



MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Operation RECOVERY: Substance Abuse and Opioid Addiction Still a Crisis "An Epidemic within a Pandemic," is being Fought on the Frontlines

COLUMBUS, OH – May 21, 2020 While the world continues to focus on COVID-19, within Franklin County, substance abuse and unintentional, fatal opioid overdoses have increased as a result of COVID-19. Isolation, disruption of routine due to social distancing, and other pandemic-related barriers have made accessing treatment and support more difficult, have had a greater impact on minority health, and revealed disparities that have targeted our most vulnerable residents.

However, a united collaboration of first responder agencies, public health offices, and healthcare professionals have come together to aggressively step up their efforts in combatting this ongoing crisis.

Operation RECOVERY has been a month-long campaign emphasizing the greater urgency to attack substance abuse and opioid addiction. This collaboration of H.O.P.E. Task Force (Franklin County Sheriff's Office), RREACT (Columbus Division of Fire, Columbus Division of Police), Franklin County Public Health, Columbus Public Health, The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, and Southeast Healthcare, dedicated the month of May to concentrating their efforts on:

- Conducting Narcan use trainings
- Distributing Narcan
- Distributing Fentanyl test strips
- Conducting face-to-face follow ups for those with Substance Use Disorder
- Linking individuals with treatment and resources

The media is invited to witness this in action and get a first-hand look at how this collaboration is changing lives for the better. In addition, one-on-one interviews will be available.

What: Operation RECOVERY, Narcan Distribution, Training, and Engagement
 When: Saturday, May 23, 2020
 Where: 9:00 a.m. – Columbus Division of Fire Academy
 3639 Parsons Avenue
 10:00 a.m. – Multiple locations (see attached)

NOTE: Social Distancing protocols will be enforced. Maintain 6-ft separation, wear protective masking, and have extendable microphones.