



August 30, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information:

Lindsay Java, Communications Specialist, Essex County Health Department
518-873-3517 | lindsay.java@essexcountyny.gov

*Essex County Health Department to recognize Overdose Awareness Day,
Thursday, August 31, 2023.*

Elizabethtown, NY. Essex County Health Department (ECHD) invites local community members to join in remembering loved ones who have died from drug overdose and acknowledge the grief of the family and friends left behind. This year's theme "Recognizing those people who go unseen" is about acknowledging people in our communities who are affected by overdose but might go unseen in the crisis.

"Addiction can happen to anyone, any family, at any time," stressed Linda Beers, Director of Public Health for the Essex County Health Department (ECHD). "There is not one single driving factor that leads to addiction. Every person who has a substance use disorder has a story. Our department is active in local responses to the abuse of prescription (Rx) drugs and heroin in Essex County. We co-chair the Essex County Heroin and Other Prevention Coalition (known as ECHO) and gather community partners. Reversing this sad trend will require tearing down old approaches and patterns by eliminating policies and ideas that are founded on and continue to perpetuate stigma." stated Beers. To date in 2023, we have lost six people to fatal drug overdoses. There have been at least thirty non-fatal reported overdoses in Essex County.

"Our 2022 Community Health Assessment identified overdose and fatal overdose trends in Essex County to track closely with NYS and National trends," highlighted Jessica Darney Buehler, ECHD's Director of Health Planning and Promotion. "We will continue to frame our strategies towards the epidemic by preventing opioid misuse; expanding access to medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD); and using data to better target our efforts." expressed Buehler.



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Public Health Unit

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH- Linda Beers, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH PROMOTION &
PLANNING- Jessica Darney Buehler, MPH

ECHD has several things planned for tomorrow, including a social media campaign presence, a Facebook live message and a remembrance balloon display at the Government Center Complex. The Essex County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in August recognizing Overdose Awareness Day.

Chairman Shaun Gilliland said, "On this day we want to pause to remember all those who lost their lives due to overdose and recognize those rescued from overdose in our Essex County community."

Community members can support the theme by printing these graphics and displaying in their windows.

To follow along with the campaign, follow the Essex County Health Department on social media at: <https://www.facebook.com/EssexCountyPublicHealth/>.

