



# BCPO News

**Scott A. Coffina, Prosecutor**

**Philip S. Aronow**  
*First Assistant Prosecutor*

**Darren N. Anderson**  
*Chief of Detectives*



Joel Bewley  
BCPO Public Information Officer  
[jbewley@co.burlington.nj.us](mailto:jbewley@co.burlington.nj.us)  
Desk: 609-265-5777 Cell: 609-820-4407  
**March 23, 2018**

*The following release is issued jointly by Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina, Evesham Township Police Chief Chris Chew and Oaks Integrated Care CEO Derry Holland.*



## **New "Straight ... to Treatment" Program Offers Help to Drug Users**

Those who are caught in the powerful grip of addiction and substance abuse but would like to break free will have an opportunity to seek treatment and turn in their drugs without the fear of arrest under a new initiative that begins on Monday, March 26.

The program, known as "Straight ... to Treatment," allows drug users to come to the Evesham Township Police Department and be connected with a program to assist them in overcoming their addiction. Participants can also safely turn in any drugs or drug paraphernalia in their possession and not be charged with a drug possession offense.

The process of finding treatment for those who come forward will be handled by Oaks Integrated Care of Mount Holly, which will be on call to meet in person with those who request help for addiction. Oaks, which offers treatment for substance abuse as well as other health and social service programs statewide, will use its network in an effort to find help for all who come forward, including those without the resources to seek it on their own.

One of the common challenges to providing treatment for substance abuse is making sure that help is available when someone has decided to seek assistance. That moment must be seized, and this program does just that, Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina said.

"Straight . . . to Treatment will provide another option for those who are struggling with addiction to find their way to treatment," Prosecutor Coffina said. "The heartbreaking number of people caught in the nightmare of this disease demands that we as a community do everything in our power to find help for people seeking it. I am incredibly grateful to the Evesham Township Police Department and to Oaks Integrated Care for devoting their resources to launch this program and hope that Straight ... to Treatment can be a lifeline for those seeking treatment, and their families searching for hope for their loved ones."

***more...***

The initiative is similar to the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office's Blue HART (Heroin Addiction Recovery Treatment) program, which was initiated by Prosecutor Joseph D. Coronato early last year and has been successful at connecting addicts with treatment.

Statistics reveal that there is a strong need for treatment in Burlington County. In 2017, Burlington County experienced 141 overdose deaths, a 70% increase over the 83 in 2016, and an 88% increase over 2015. Even more distressing, Burlington County law enforcement and emergency responders deployed Narcan over 900 times in 2017 (a 40% increase over 2016), saving nearly that many people in the process. Without these lifesaving naloxone deployments, Burlington County could have approached 1,000 overdose deaths last year.

Evesham Township experienced 11 fatal overdoses in 2017, and its police department has been one of the more proactive agencies in seeking to address the drug crisis. "The Evesham Township Police Department is honored to partner with the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office in launching the Straight ... to Treatment program," Evesham Township Police Chief Chris Chew said. "I am proud that this initiative will reduce the impact of opiate abuse in our community and will provide those who suffer from addiction an opportunity to get help and guidance to recovery."

Initially, the program will be in operation on Mondays from noon to 7 p.m. at the Evesham Township Police Station, which is located at 984 Tuckerton Road in Marlton, New Jersey. All three partners expect to extend the hours as the program takes hold, and Prosecutor Coffina anticipates expanding the initiative to other municipalities in the near future.

Oaks Chief Executive Office Derry Holland said the organization actively seeks to create partnerships with local law enforcement agencies, municipalities, hospitals and non-profit community providers to help those in need.

"We all know someone impacted by substance abuse - a family member, friend, neighbor, colleague - the disease has no boundaries," Holland said. "Recovery is possible with the right resources, treatment and continuing care. Straight ... to Treatment will give individuals and families in our communities increased access to critical services and offer hope for long-term recovery."

**END**