


Date: August 19, 2014, 8:30 a.m.

To: Senator Gene Yaw, Chairman  
Center for Rural Pennsylvania

From: Kami Anderson, Executive Director   
Armstrong-Indiana-Clarion Drug and Alcohol Commission

Re: Clarion University, Clarion PA  
Center for Rural Pennsylvania  
"Heroin Crisis Affecting Rural Pennsylvania"

Dear Senator Yaw and members of the Center for Rural Pennsylvania:

On behalf of the Armstrong-Indiana-Clarion Drug and Alcohol Commission and the hundreds of clients that we serve annually, we thank you for the opportunity to address this critical issue.

Heroin and opiates are now the #2 Drug of Choice for those seeking substance abuse treatment in our three rural Counties. In 2013, we lost 19 of our County residents to heroin and opiate overdoses. Emergency Room Admissions for drug overdoses spiked in 2013 at 151 admissions. Our treatment providers in the three Counties collectively work with over 2,000 clients per year seeking substance abuse treatment.

In order to address this problem, we request that the Pennsylvania General Assembly support the following initiatives:

- 1) Enacting prescription drug monitoring legislation to establish a confidential data base of addictive medications
- 2) Pass Naloxone legislation so that first responders and family members can be equipped with this life saving medication to administer after an overdose
- 3) Restore the funding cuts to the Single County Authorities for substance abuse addiction treatment. Our three Counties have lost 25% of our treatment funding over the past 10 years, while the number of requests for treatment have quadrupled.

Since 2007, our agency has been concentrating on developing a Recovery Oriented System of Care (or ROSC as it referred to) in our three rural Counties that focuses on substance abuse treatment as a chronic disease, instead of an acute disease. In 2008, the

Pennsylvania Certification Board created a new certification title called Certified Recovery Specialist, meant for people in long term recovery to provide Recovery Support Services to others battling addiction. We now employ four full-time CRS staff at our agency that assist clients with drafting a recovery plan, engage clients in the support service while they are in residential care in order assist them through the Outpatient treatment process when they arrive home, and assist them with their recovery needs, such as attending local support groups and finding a sponsor. It has been a very effective service in our rural Counties.

The main reason that I wanted to be here today is to introduce to you a remarkable young man that came to us about 10 years ago requesting treatment for his heroin addiction. Our staff was able to work with this man to provide treatment and case management services through his battle to overcome heroin addiction.

Michael Krafcik is now an employee of the Armstrong-Indiana-Clarion Drug and Alcohol Commission, serving as the Certified Recovery Specialist Supervisor, carrying a caseload and supervising three other Certified Recovery Specialists.

I am very proud to introduce to you Mr. Michael Krafcik, to tell you his story of heroin addiction and recovery in rural PA.