

# Hanover Township

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Lehigh County, PA

Dear Resident or Business Owner:

The rise of opioid and heroin addiction is affecting our community at an alarming rate. Since January 1<sup>st</sup>, there have been 70 overdose deaths in Lehigh County alone. In 2015, nearly 3,400 overdose deaths were reported across Pennsylvania, an increase of 23 percent over 2014, according to the DEA. In Lehigh County, the overdose mortality rate was 32 deaths per 100,000 people – the 15<sup>th</sup> highest rate among the state's 67 counties. The face of the heroin user has changed dramatically over the last few years. It crosses gender, race, economic class, and family structure. If you have children of any age in your home, you need to be educated about this problem that is tearing families apart across the Lehigh Valley.

Hanover Township, Lehigh County is partnering with State Representative Dan McNeill to host a Town Hall Meeting to discuss and educate parents, students, and business owners about how widespread addiction is in our community. Representative McNeill has hosted two public Town Hall Meetings in other parts of his district, as well as co-hosted two roundtable discussions with other local State Representatives; one with Governor Tom Wolf and one with Secretary of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs Gary Tennis, to strategize on how best to combat this plague. Our Town Hall Meeting will have a panel of experts on addiction, and scheduled to attend are: Trooper Marc Allen, Community Relations Officer for the Pennsylvania State Police, Bethlehem Barracks; Scott Grim, Lehigh County Coroner; Layne Turner, the Lehigh County Drug and Alcohol Administrator; Bill Stauffer, a recovery and treatment counselor who is himself in long-term recovery; Donna Jacobsen, whose daughter is in long-term recovery and who is a leader for a Lehigh Valley Parent and Family Support Group; and Nichols Labar, a young man who has successfully overcome his addiction and works to help others live a clean and active life. Other speakers may also attend, but we have listed above those who are currently on board. A question and answer session will follow the main presentation.

The Town Hall Meeting will be held at **7:00 pm on Wednesday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at the Days Hotel Allentown Airport/Lehigh Valley, located at 3400 Airport Road** across from the Lehigh Valley International Airport. I encourage you to attend this meeting to learn the facts about this growing problem that is taking lives, young and old, on a daily basis throughout our state. It is imperative that we learn about the dangers of prescription opioids, the signs of addiction, the most effective methods of treatment, and how we can work together to fight this crisis and protect our loved ones.

Sandra A. Pudliner  
Township Manager on behalf of  
Members, Hanover Township Council