

For Immediate Release
Oct. 14, 2010

Media Contacts: Collin Nash and Sid Nathan, ToNH
(516) 869-7794
Cathy Samuels, Manhasset CASA
(516) 267-7548

Town Hosts Meeting, Part of the Campaign to Tackle the Growing Trend of Prescription Drug Misuse

Manhasset, NY—Reiterating his administration’s commitment to help stop one of the most alarming trends on Long Island, prescription drug and heroin abuse, Supervisor Jon Kaiman and the North Hempstead Town Board hosted the Manhasset Community Coalition Against Substance Abuse (CASA), Inc. Sector Meeting, one of four planned meetings as part of their Federal Drug Free Communities Grant Initiative to reduce substance abuse among youth.

“As a partner in this crucial undertaking to keep prescription and over-the-counter pharmaceuticals away from our youth, I am honored to host this event here today to help shed light on the problem and lay the foundation for town-wide participation in the *Lock Your Meds Be Aware Don’t Share* campaign,” Supervisor Jon Kaiman said during the Sept. 30 meeting in the board room at Town Hall. CASA Sector member, Dr. Jeffrey Reynolds, Executive Director LICADD stated, “It is heartening to see such a large and diverse group mobilize to address drug and alcohol abuse in our community. It’s precisely these kinds of efforts that reverse some of the disturbing trends we’ve seen among adolescents, particularly as it relates to the misuse of prescription medications. Manhasset CASA is doing a great job managing this coalition and we are thrilled to participate.”

Featured speaker, Dr. Rickard E Terenzi, Chief, Drug Treatment and Education Center, North Shore University Hospital presented the coalition with an overview of current developments on the teen prescription drug misuse front. “Misuse of painkillers has become the gateway to heroin abuse on Long Island,” Dr. Terenzi said. “The longer we can delay our teenagers from experimenting with alcohol or drugs, the less likely they may develop a substance abuse problem in their lifetime.” Dr. Terenzi further discussed the number of studies that have shown how 70 percent of youth 12 and older who abuse prescription painkillers get them from family and friends.

Cathy Samuels, Project Director of Manhasset CASA said often, young people underestimate the dangers of misusing medicines. “Parents have to understand that for many teens, prescription drugs appear to be a ‘medically safe high’ because, in their minds, these medicines were ‘prescribed’ by a doctor,” Ms. Samuels said. All too often, she added, “teens will combine prescription or OTC drugs with other substances like alcohol and marijuana, which can also lead to dangerous and deadly consequences.”

The presentation included an overview of the current trends in teen misuse and outlined the continuum of abuse that is seen when teens and adults eventually become addicted. According to Dr. Terenzi, the abuse continuum follows a pattern of behavior:

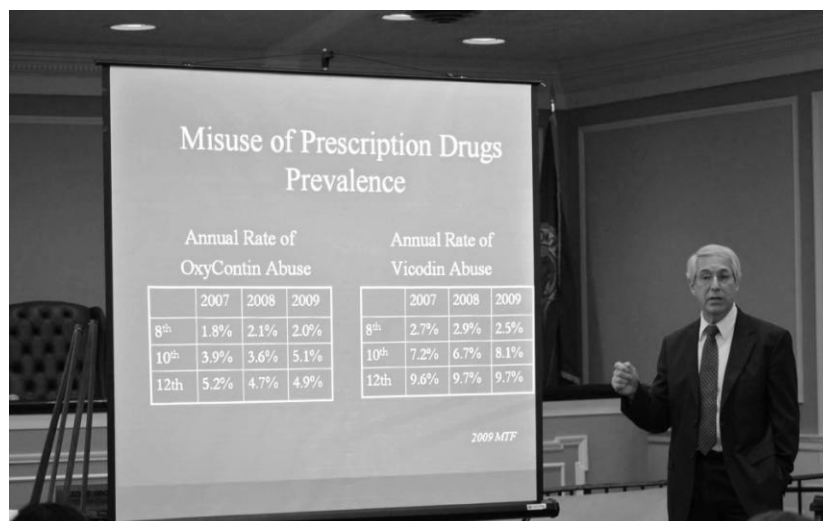
experimentation → recreation → habituation → abuse → dependence → addiction

In addition, while there are many factors that can protect children from substance abuse, there are those factors that will counter and put our youth at risk. Dr. Terenzi elaborated on the importance of strong, positive family bonds, parental monitoring and clear consistent rules as some of the important protective factors that can prevent teen substance abuse.

In discussing risk factors, Dr. Terenzi was clear in pointing out that while it is essential for families to engage in these protective factors, “genetic disposition” within any family will derail these prevention efforts. *Parents and caregivers must be cognizant of any alcohol and drug dependence within their families and convey to teens that the risk for becoming an alcoholic or substance abuser is greater because of family history.*

In an effort to combat the rise of teen prescription drug misuse, Manhasset CASA is working across the community to initiate the Prescription Drug Misuse Public Awareness Campaign. The campaign works in partnership with the Town of North Hempstead, National Family Partnership, Manhasset Public Schools, Manhasset SCA, and the Nassau County Police to provide information regarding the health and safety risks of prescription medication misuse with a primary focus on keeping prescription and over-the counter pharmaceuticals away from our youth.

Recognizing that parents, grandparents and all residents are in a unique position to reduce teen access to prescription drugs because they are found in the home, the campaign includes a **Pharmaceutical Take Back Event sponsored by the Town of North Hempstead and the Nassau County Police Department on Saturday, October 23, 2010 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Manhasset High School.** For more information regarding the Take Back Event, call 311 or go to www.northhempsteadny.gov .



Dr. Rickard Terenzi, CASAC, Chief, Drug Treatment & Education Center of North Shore University Hospital presents overview of the Prevalence of Teen Prescription Drug Misuse at CASA’s Sector meeting held at North Hempstead Town Hall.



Displaying Manhasset CASA's Lock Your Meds Ad Campaign from left to right:

Dr. MaryAnn Schaeffer, Manhasset CASA Coffee Facilitator; Fran Reid, Director of Environmental Planning; Patrice Leone, Co-Chair Shelter Rock School Red Ribbon Week Committee; Rosa Stein, Co-Chair Munsey Park Red Ribbon Week Committee; Jon Kaiman, Supervisor Town of North Hempstead; Maria-Christina Poons, Councilwoman, Town of North Hempstead; Dr. Rickard Terenzi, CASAC, Chief, Drug Treatment & Education Center of North Shore University Hospital; Lisa Belinsky, Manhasset CASA Executive Board Member; Lisbeth Shibley, Manhasset CASA Executive Director and Board President; and Cathy Samuels, Manhasset CASA Project Director



Local Supporters of CASA's Lock Your Med's Campaign from left to right:

Fran Reid, Director of Environmental Planning, Town of North Hempstead; NYS Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, 16th District; Nancy Morris, Nancy H. Morris Agency, Manhasset CASA Liaison; Manhasset Chamber of Commerce; Jo-Ann Leitner, MA, Program Liaison Nassau County Division of Chemical Dependency; Councilwoman Maria-Christina Poons, Town of North Hempstead; Dr. Rickard Terenzi, CASAC, Chief, Drug Treatment & Education Center of North Shore University Hospital; Angel Branch, Manhasset/Great Neck EOC; Charles Cardillo, Superintendent Manhasset Public Schools; Lisa Belinsky, Manhasset CASA Executive Board Member; and Karen Blando, Executive President, Manhasset SCA.