



News Release

*Contact: Danis Russell, GCCMH CEO Phone 810-257-3707
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Robert Pickell, Sheriff Phone 810-257-3422*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

14-Apr-10

Community Collaboration Focused on Decreasing Prescription Drug Abuse

Genesee County, Michigan – A collaboration between Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton, Genesee County Sheriff Robert Pickell and Genesee County Community Mental Health is focusing on reducing the abuse of prescription medication in Genesee County.

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Genesee County data from 2004 - 2006 estimates that 6.5% of those 12 years and older used a prescription pain reliever not prescribed by their doctor. Genesee County had the highest rate in Michigan from those regions surveyed. Those between the ages of 18 - 25 years old had the highest prevalence rate, 16.3% used a prescription pain reliever not prescribed to them. In Genesee County since January 1, 2007, there have been 259 arrests for possession of prescription drugs that were not prescribed to the individual in possession. There were 78 arrests for obtaining prescription drugs through fraud.

The Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant has awarded \$229,756 to the Prosecutor's office in collaboration with GCCMH and \$135,000 to the Sheriff's Department to fund this Genesee County collaboration that will increase awareness

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about prescription drug abuse; educate the community through presentations, workshops, and seminars; and build partnerships within the community through developing community task forces. The groups that are targeted for awareness and education are physicians, pharmacists, veterinarians, and dentists; state, county and local police agencies within Genesee County; parents and students of middle and high school; the elderly, and young adults ages 18-25. To schedule an in-service call GCCMH Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist Elaina Conklin at 810-496-5545.

“We are very happy to collaborate with the Prosecutor and Sheriff to target this growing issue in Genesee County,” said Danis Russell, CEO of Genesee County CMH. “By combining our resources we will be able to reach many teens, parents and professionals about this dangerous and potentially fatal trend.”

“This collaborative effort is vital to stemming the rise in prescription drug abuse among teens which is known to law enforcement to be a significant precursor to other illegal drugs such as heroin,” states Genesee County Prosecutor, David Leyton.

“Prescription drugs account for the second most commonly abused category of drugs, behind marijuana and ahead of cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and other drugs,” adds Genesee County Sheriff Robert Pickell.

Genesee County CMH provides services and supports to Genesee County residents who are adults and children with developmental disabilities, adults with

Genesee County Community Mental Health
Genesee County Prosecutor's Office
Genesee County Sheriff's Department



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serious mental illness, children with serious emotional disturbance and for adults and children with substance use disorders. For more information call Customer Services at (810) 257-3705.

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