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Print Page

Chiefs, DA kick off prescription safety and holiday drunk driving prevention campaigns

Police chiefs, fire chiefs and prescription drug task force members from across Norfolk County joined Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey at Patriot Place on Monday to launch two campaigns aimed at the two greatest causes of preventable death in Norfolk County – drunk driving and prescription drug abuse.

“We are losing more than a person a week to opiate overdose. Fifty-nine so far this year, even though we have a countywide Narcan program,” District Attorney Morrissey said. “On average we have a person killed or seriously injured about every week in drunk driving crashes.”

Norfolk County chiefs and the District Attorney launched a new program and will be visiting all 120 pharmacies in the county to ask them to do three things: Enroll in the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program designed to prevent doctor shopping and bogus prescriptions; distribute information cards, created and supplied by the DA, with safe drug storage and disposal information with every new prescription for addictive drugs the pharmacies fill; take and use materials outlining the yellow flags that local law enforcement have identified as warning of possible prescription fraud or abuse.

“Some of what we share with pharmacies, they will already have experienced directly or know to look out for,” Morrissey said. “But if the information we have gained regionally from analyzing our investigations – including our overdose cases—if we can prevent even a percentage of pills from being diverted, we will have accomplished something important.”

The launch event took place just a few yards from where Morrissey was sponsoring a TIPS alcohol server training event at Patriot Place for local bar and restaurant workers. The program aims to make liquor serving establishments better equipped to keep patrons from getting behind the wheel when they should not.

“That training dovetails with our Observe, Don’t Overserve initiative,” Morrissey said. “For the last several years, we have reached out to local restaurants and bars to partner with us and display ‘Observe, Don’t Overserve’ signs on the bar or at serving stations in their places. When a server recognizes the need to shut someone off, they can point to the signs and explain that their manager, their owner, is in partnership with the local police chief and the District Attorney and they just can’t serve them another drink. If it keeps one drunk driver off the road, by all means blame me.”

2014 marks the third year Patriot Place has worked with the District Attorney’s office on the “Observe, Don’t Overserve” campaign and hosted the TIPS alcohol server training event.

“Patriot Place continues to work closely with the District Attorney’s office to stress the importance of responsible alcohol service and proudly supports programs like the ‘Observe, Don’t Overserve’ and the John R. Elliot HERO Campaign for Designated Drivers,” said Patriot Place General Manager Brian Earley. “Programs like today’s event are important not only for the upcoming holiday season, but year-round.”



Dozens of Norfolk County police and fire chiefs joined Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey, at center, in launching regional campaigns to fight the two greatest causes of preventable death in the county – drunk driving and opiate overdose at Patriot Place on Nov. 10. Courtesy photo

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