



Oakland County Prescription Drug Abuse Partnership Recognized as 2017 Harvard Ash Center Bright Idea in Government

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L. BROOKS PATTERSON, OAKLAND COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Kathleen Forzley, RS, MPA
Manager / Health Officer

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January 18, 2017, Pontiac, Mich. – The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, recognized the Oakland County Prescription Drug Abuse Partnership today as part of the 2017 Bright Ideas in Government initiative. The Partnership is part of a cohort that includes programs from all levels of government — school districts, county, city, state, federal agencies, and tribal nations, as well as public-private partnerships — that represent the next horizon in government work to improve services, solve problems, and work on behalf of citizens.

"Addressing the prescription drug abuse epidemic requires partnerships at every level to strengthen education, prevention, and treatment," said Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson. "I applaud the work of the Health Division and our partners as we look forward to continuing ongoing efforts to halt drug addiction."

The Oakland County Prescription Drug Abuse Partnership was convened March 2015 by the Oakland County Health Division and is comprised of multidisciplinary members who actively work to prevent prescription drug abuse and overdose deaths. Partnership members include local physicians, pharmacists, substance abuse treatment and prevention agencies, court judges, law enforcement, the Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Attorney's Office, public health, academia, and grassroots organizations.

The Partnership is led with in-kind resources from OCHD staff, including a director, administrator, health education supervisor, and a health educator. Staff time includes planning and implementation of trainings, meetings and events, correspondence, coordination of promotional campaigns and subcommittees, and research. Achievements include creating and sustaining a diverse partnership, implementing a Drug Death Review Committee with Oakland County's Medical Examiner, providing SCOPE of Pain trainings to more than 160 physicians, reaching over 300,000 residents via transit advertising, and establishing three subcommittees.

"These programs demonstrate that there are no prerequisites for doing the good work of governing," said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Program at the Ash Center. "Small towns and massive cities, huge federal agencies and local school districts, large budgets or no budgets at all — what makes government work best is the drive to do better and this group proves that drive can be found anywhere."

This is the fifth cohort recognized through the Bright Ideas program, an initiative of the broader Innovations in American Government Awards program. For consideration as a Bright Idea, programs must currently be in operation or in the process of launching, have sufficient operational resources, and must be administered by one or more governmental entities; nonprofit, private sector, and union initiatives are eligible if operating in partnership with a governmental organization. Bright Ideas are showcased on the Ash Center's Government Innovators Network, an online platform for practitioners and policymakers to share innovative public policy solutions.

Please visit the Government Innovators Network at <http://innovations.harvard.edu> for the full list of Bright Ideas programs, and for more information regarding the Innovations in American Government Awards.

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About the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation

The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, education, international programs, and government innovations awards, the Center fosters creative and effective government problem solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world's citizens. For more information, visit www.ash.harvard.edu. For more information, contact Daniel Harsha, Associate Director for Communications, Ash Center at 617-495-4347.

FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES ONLY: Please contact George Miller, Oakland County Health and Human Services Director, at 248-858-1293.



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