



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Greater Detroit Area Health Council and Detroit Wayne
Mental Health Authority to host February 10 Opioid Summit
to create a call-to-action to address epidemic**
*GDAH and DWMHA to facilitate discussion of the
risks and effects of prescription drug and heroin abuse*

DETROIT (January 8, 2015) – The Greater Detroit Area Health Council (GDAH) in partnership with the Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority (DWMHA) announces it will convene a conversation and create a call-to-action around the opioid abuse and resulting heroin overdose epidemic and its impact in Detroit and Wayne County. The “Prescription Drug Abuse and Heroin Overdose Summit: Understanding and Collaborating to Affect Change” will occur on Wednesday, February 10, 2016, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Detroit Marriott Renaissance Center.

Michigan is at the forefront of a major epidemic in America – the overuse of prescription drugs and heroin overdose. This is a life-threatening and community-damaging crisis that crosses all demographics, affecting families, resulting in job loss, increasing health care costs and vastly impacting law enforcement. The summit will present the foundational issues, why this matters to every stakeholder, share the impact and set an action plan.

"Our members – those who give care, get care and pay for care –have been concerned about the recent rise in prescription drug overuse and subsequent heroin overdose in our community," said Kate Kohn-Parrott, president and CEO of GDAH. "In partnership with the DWMHA, we have assembled an impressive roster of subject matter experts who will increase our knowledge as we all work together to implement strategies to address this crisis."

Tom Watkins, president and CEO of DWMHA, said, "At DWMHA we are seeing an alarming increase in prescription drug and heroin abuse. These are not just statistics. They spell devastation in real people's lives. We accepted GDAH's invitation to partner to try to stop this epidemic in our communities."

Health professionals including physicians, nurses, allied health workers, hospital and medical center staff, and health plan staff; social workers; law enforcement; counselors; educators; elected officials and government staff; court staff; corrections officers; clergy; families affected by devastating disease; funeral directors and members of the community at large are invited and all have a stake in the outcomes of this critical summit. Attendees will receive 5.5 MCBAP-approved CADC hours awarded by DWMHA.

Confirmed presenters include Michigan Lieutenant Governor Brian Calley, who heads the state's task force on Prescription Drug and Opioid Abuse, will present findings in a streaming video presentation. Drs. Carl Christensen, Mark Menestrina and Corey Waller will help provide education to better understand the disease, current treatment options, challenges within the current system and offer suggestions on how the public can work together to improve outcomes. Dr. Grenae Dudley will address prevention strategies. Abraham Azzam, director of the Michigan High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, will speak on the current state of drug trafficking. Panelists Judge Linda Davis, 41B District Court in Macomb County, Judge James Kandrevas, 28th District Court in Wayne County, Dr. Carmen McIntyre of the DWMHA and Dr. Raymond Edison of SHAR House will explore opportunities for partnership in the fight against opioid and heroin abuse.

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Registration is \$40 for GDAH members and DWMHA provider network members and \$65 for all other attendees, which includes breakfast and lunch. Early registration is advised. Table sponsorship for \$500 is available. Online registration is at www.gdahc.org/opioidsummitdetroit.

Event sponsorship or an exhibit table is available by contacting Renée Ahee at 586-484-2390 or events@gdahc.org.

For more information, please contact GDAH at 313-963-4990 or Renée Ahee at 586-484-2390 or events@gdahc.org.

ABOUT THE GREATER DETROIT AREA HEALTH COUNCIL

The Greater Detroit Area Health Council (GDAH) is southeast Michigan's premier health care collaborative. It leverages multi-sector and multi-stakeholder collaboration to develop and evaluate innovative ways to improve the health and wellbeing of people living and working in southeast Michigan. As a health care leader for more than 70 years – recognized nationally and regionally – GDAH represents everyone who gets care, gives care and pays for care. Dedicated to the cost-effective allocation, management and use of health care resources, the non-profit collaborative seeks to develop strong, strategic partnerships that increase access to care, improve the value, and manage the cost of health. Visit www.gdahc.org to learn more.

ABOUT THE DETROIT WAYNE MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY (DWMHA)

The Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority (www.dwmha.com) is the largest and most diverse CMH system in Michigan. We are committed to being consumer and community focused, data driven and evidence based. Through programs and services that utilize promising best practices we hope to promote a community that is supportive and embraces individuals with mental illness, developmental disabilities and substance use disorder. We offer supports in Infant Mental Health, Integrated Healthcare, Supportive Housing, and Recovery to support self-determination and improving the health and quality of life for more than 100,000 consumers and their families.

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