

2018-2019 SOMERSET COUNTY TREATMENT PLAN

I. Background

The Somerset Single County Authority (SCA) completes the Drug & Alcohol Treatment Plan to present how it is providing the best care and offering the best treatment in the most efficient way possible. The SCA also completes the treatment plan to identify the areas of treatment and care for Somerset County residents that can be improved and/or is lacking.

The Somerset SCA uses many different resources to gather the information to complete the Drug & Alcohol Treatment Plan.

One resource used is statistics regarding the prevalence of drugs & alcohol in Somerset County. These statistics come from many different sources including Somerset SCA internal statistics, the Uniform Crime Report, the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), Behavioral Health Services of Somerset & Bedford Counties (BHSSBC), HealthChoices, the PA Youth Survey (PAYS), the National Institute on Drug Abuse, SAMHSA, WITS, Somerset County jail, and drug & alcohol treatment providers.

Another resource is stakeholders in the community. The Somerset SCA's strategy to accomplish the development and completion of the treatment plan is designed to involve three levels of stakeholders.

One of the stakeholders that represent the community through their work in social agencies and law enforcement have and continue to provide input into the assessment and analysis of data related to the needs of the community during the course of their job functions or committee work. This involvement is ongoing with data analysis shared between various agencies, committees, and law enforcement. These stakeholders currently have the most involvement in developing and implementing the SCA treatment plan and are the easiest to engage. The Somerset SCA utilizes information gathered through the close working relationships between agencies and professionals. Somerset County compared to other counties is very unique in how well and how close its law enforcement agencies and human service agencies work together. The Somerset SCA's uniqueness stands out in the relationship with Adult Probation, Juvenile Probation, the District Attorney's Office, Mental Health agencies, Children and Youth Services, the County Jail, Somerset Hospital, Local Police, State Police, Department of Public Welfare (DPW), Area Agency on Aging, Community Action Partnership, the County Commissioners, Drug Free Communities' Coalition, the county schools, the United Way of the Laurel Highlands, and the treatment providers.

Another level of stakeholders is the community members that access treatment as well as their family and/or loved ones inquiring about treatment. Their involvement is usually only in time of need. They provide an individual level of data based on their current needs, wants, and the success of the treatment itself. This level of stakeholders also provides the SCA with their demographics and present drug use which allows the SCA to formulate trends and current patterns in regards to the county drug/alcohol use. This is a priority of the SCA to become

involved in developing and implementing the treatment plan. The input from this group of stakeholders is invaluable. The method to engage them is by individual discussion and through support group activities. Surveys of clients and conversation with their family members and/or loved ones through the SCA are encouraged, with confidentiality in mind, to provide the SCA with their input.

The last and most difficult stakeholders to engage are the general community. There currently is a steady level of involved community members on Somerset County Drug Free Community Coalition as well as community members that make up the Somerset SCA Advisory Board. These community members have provided the SCA with great insight on the views and opinions of the community regarding drug & alcohol treatment. Individual recruitment for key leaders of the community continues to occur through efforts of the SCA Advisory Board, the SCA staff, Drug Free Communities Coalition, and Prevention staff.

All the resources mentioned have been utilized to gather as much information as possible. The Somerset SCA used the information gathered by the resources to complete the Treatment Needs Assessment which is the basis for the Treatment Plan. The Treatment Plan is available to the public through a link on the Somerset SCA webpage.

II. Executive Summary

The Somerset SCA developed the 2018 Treatment Plan based on the Somerset SCA Needs Assessment conducted through the collection and analysis data, identifying emerging problems, assessing community needs, identifying current barriers, identifying resources and assets, and identifying current and future trends that impact drug & alcohol treatment.

Approximately 500 individuals seek treatment in Somerset County annually through the SCA office. The number one drug of use/abuse for the last three years is Heroin/Opiates. This is new in the county; alcohol has historically always been the number one drug of use prompting individuals to seek treatment. Heroin/Opiate addicts require new and different treatment services than previously offered due to their very high relapse rate. Due to the high relapse rate, the SCA has many clients in need of treatment again only weeks to months after a treatment episode. The SCA has eliminated any barriers and treatment restrictions for all clients due to the severity of addiction currently happening as well as the damage the addiction is causing on the county. The SCA is increasing its outreach efforts to try to get treatment help information to as many residents as possible.

The Heroin/opiate epidemic has not only changed the treatment need and demand in Somerset County, but has also created new system barriers. Clients are being offered the full continuum of care and are being encouraged to seek long term treatment as well as MAT (Medication-Assisted Treatment). The SCA has expanded its treatment provider contracts in order to be able to offer clients appropriate treatment as soon as possible. The SCA is still addressing the lack of MAT available for residents in Somerset County but does have a couple providers to offer those services. The SCA is providing more service coordination with these clients, especially by continuously following up with them and encouraging them to reenter

treatment if they leave treatment, never go to treatment, or relapse. The SCA is creating very positive relationships with clients due to providing service coordination as well as being advocates for our clients and getting them into treatment as soon as possible. The Somerset's SCA client satisfaction survey's average rating of the client's interaction with the SCA office last year was 4.88 out of a possible 5.0.

The Somerset SCA is now offering Recovery Support Services (RSS) to clients. This service is helpful to clients by being available whether or not the client is engaged in treatment and providing him or her an avenue to become involved in the recovery community. This service also helps with the lack of public transportation in the county; however, transportation continues to be a barrier for people seeking services and treatment. One service under RSS is Certified Recovery Specialists (CRS). The CRS is a vital part of our Warm Hand Off policy. The CRS reports to the Emergency Department (ED) when an overdose arrives and helps to facilitate admission directly into treatment. The SCA offers Naloxone Trainings to law enforcement, county agencies, human service agencies, and community members who request the training. The SCA also provides Police and EMS with help information packets to provide to overdose victims.

A population that has been impacted dramatically from the Heroin/Opiate epidemic is the Criminal Justice population. Many addicts have committed crimes to support their habit; therefore, with the increase in addicts, there has been an increase in the criminal justice population. The SCA is a critical part of the newly implemented Treatment Court in Somerset County as well as continuing to be involved in the Day Reporting Center and assessing all probation/parole referrals. The SCA also serves the inmates at the County Jail. These combined ventures will decrease the criminal justice population by helping clients enter into recovery, therefore being compliant and serving their sentences/supervision. Another population effected by this epidemic is Women with Children (WWC). Many SCA clients have lost custody of their children due to their addiction. The SCA will continue to assist WWC swiftly into treatment as well as assist Children & Youth Services in its increase in dependent children cases by providing assessments and referrals.

The SCA cannot overlook other treatment needs due to the Heroin/Opiate epidemic that is facing our county. Alcohol is still a problem in Somerset County along with the lack of adolescent referrals being made.

The SCA's funding issues have not been a significant problem in meeting the treatment demand this year. Medical Assistance (MA) expansion funding covers much of the drug and alcohol treatment, allowing the SCA to expand services in other areas in combination with Heroin/Opiate funding to address the needs.

The SCA will continue to address these issues through resources and collaboration. The SCA will continue its positive and beneficial relationships with county human service agencies, law enforcement agencies, healthcare organizations, treatment providers, and the community to explore new ideas and initiatives to combat the drug & alcohol issues in Somerset County.