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Northwest CT Overdose Awareness Day Community Resource Fair and Vigil to be held August 31

(Torrington, CT) – The Litchfield County Opiate Task Force (LCOTF) will be presenting Northwest CT Overdose Awareness Day - a community resource fair and vigil to be held on Thursday, August 31st, in Coe Park, downtown Torrington beginning at 6 PM.

This free event is open to all members of the community and will give attendees an opportunity to come together and honor the memory and commemorate the lives of those lost to opioid overdose and addiction. Attendees can also learn about available local resources, offer and share support to help those affected, and hear inspiring music and messages of hope and encouragement from those in recovery.

There will be educational information booths and refreshments from 6 to 8 PM with representatives from Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, McCall Center for Behavioral Health, Greenwoods Counseling, The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Home Visiting Family Services, Family Strides, ED Advance, Key Recovery, All About You, Tides of Mind, Western CT MHN, Nurturing Families, and more. Beginning at 8 PM, a traditional vigil will begin featuring speakers, music, prayer and meditation, and a candle lighting ceremony at the conclusion of the evening.

“Our community has been significantly impacted by the loss of lives due to opiate overdose. We wanted to provide an opportunity to come together in our shared loss, and offer support, mutuality and a sense of hope between providers, family and friends and survivors.” said organizer Ariana Cardozo.

Many organizations and town agencies took part in providing the planning, refreshments and funding for the vigil, including the City of Torrington, Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, McCall Center For Behavioral Health, and other members of the Litchfield County Opiate Task Force. For more information, e-mail Ariana Cardozo at ariana.cardozo@mccallcenterct.org at the McCall Center.

Opiate abuse has become a major public safety and health issue in recent years. Medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are alarmingly high, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet. In addition, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines—flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash—both pose potential safety and health hazards.

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The Task Force recently published a resource guide detailing treatment options, locations and contact information for area detox centers, outpatient drug therapy, residential programs and medication assisted programs. The guide is available at the CHH Emergency Department at 540 Litchfield Street or the McCall Center for Behavioral Health at 58 High Street, Torrington. You may also view it online at www.charlottehungerford.org under Services/Behavioral health/adult tab or request a free copy to be mailed to you by calling 860-496-6719.

Founded by Charlotte Hungerford Hospital and the McCall Center for Behavioral Health, The Litchfield County Opiate Task Force (LCOTF) is a collaboration of professionals and advocates from a wide range of hospital, medical, behavioral health, non-profit, government, public safety, and private and public sector organizations that meet regularly to help address and reduce the harmful effects of the state's opiate epidemic.

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