Alcohol abuse and addiction have traditionally been the unspoken concerns among older adults, but as the baby boom generation ages, the problem has become more exposed. The older adult population is expected to reach 80 million by 2050.

According to SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), substance abuse among this age group is one of the “fastest growing health problems in the country.”

In recent years more adults, age 60 and older, are making trips to emergency rooms needing hospitalization because of medication misuse. The most commonly misused prescriptions are painkillers (such as Vicodin, OxyContin), depressants (such as Xanax, Valium) and stimulants (such as Concerta and Adderall).

Misuse may be accidental due to forgetfulness or taking the medication incorrectly, but the problem becomes much more dangerous when alcohol is combined with prescribed or over-the-counter drugs. SAMHSA’s report estimates 2.5 million older adults have problems related to alcohol in the U.S., and 21 percent of hospitalized adults over the age of 40 have a diagnosis of alcoholism as part of their health concern.

The mix of alcohol and medication is often a recipe for injury and accidents. But even alone, alcohol causes complications in older bodies, which don’t contain as much water. One result is the increased risk for many medical conditions, including high blood pressure and diabetes.

Older brains are affected too. Alcohol has a greater impact on cognition than aging. Some of the cognitive concerns are related to judgment, reasoning, coordination and memory.

But as is often the case when talking about mental health and substance abuse, one of the biggest concerns and most difficult obstacles for older adults is interested in behavioral health services.

“In light of the growing drug abuse epidemic in Pennsylvania, including the increasing number of opiate overdoses and related deaths, it is imperative that all professionals have a general understanding and working knowledge of addiction and recovery,” said Vince Brown, Director of Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services.

The conference is free to Community Care members and their families, as well as medical residents and students. For behavioral health professionals, this conference costs $35.00, which includes CEUs and lunch. Contact shipmand@ccbh.com for more information and registration.
September is Recovery Month

This national observance is held each year and reinforces the positive message that behavioral health is essential to overall health, prevention works, treatment is effective, and people can and do recover. Chester County and local stakeholder groups support this observance with activities and events throughout September, including -

PRO-ACT Recovery Walks! 2016
September 17, 2016 - Penn’s Landing, Philadelphia

&

A Premiere Screening - A Generation Found
From the creators of Anonymous People, a powerful story about one community coming together to ignite a youth addiction recovery revolution in their hometown. Thursday, September 22, at 7:30 PM, at Downingtown Regal Cinema

Look for more information on Recovery Month in the next issue of Recovery Works! And check out the Chester County Drug & Alcohol Services website for calendars - www.chesco.org/drugandalcohol

Aging, Alcohol & Addiction, Continued

the lack of awareness and understanding about these issues. Older adults who grew up in a time when there was less information and understanding about mental health and substance use disorders, often maintain outdated beliefs that create stigma, shame and denial.

The National Center for Biotechnology notes that older adults tend to believe that symptoms of mental health or substance use disorders may simply be part of aging. Other adults often find it hard to believe that an older person, especially a woman, is experiencing these health concerns. In general, society looks at substance abuse as a young person’s issue.

With life expectancy continuing to increase, the potential harm from alcoholism or addiction increases as well. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, by the year 2050, one out of four Americans over age 65 will be 85 and older.

To address the concerns and ripple effect, SAMHSA and the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (SAMSHA/CSAT) have produced The Treatment Improvement Protocols (TIPs) are best practice guidelines for the treatment of substance abuse. Go to the website for more information: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/.

Mental Health First Aid

This is a free course offered by Chester County, in partnership with other stakeholder groups.

Find out more about the classes offered this summer at the MH/IDD website:

www.chesco.org/mhidd

Did you know?

Use of illicit drugs among Americans, age 12 and older, has increased over the last decade from 8.3% of the population using illicit drugs in the past month in 2002 to 10.2% (27 million people) in 2014.

- SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use & Health, 2014

Announcement - Chester County Substance Abuse Service Transition

Beginning Friday, July 1, 2016 substance abuse services in Phoenixville, PA have been transitioned to a new provider, Creative Health Services.

Creative Health will conduct screenings, level of care assessments and both outpatient (OP) and intensive outpatient (IOP) treatment as formerly offered by Chester Counseling Center.

The contact information for this provider is:

Creative Health Services, Inc. 100 1st Avenue, Phoenixville, PA 19460. Phone is (610) 933 – 1223; fax (610) 933 – 1208.

We here at Chester County would like to thank Chester Counseling Center and its staff for years of quality service and dedication they gave to our clients and the community; we wish them all the best in their future endeavors.
As a new dad, Rich Mollica says he’s found a new appreciation for families struggling with a child’s addiction.

“I think I always had empathy for families, but now there seems to be a greater sense of the weight families bear,” said Mollica, who’s daughter Carmella was born in April. “There’s no communicating what your child means to you. Being a dad has changed how I feel [about the work I do] and has given me a new focus on youth and finding solutions for the future.”

A member of the pastoral staff at Cornerstone Christian Fellowship Church in West Chester, Mollica, an ordained pastor, often counsels families and individuals who are struggling or in recovery. As a person in recovery since 1996, he has worked to be a source for education, comfort and acceptance.

“My family had the ‘bug,’” Mollica said. “I was the child of an alcoholic and there was addiction in my family.”

He said he used different substances compulsively, became suicidal, and was arrested. But when he experienced the trauma of multiple losses, Mollica finally sought help.

“My father died, then I lost a friend who died of natural causes,” he said. “And then a close friend of mine shot and killed another friend.”

He had been searching for acceptance and a family-type of connection at churches, but wasn’t finding what he needed. He finally found a connection at a 12-step program.

“I was going to church, I met a girl, and she introduced me to an NA meeting” he recalled. “The girl ended up leaving, but I continued going. I felt comfortable. Finally, I wasn’t alone.”

Originally from Delaware County, Mollica said he moved to Chester County when he joined the staff at the Rehab After Work program. He continued looking for a church family, and found it when he was invited to attend Cornerstone Christian Fellowship seven years ago.

“I liked the culture and the message, but the thing that sold it was when I spoke to Pastor Tracy [about my history] and she also shared her testimony. There was no pretense of religiosity, and it was acknowledged that everyone has ‘stuff,’” Mollica said. “It lit me up.” Life became more complete when Mollica met Vickie, who he married five years ago. She currently works in the church office, and the couple now reside in the borough of West Chester with their baby daughter.

Part of the church’s work is through a non-profit, Justice Rain, Inc., which sponsors educational events related to social issues, most recently a half-day conference on mental health and addiction.

“We’re trying to create bridges,” Mollica said. “We do a lot of outreach, especially to under-served populations.”

The Cornerstone Christian Fellowship website lists the activities, including a weekly community dinner, followed by a meeting for those in recovery.

“I believe that everybody has ‘stuff.’ No one is superior than others, and I don’t believe a diagnosis or history of addiction precludes hope for recovery. There’s hope for everyone,” Mollica said.

Find out more about the church at the website: www.cornerstonewestchester.com.

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**What is a Recovery Oriented System of Care?**

We know that recovery from substance abuse or mental health disorders is a process. It’s not just about the short-term goals, but a commitment to a person’s whole health and wellness to live the life they chose, and their ability to reach their full potential.

Chester County is committed to this Recovery Oriented System of Care (ROSC) for everyone receiving services. Designed to support long-term recovery through the delivery of exceptional treatment, paired with a focus on one’s hopes, dreams and achievement of a fulfilling life in the community, ROSC focuses on four major life domains that support a life in recovery: health, home, purpose and community.

In the next issue of Recovery Works! These domains will be explored. You may also read more about them in SAMHSA’s Recovery Support Strategic Initiative, at the website: www.samhsa.gov/recovery.
A Resource for All of Chester County

Got Drugs?

Chester County Medication Collection Boxes

Free and Anonymous

Medication Collection Boxes offer residents the opportunity to safely and anonymously dispose of unwanted and expired drugs and medication. For more information about Medication Collection Boxes in Chester County, please call: 1-866-286-3767

Products Accepted
Prescription and over-the-counter
Solid Medications,
Tablets and Capsules
Nasal Sprays
Pet Medicines

Products NOT Accepted
Intravenous Solutions
Liquid Medications
Inhalers, Creams, Ointments
Injectables
Needles

Permanent Medication Collection Boxes are available at the locations listed below.
Prior to dropping off, please contact each site directly for collection hours, rules and regulations.

Cain Township
Police Department
253 Municipal Drive
Thorndale, PA 19372
610-383-1821

City of Coatesville
Police Department
1 City Hall
Coatesville, PA 19320
610-384-2300

East Brandywine Township
Police Department
1212 Horseshoe Pike
Downingtown, PA 19335
610-269-4300

Easttown Township
Police Department
566 Beaumont Road
Devon, PA 19333
610-341-9780

Kennett Square Borough
Police Department
115 N. Broad Street
Kennett Square, PA 19348
610-444-0501

New Garden Township
Police Department
8934 Gap Newport Pike
Landenberg, PA 19350
610-208-2907

North Coventry Township
Police Department
845 South Hanover Street
Pottstown, PA 19465
610-323-8360

Oxford Borough
Police Department
57 N. Fourth Street
Oxford, PA 19363
610-998-0092

Parkesburg Borough
Police Department
315 W. First Avenue, Building 2
Parkesburg, PA 19365
610-857-3535

Phoenixville Borough
Police Department
351 Bridge Street
Phoenixville, PA 19460
610-933-1180

Sheriff's Office
The Chester County Justice Center
201 West Market Street, Suite 1201
West Chester, PA 19380
610-344-6850

Tredyffrin Township
Police Department
1100 DuPage Road
Bryn Mawr, PA 19312
610-644-3221

Upper Uwchlan Township
Police Department
140 Pottstown Pike
Chester Springs, PA 19425
610-592-5100

Valley Township
Police Department
890 West Lincoln Highway
Coatesville, PA 19320
610-384-8133

West Brandywine Township
Police Department
198 Lafayette Road
Coatesville, PA 19320
610-380-8201

West Chester Borough
Police Department
721 W Kings Highway
Coatesville, PA 19320
610-384-3115

West Goshen Township
Police Department
1025 Paoli Pike
West Chester, PA 19380
610-696-7400

West Vincent Township
Police Department
725 St. Matthews Road
Chester Springs, PA 19425
610-458-3205

West Whiteland Township
Police Department
101 Commerce Drive
Exton, PA 19341
610-363-0200

Westtown-East Goshen
Regional Police Department
1041 Wilmington Pike
West Chester, PA 19382
610-692-9600

Willistown Township
Police Department
688 Sugartown Road
Malvern, PA 19355
610-251-0222

A PROJECT OF THE CHESTER COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY’S OFFICE
With the support of the following State agencies: Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association, The Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and the following County of Chester Offices: Commissioners, District Attorney, Health Department and Drug and Alcohol Services
Funding provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health’s Prevention Health and Health Services Block Grant.

Medication Collection Box locations in and around Coatesville are a result of a community partnership between Pennsylvania American Water The Brandywine Health Foundation, Coatesville Youth Initiative and the Police Chiefs of the City of Coatesville, Cain Township, West Cain Township, West Brandywine Township and Valley Township. 7-2016
Helpful Links

Check out local organizations to observe Alcohol Awareness Month—

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
http://www.aa.org/

Narcotics Anonymous Meeting Schedule (NA)
http://www.cleanacresna.org/meetings/

Health and Human Services Agencies
http://www.referweb.net/chesco/

Al-Anon
http://www.al-anon.org/

Al-a-Teen
http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/

Drug Free.org
http://www.drugfree.org/join-together/

Faces and Voices of Recovery
http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/

Kacie’s Cause
http://www.kaciescause.com/

Nar-Anon Family Groups
http://nar-anon.org/naranon/

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
www.samhsa.gov

Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services

PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs
www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=20800&parentname=objmgr&parentid=92&mode=2

PRO-ACT Southeast Pennsylvania Council
http://www.councilsepa.org/programs/pro-act

PRO-ACT Chester County Calendar
https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=proactchesco@gmail.com&ctz=America/New_York

Act 106 of 1989

Readers are invited to attend The Chester County Drug and Alcohol Advisory Council meeting at the Government Services Center, 601 Westtown Road, Suite 339, West Chester, PA 19380 on the following dates:

**ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING**
1st Monday of Every Month
All Meetings begin at 5:30 p.m. and meet in room 339
July 11, 2016
September 12, 2016
October 3, 2016
November 7, 2016
December 5, 2016
January 2, 2017
February 6, 2017
March 6, 2017
April 3, 2017
May 1, 2017
June 5, 2017

If you are a person with a disability and wish to attend this meeting and require an auxiliary aid, service, or other accommodation to observe or participate in the proceedings, please contact Betty Wade at (610) 344-6620 to discuss how we may best accommodate your needs. Please RSVP if you plan to attend the meeting. We look forward to seeing you!