



## Mayor's Task Force to Combat the Opioid Epidemic Presents Final Report



The Mayor's Task Force to Combat the Opioid Epidemic in Philadelphia presented its final report and recommendations to Mayor Jim Kenney on Friday, May 19, the culmination of a four-month initiative designed to address the growing opioid crisis in Philadelphia. The presentation was made during a press conference at City Hall attended by Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf and several local officials.

The report was developed based on input from the 23-member Task Force convened by Mayor Kenney and co-chaired by our former Commissioner Dr. Arthur Evans and Department of Public Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley. Its members include a broad section of stakeholders representing public health, substance use disorder treatment providers, healthcare, law enforcement, local, state and federal governments, and managed care, as well as former opioid users and their loved ones. Gov. Wolf commended Mayor Kenney and the

Task Force for working to help save lives and address substance misuse in the city. The opioid crisis is considered by many to be as big a threat today as the AIDS epidemic was in the 1980s. In 2015, Philadelphia's rate of overdose deaths – 46.8 per 100,000 residents – greatly outpaced larger cities such as Chicago (15.4) and New York (11.2). Additionally, experts are already predicting that opioid deaths in 2017 will exceed 2016 numbers, reaching nearly 1,200 deaths.

The Task Force report, and the recommendations it contains, align with the efforts that we have made at the state level to give our local municipalities and cities, our first responders, our law enforcement officials, and all of our citizens the tools they need to save the life of a loved one – and get them into quality and proven treatment programs," Gov. Wolf said. "I applaud the mayor and the task force for the commitment to fighting this epidemic that is a scourge on our state and the City of Philadelphia."

Kudos to **Deputy Commissioner Roland Lamb, Public Health Policy & Planning Supervisor Pamela D. McClenton, Special Assistant to the Commissioner Andrea Brooks,** and **Administrative Coordinator Yvette Brooks** for their work in leading the DBHIDS efforts on the Task Force, from the planning and execution of meetings to the research, writing and editing of the final report, [which can be viewed here](#).

For media coverage of this event, our [task for media page](#).

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## Homeless Services Hits the Streets

While many of us were comfortably nestled in our beds on the evening of May 17, members of our Homeless Services Unit and other DBHIDS staff were out participating in the Spring Census, an annual activity where homeless advocates and volunteers go out to assess the number of homeless people in communities throughout Philadelphia. More than 50 people gathered at Project H.O.M.E. around 10 p.m. that night for an orientation before being deployed to 13 zones across the city.

The teams spent several hours in their respective zones, connecting with homeless individuals and seeing what types of services and support were needed. The homeless count, which is conducted quarterly, guides homeless services groups on needs assessment, outreach strategies and the development of additional programming. Many thanks to **Bridgette Tobler** and **Tim Sheahan** for leading our group, which included **Brian McShane, James Chun, Carrie Wagner, Brook Stello, Mary Bethall, Jorge Toro,** and **Jeffrey Orlin**, who also brought along his 16-year-old son.

Homeless Services is also pleased to announce the addition of a newly funded outreach team through Prevention Point. The team is in the process of getting trained and shadowing other teams this summer. Team members will be covering the Kensington area.

To learn more about this effort or to volunteer for the Summer Census, contact [Bridgette Tobler](#).

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## Health Promotions to Be Honored for 2016 National Screening Day Efforts

For the second consecutive year, the Health Promotions Unit will be honored for its National Depression Screening Day activities by *Philly Happening*. The award will be presented during the **2017 Happening List®! Awards** on Thursday, June 22, at the Courtyard Philadelphia Downtown.

The award - "Best Outdoor Event" – was for Health Promotions outstanding National Depression Screening Day event on Oct. 16, 2016, which resulted in the screenings of 256 people across nine locations in Philadelphia. The effort, which beat out the Mummer's Day and Thanksgiving Day parades in the awards category, aimed to help people see how we all could use a check-up from the neck up! Congratulations to everyone on the Health Promotions team and stay tuned for details on the 2017 National Screening Day event, which is sure to be another award-winning and effective effort in our population health work.

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## Mental Health First Aid Training Update

Attention! If you completed a DBHIDS-sponsored Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training on or before May 2014, you are due for your re-certification! For a limited-time only, you can take a free 90-minute online refresher course provided you are already an aider.

- [Register here for the on-line course](#)
- **Disregard the charge of \$29.95 and "ADD TO CART"**
- **Enter this coupon code: PHILA-DBHIDS** where you see "**Apply Coupon**". Click "**Checkout**" to begin.
- **Upon completion of the on-line re-certification course**, you will be registered nationally again for another three years with the National Council for Behavioral Health\*

**PLEASE NOTE:** If you have never taken a Mental Health First Aid course, or prefer to attend another in-person eight-hour course to re-certify, you are very welcome to [register for an upcoming training](#). Trainings continue to be sponsored by DBHIDS at no cost to individuals who live, work, or study in Philadelphia.

*\*Our local Philadelphia office will be notified that you have re-certified.*

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## Job Well Done: Janet Whitters Retires

After 17 years of service to the City of Philadelphia, Janet Whitters is retiring from her role as a Clinical Consultant with our Network Improvement & Accountability Collaborative (NIAC) unit. Several colleagues gathered to celebrate her contributions to our department during a [retirement celebration](#) on Monday, May 22. Janet's last day is Friday, June 9. Please join us in wishing Janet all the best in her retirement!

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## DBHIDS Prevention Unit Partners With Community Groups



To commemorate National Prevention Week, the DBHIDS Prevention Unit held a series of activities to increase public awareness of and action around mental and/or substance use disorders. Under the 2017 theme, Making Each Day Count, our team worked with providers to conduct a week of fun-filled activities May 14-20 for several communities throughout Philadelphia.

DBHIDS Prevention Unit oversees the activities of 14 prevention providers, with the goal to reduce incidents of abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, and gambling by Philadelphia residents and families. This is completed with prevention, education, policies, and environmental strategies. There are currently over **37,000** children and youth receiving prevention services, in 132 public, private parochial and charter city schools. The team worked closely with partners such as Philadelphia Prevention Partners and United Communities of Southeast Philadelphia. Philadelphia Prevention Partnership distributed educational information about substance abuse and treatment options and hosted a spoken word contest about sobriety at the Tustin Recreation Center, where Mayor Jim Kenney was in attendance. United Communities of Southeast Philadelphia held "Inspire," an event at Mifflin Square Park that had a variety of activities for children and families from the neighborhood's diverse communities. The event also focused on bullying, violence and alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) prevention through art work, games, chalk- and mural-painting that promoted awareness and involvement in the surrounding neighborhoods.

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## Upcoming Events

### **Human Trafficking Conference: Beyond Awareness to Action**

**Thursday, June 8, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

**Jefferson Alumni Hall, 1020 Locust St., Phila., PA**

This conference will uncover Southeastern Pennsylvania's current human trafficking climate. Speakers and workgroups will analyze challenges in assisting and identifying victims and survivors from. For more information contact [Andrea Stout](#) at 215-685-5447

### **Active Shooter 2.0 Training: The Evolution of the Active Shooter Risk and Community Response**

**Thursday, June 15, 8 a.m.**

**Community Behavioral Health, 801 Market Street, Room 1154B**

This training session will cover the most current approaches for organizations to implement plans and procedures to ensure effective and integrated response to active shooter events. The presentation promotes preparedness as a behavioral health tool and increases resilience amongst individuals and organizations. For more information contact [Ysaye Zamore](#) at 215-983-5779.

### **Recovery Idol Competition – Round 4**

**Friday, June 16, 12 – 3 p.m.**

**Thomas Paine Plaza, 1401 JFK Boulevard, Phila., PA**

The latest round of competitions is underway! Come out and see recovery at its best! You can get more information at [the Recovery Idol website](#).

### **Certified Peer Specialists Information Session**

**Thursday, July 13, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

**Community Behavioral Health, 801 Market Street, 11th Floor**

This session will give attendees an overview of the Certified Peer Specialists (CPS) program. Information will address the certification procedures for the Certified Psychiatric rehabilitation Practitioner and Certified Recovery Specialists programs, as well as give information on volunteer opportunities with Pro-Act and the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, a nonprofit corporation that creates opportunities for individuals and family members.

To have information about your area included in the July 2017 issues of *At Your Best: DBHIDS News*, **please [email us](#) by Monday, June 26**. If you have questions about this publication or ideas for future issues, please contact [Monica Lewis-Wilborn](#) at 215-685-5475.

For DBHIDS resources visit [bit.ly/DBHIDSResources](http://bit.ly/DBHIDSResources)  
[DBHIDS Team Highlights Archive](#)