

The Review

State grant will assist local drug addiction programs

Help is available in the city for those addicted to drugs, if they want it, and a grant received this week by the police department will make that help even more available.



Police Chief John Lane reported to city council Tuesday night he had received word earlier in the day that a \$50,000 grant had been awarded by the Ohio Attorney General's office to be shared by his department and those in Liverpool and St. Clair townships in creating the Southern Columbiana County Drug Abuse Response Team (DART).

With assistance from the victims' advocates in the law director's office, Lane said an application for a \$150,000 grant had been submitted, but \$50,000 over two years was received.

"Without them, this wouldn't have happened," Lane said of the law director's staff.

He and Service-Safety Director Brian Allen said the money will be used to pay primarily for services rendered by Family Care Ministries, located across the street from City Hall, and New Visions, located at East Liverpool City Hospital.

Lane said his officers now refer those they encounter, whether through arrests or other interactions, who are in need of drug rehabilitation, to Family Care Ministries, where Vice President Josh Lytle is a recovering addict himself.

“We refer them to Josh, and he gives them options how to fix the problem. Some are open to it, some aren’t. He’s helping to break the chains of addiction,” Lane said of Lytle and Family Care Ministries.

Lane said there has been a *“big difference”* in the number of overdoses his department has seen since Family Care Ministries opened its doors.

“He’s come here (to the police department), day or night,” Allen said of Lytle.

Family Care Ministries does not charge for its services, operating on donations, according to Lane, who said the grant money will go a long way toward helping its operation.

Under the program, when an overdose occurs, dispatchers will notify Lytle, with all three ambulance companies in the southern part of the county also partnering in the program and able to contact him when responding to an overdose.

Allen said a DART team will meet monthly as part of the program.

Councilman Ernest Peachey asked if the new opioid recovery center operated in the city by Family Recovery Center will also be contacted, with Lane indicating it will not due to its use of alternate drugs to treat clients.

Allen said, *“We do refer to other plans if they don’t want to try Josh’s. If you want help in the city, you can get it, but you have to come seek it. There is help. There are plenty of places to get help, but you have to want*

help and you have to be serious. It's easy to be serious when you're in handcuffs."

Allen said the man depicted in a now-famous photo taken by city police officers showing him unconscious from a drug overdose in a vehicle with his girlfriend's young grandson has benefited from Lytle's program.

"That little boy is safe, and the driver is clean. That's two things that happened from that picture," Allen said.

Lane told council his officers have heard from some of those being arrested that they are having trouble finding drugs to buy in the city.

"It can't be any more from the horse's mouth than that. We're not where we want to be, but we're getting there," Lane said.

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