

Angelo M. Valente, Executive Director

Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey

Thank you.

Just last year, I stood before you to speak about the introduction of the Narcan program, here in Monmouth and Ocean Counties -- a program that put the lifesaving antidote to an opioid overdose in the hands of law enforcement and first responders.

Many lives have been saved in one year.

Monmouth and Ocean County have been leading the charge in New Jersey against the opioid abuse epidemic, and today marks another example of leadership from Prosecutor Coronato and Prosecutor Gramiccioni that can save even more lives by including the support of area hospital systems.

Addiction is a disease, a disease that does not discriminate, and we are fortunate that science has provided this antidote to save lives, and once those lives are saved, we now have the opportunity to help those people suffering from this deadly affliction to learn about treatment opportunities and to seek treatment from the hospital systems here today. We need to make Monmouth and Ocean County a place where a person whose life is saved by Narcan will receive immediate support, treatment and counseling -- and be able to once again live a life free of opioid addiction. In doing this, Monmouth and Ocean Counties will once again be the first leaders to embrace this type life-saving approach in not only for the state but also the country.

As we have heard many times today, the abuse of opiates is taking too many lives in our state, treatment works, but it is also important to educate yourself on how to prevent substance abuse in your family. Throughout the year, the Partnership encourages families to take the 5- Step American Medicine Chest Challenge to help safe guard their home from prescription drug abuse by First, taking inventory of the medicine that we have in our medicine cabinet.

- Second, we need to make sure the medicines are securely out of the hands of our children.
- Step three is to take your medicine only as prescribed and not share your medicine with others.
- Next, we have to dispose of those medicines that are expired or we no longer need or want. In New Jersey we are very fortunate to have several options to safely dispose of these medicines. All of these sites can be found on the AmericaMedicineChest.Com website or through the AMCC RX Drop Mobile App

Finally, and most importantly we need to talk to your children frequently about the dangers of prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse.

I want to conclude today by once again thanking Prosecutor Coronato and Prosecutor Gramiccioni for their exceptional leadership in addressing the epidemic of prescription drug abuse and truly leading the way to saving the lives of so many of our neighbors and friends, here in Monmouth and Ocean Counties.

Thank you.