and drug addiction, loss of a family member or friend, as well as recovery from addiction.

The Listening Forums will engage the community in discussion with local leaders and result in a report titled, The State of Addiction Recovery in New York to better inform the public and policy makers.

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Saratoga Springs Public Library
1st floor Community Room
49 Henry St., Saratoga Springs

Register at www.PreventionCouncil.org/ListeningForum

To Speak Speaker's remarks will be limited to 3 minutes in order to allow as many people as possible to speak.

CO-SPONSORED BY RECOVERY ADVOCACY IN SARATOGA (RAIS) AND THE PREVENTION COUNCIL

