



Essex County Sheriff's Department



Kevin F. Coppinger
Sheriff

20 Manning Avenue
P.O. Box 807
Middleton, MA 01949-2807

Telephone 978-750-1900
Fax 978-750-1999
www.EssexSheriffMA.org

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FOR MORE INFORMATION
William Raynard
Public Information Officer
978-774-3281

ESSEX COUNTY DETOX PROGRAM SPOTLIGHTED AT NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT SUMMIT

Essex County Sheriff Kevin F. Coppinger addressed over 200 law enforcement leaders and addiction treatment specialists as part of the first Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (PAARI) Summit held at the Boston University School of Public Health on December 5th. Representatives from 27 states across the nation gathered to share ideas on best practices in preventing overdose deaths and providing access to addiction treatment and recovery services.

Sheriff Coppinger noted that the current opiate epidemic affects thousands of people in all walks of life and that in 2016, over 65,000 deaths were attributed to drug overdoses nationally. "The majority of our inmates have addiction issues and upon release, without proper planning in place, they are 58 times at greater risk to overdose than those not previously incarcerated," said Coppinger. "Working with the courts, the district attorneys, defense attorneys, probation, and police, our innovative Detox program at the Middleton Jail has provided meaningful options for inmates and now with the assistance of PAARI and the Recovery Coach initiative, we are ready to take our program to the next level to help combat this horrible epidemic."

Coppinger described the Detox Unit as a 28 day program available for both men and women in separate housing units. There are 42 available beds in each unit. Treatment services and health care needs are provided by outside experts in those fields and upon successful completion of the program participants are returned to the courts with an individual plan for reentry back into the community.

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“Now that we have the Recovery Coaches in place, the link between our program and successful reintegration back into the community is greatly enhanced”, Coppinger said. This allows the program to extend beyond the facility walls. PAARI and the Essex County Sheriff’s Office Detox Team conduct group meetings, attend participant’s court appearances and work together to address barriers to successful recovery. The coaches will serve as liaisons between the individuals and available services throughout the county, working with a variety of resources to try and stem the tide of recidivism.

Coppinger believes that this kind of coordinated partnership, with extended community follow-up, will have a significant effect on a participant’s success after completion of the Detox program.

While proud to share the details about Essex County’s program, Coppinger also stated “I was also glad to hear about what strategies are having success in other states. And I look forward to sharing that information with local police and fire chiefs, Mayors, School Superintendents, and leaders of organizations across Essex County with whom I work collaboratively with to find and implement effective solutions. We cannot ignore this problem.”

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