



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT: Meghan Wedd McGuire
(804) 786-9048

SEPTEMBER IS ALCOHOL AND DRUG ADDICTION RECOVERY MONTH IN VIRGINIA

Richmond – Nationwide, more than 23 million people aged 12 or older needed treatment for a substance use disorder in 2007, and in Virginia alone, 4.8 million people and their families are affected by this disease. Citing that substance use disorders are serious and treatable health problems, Governor Timothy M. Kaine proclaimed September Alcohol and Drug Addiction “Recovery Month” in Virginia.

“Although substance abuse affects people of all ages, races and economic backgrounds, many people don’t understand that recovery from addiction is possible,” said Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services Commissioner James Reinhard, M.D. “In fact, addiction is as treatable as many chronic medical conditions. This month, we celebrate individuals in recovery as well as those who help them reach it.”

In Virginia:

- Approximately 174,865 Virginia adults and adolescents (age 12 and older) abuse or are dependent on any illicit drug, with 119,744 meeting the criterion for dependence, and 467,573 adults and adolescents abuse or are dependent on alcohol, with 209,711 meeting the criterion for dependence.
- Numbers of drug-caused deaths have risen from 473 in 2004 to 717 in 2007, when 338 (47%) were related to misused prescription pain medication.
- Publicly-funded treatment in Virginia is provided by the Commonwealth’s 40 CSBs, entities of local government.
- CSBs provide a variety of treatment and prevention services, including emergency services (required by the Code of Virginia), inpatient services (examples include: hospital-based 24-hour detoxification, other hospital-based substance abuse treatment, use of medication in a 24 hour setting), outpatient services, day support services, and residential services (examples include: highly intensive, intensive, jail-based, supervised residential services, community-based detoxification services).
- In 2006, CSBs served 52, 416 individuals with substance-use disorders.
- \$1 invested in treatment results in a return of \$4 to \$7 in reduced drug-related crime, criminal justice costs, and theft.

The purpose of Recovery Month is to highlight the societal benefits of substance abuse treatment, laud the contributions of those who work in the treatment field and promote the message that recovery from substance abuse is possible. For more information on Recovery Month in Virginia, including events, contact the Substance Abuse and Addiction Recovery Alliance (SAARA) at (804) 762-4445. For more information on national Recovery Month, visit <http://www.recoverymonth.gov/> at the U.S. Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration.

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Available to citizens statewide, Virginia’s public mental health, intellectual disability and substance abuse services system is comprised of 40 community services boards (CSBs) and 16 state facilities. DBHDS seeks to promote dignity, choice, recovery, and the highest possible level of participation in work, relationships, and all aspects of community life for individuals with a mental illness, intellectual disability or a substance-use disorder.

1220 Bank Street • P.O. Box 1797 • Richmond, Virginia 23218-1797
Phone: (804) 786-3921 • Fax: (804) 371-6638 • Web site: www.dbhds.virginia.gov