Medical Marijuana - What Now?

What does New York State’s recently passed medical marijuana bill mean to us? Here we have broken down what the newly passed legislation says and what we as a prevention agency should be looking to do next.

Governor Andrew Cuomo signed The Compassionate Care Act in early July. It is unique from most other states that currently have signed medical marijuana bills because unlike most other states, in New York, patients can only receive medical marijuana in nonsmokable forms. Senator Jeffrey D. Klein said the program will be “one of the safest, most tightly regulated medical marijuana programs in the country.” This new bill was designed to get medicine into the hands of patients who really need it and to prevent any defrauding of the system.

Current Bill

- Medical marijuana available ONLY in nonsmokable forms: edibles, tinctures, and vaporizers.
- Small list of eligible state-recognized ailments including AIDS, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, glaucoma, and cancer.
- Criminal penalties in place to prevent defrauding of the system.
- “Fail safe” mechanism that allows the governor to “suspend the program at any time on recommendation of either the State Police Superintendent or the Commissioner of Health if there is a risk to the public health or public safety.”
- There is an 18-month long implementation process.
- Only certain doctors at designated locations will be able to prescribe medical marijuana for specified medical conditions.

Next Steps in Prevention?

- Continue with educational efforts that focus on the harms of marijuana use.
- Work to increase the perception of harm so illegal marijuana use does not increase.
- Keep a close eye on what’s happening throughout the state as medical marijuana becomes readily available.
- Ensure pro marijuana groups don’t push to have recreational use legalized.

Continuing with these efforts is important because after all, the most widely used and abused drugs are legal: alcohol, tobacco, and prescription medications. Why add more to this devastating list?

Sources: CNN Health, Huffington Post
Letter from the Executive Director
Andrea J. Wanat, MA, CPP

As an agency that works to prevent substance abuse, ECCPASA strives to keep the community informed about current substance abuse trends and public policy issues. Therefore, in this summer issue of AwareNews we are highlighting recent updates on public policy topics and legislative actions in New York State. Recently the Governor passed legislation to help raise awareness about opioid abuse. This is described on page six of this edition. Our cover page focuses on the issue of medical marijuana and the recent passage of the Compassionate Care Act in NY State.

On the local level, ECCPASA was able to see policy change take place from the ground up. Our Public Policy Committee, led by Dr. Robert Whitney, was instrumental in the recent passage of Social Host legislation in Erie County. Dr. Whitney and his committee worked with Erie County Legislator Lynne Dixon to draft a social host bill. The bill was passed into law in early June and its purpose is to help prevent underage drinking by holding adults accountable who allow minors to drink on their property, or who fail to take reasonable corrective actions. Penalties for individuals in violation of this law include fines upwards of $1000 and misdemeanor charges, including imprisonment, for third time offenders.

Hope you enjoy this edition of AwareNews and take pleasure in the joys of summer. Be sure to mark your calendar for our upcoming Annual Meeting that will be held at Templeton Landing on October 8, 2014! We are excited to welcome Frances M. Harding, Director of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) as our keynote speaker. It will be something you do not want to miss!!

Andrea
ECCPASA Calendar of Events

Fall 2014 Community Education Trainings

Registration will begin at 8:30 am. Training will begin promptly at 9:00 am.
Training held at the Harlem Road Community Center
4255 Harlem Rd. ~ Amherst ~ NY ~ 14226
9:00 AM - 12 Noon

- CASAC/CPP/CPS credits available
- Light refreshments served

November 12, 2014 – A General Overview, E-Cigarettes - Part I
By: Teresa Harris, M.S., ECCPASA and Lauren Lysiak, B.S., ECCPASA
Class cost: $20
This is a two-part series that will discuss a new popular trend in the tobacco world that is sweeping the nation; E-Cigarettes. The main focus of this Part I training will be to educate the community on the many varying opinions and facts pertaining to this elusive device. During this session the main topics of discussion will be generalized towards understanding what exactly an E-cigarette is and the many varying parts and supplies that are on the market. It will also look at the different health risks with specific attention to the individual, the public, and even special populations involved with E-cigarettes. Please join us as we shed light on this new product and the many risks involved.

There will be a follow-up training in this series on December 10, 2014, which will go into further detail and will discuss advertising, FDA involvement, and future concerns.

December 10, 2014 – Advertising, Regulations, and Future Concern, E-Cigarettes, Part 2
By: Teresa Harris, M.S., ECCPASA and Lauren Lysiak, B.S., ECCPASA
Class cost: $20
The main focus of this second session is to educate the community on the many varying opinions and facts pertaining to this device. During this second training we will be taking a deeper look at the advertising world involved in E-cigarette marketing and the positive support it receives from many different entities. We will also be discussing the different geographic locations of E-cigarette vendors, the FDA regulations and their vested interest, as well as the many future concerns of our communities.

To Register Contact: Shirley Liddle
ECCPASA
(716) 831-2298
Shirley@eccpasa.org
Or visit us online at www.eccpasa.org

Amazon Smile

ECCPASA is now a registered member of Amazon Smile! Amazon.com is partnering with non-profit agencies and donating a portion of the proceeds of purchased goods from shoppers who designate a specific charity on their Amazon account. There is no extra cost to the user.

Please visit http://smile.amazon.com/ to designate the Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse as your charity of choice and begin shopping as you normally would. You must visit http://smile.amazon.com/ to shop. You only have to do this once, from then on Amazon will remember to donate a portion of your purchase amounts to us!

We appreciate your continued support!
ECCPASA News - 4

ECCPASA has completed another successful year of Tomorrow’s Leaders Camp (TLC)! We had an absolutely amazing group of campers this year and wonderful staff who helped make TLC 2014 a great success! This year’s theme for camp was Discover Me. The games and activities that were developed by staff were fun and entertaining, and also provided the campers with educational, developmental, and leadership opportunities.

Each of the nine days of camp had a theme. The themed days included: Try Something New, Goin’ Green, Around the World, Make Something with Your Hands, Mystery Day, and Summer Olympics. There were also two field trip days included in the two-week camp.

Some of the activities the campers took part in included participation in a fun, yet educational Scrabble Relay game and planting their choice of a carrot or cucumber seed to take care of and watch grow for the following days and weeks to come. Staff also made the popular TV show, Amazing Race, come to life with activities from around the world that the campers had to complete. They had their very own passport that received a stamp after properly completing the activity for the particular location.

We made the most out of a rainy afternoon by cozying up and watching a movie, Despicable Me 2, while munching on some popcorn. The campers also got artistic (and a little messy) and created some pottery using a homemade clay recipe. They also used their artistic abilities to decorate some sugar cookies that would later be the focus of a live Clue game on Mystery Day.

The following day the campers came in and quickly discovered that their cookies had been “stolen” by a cookie thief. They had to work together to collect clues and solve the mystery of who stole their cookies, why, how, and when the cookies were stolen. Each group had their very own mystery to solve. They all worked hard to solve their mystery and were able to eat their cookies for snack once found!

TLC also hosted their own Summer Olympics in which campers were given multiple different activities to complete that took away their senses, balance, and/or coordination. They had a blast and each camper got a gold medal at the end to celebrate their hard work. We also invited the coaches from the University at Buffalo Women’s Rowing Team to come and speak to the campers about their sport. They even brought some of their equipment, including a two-person rowing boat for the campers to see.

There were two field trips during camp. The first week we visited the newly rejuvenated Canalside Park where the campers ate a picnic lunch, played games such as life-size Jenga and Connect Four. For snack, the campers were able to order a small ice cream cone from Clinton’s Dish at the park. During week two we visited Murphy’s Orchard where the campers learned about farming, the Underground Railroad, and were able to pick cherries from the cherry trees!

On the final day of camp a hot dog lunch was provided for the campers. They celebrated with sno-cones and a visit from Elroy the Elk. Guest speakers from the Buffalo Zoo also came to share their knowledge of zoo animals with the campers. They were nice enough to bring some animals for the campers to see and pet including a ferret, a boa constrictor, and a parrot.

We would like to say a special thank you to all those who made our Tomorrow’s Leaders Camp possible. Our sponsors for the camp included Tops Friendly Markets and the Richard W. Rupp Foundation. We appreciate the beautiful space allocated to our campers by our location hosts; St. Mary’s School for the Deaf. We also want to say a big thank you to the coaches from UB’s Women’s Rowing Team, the Buffalo Zoo, Murphy’s Orchard, and Elroy the Elk for coming to visit our camp!

Hope to see you at camp next summer!!
Western New York Chemical Dependency Consortium Legislative Event

The Western New York Chemical Dependency Consortium (WNYCDC) held their annual legislative event on June 6th. The event consisted of consortium members talking to legislators about critical issues in the substance use disorders field. Some of the topics included: preservation and enhancement of funding for prevention services, insurance coverage and benefits for substance use disorders, and discussions about the opioid epidemic. ECCPASA’s Public Policy Chairperson Dr. Robert Whitney discussed the proposed medical marijuana legislation while Judge Gary Graber from Darien Town Court joined in the conversation to discuss an initiative he feels very strongly about that relates to underage drinking violations. Judge Graber, the former NYS Magistrate Chair, has been pushing for legislation that mandates educational interventions for underage drinkers across the state with a result of license suspension for those who do not comply. Currently, the law does not hold any repercussions for those who do not follow judges’ recommendations.

The event welcomed several local legislators, many of whom shared a few words of support with the consortium members. Senator Timothy Kennedy spoke about his continued dedication to partner with substance abuse prevention and treatment agencies and Paul Bologna from Assemblywoman Jane Corwin’s office talked about how Assemblywoman Corwin supports prevention efforts. Mitchell Martin from Senator Michael Ranzenhoffer’s office discussed the Senator’s support for substance abuse prevention and treatment efforts including supporting the prescription drug drop-off events and sponsoring community health fairs to raise awareness of health issues including substance abuse. Legislator Lynne Dixon also made an appearance to discuss the recent passage of Erie County’s Social Host legislation.

The Consortium would like to thank all those who attended this event, and give a special thank you to the Legislators who took time out of their busy schedules to show support for the cause.

Governor Cuomo’s New Legislation to Combat Opioid Abuse

Governor Cuomo has signed new legislation that will work to combat the heroin, opioid, and prescription drug abuse epidemic across New York State. According to the Governor’s website, in 2013 there were almost 90,000 cases of heroin and prescription opioid treatment admissions just in NYS. The new legislation has several components to it including: improved measures to support addiction treatment; new penalties to help prohibit illegal drug distribution; improved accessibility to Naloxone kits, which prevent opioid overdose; and increased public education campaigns to raise awareness about heroin and prescription opioids.

We want to thank Governor Cuomo for his vested interest in substance abuse prevention!
Some may call it controversial while others call it genius, but with the help from a new grant, Alaskan bars now have cheap ($3) pregnancy tests available through wall-mounted dispensers. This initiative was developed with the hopes of helping to curb birth defects caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy. The program is a two-year, state-funded project. The University of Alaska is helping with the project in which 20 bars throughout Alaska will receive the wall-mounted test dispensers to put up in the women’s restroom. The dispensers contain a poster on the outside warning women to “Think before you drink.” Alaska has the highest rate of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in the U.S. with 20 percent of women who are of child-bearing age likely to binge drink.

On June 21, 2014 ECCPASA staff and sponsors participated in the Color Me Rad fun run held at Darien Lake Amusement Park. Our agency received so much positive support from many community members and for that we want to extend a huge thank you! Our many volunteers who helped on race day with the set up and break down of all the equipment did an amazing job representing our agency and our community. All of your help was truly appreciated. We would also like to thank those of you who supported ECCPASA by signing up for the race using our special promotional code. You helped make a difference for our agency and more importantly for your community. We strongly feel that you were all a big reason why everyone enjoyed this year’s run and the whole race went off without a hitch! Thank you again!
ERIE COUNTY COUNCIL FOR THE PREVENTION OF ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE, INC.

The Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse will deliver research driven education, prevention, intervention programs and services to promote and support the health and wellness of individuals, families and communities by focusing on solutions to alcohol and other drug misuse, addiction and unhealthy behaviors.

ECCPASA will provide leadership to fight the stigma associated with addiction through public education, policy awareness, liaison with health professionals and recovering communities, by providing objective information, referral, and linkages to those in need.

Support ECCPASA

As we continue to serve the community, please become an official “supporter” of our mission!

Your tax deductible contribution can be made at any time of the year:

☐ $10.00   ☐ $50.00   ☐ $100.00
☐ $25.00   ☐ $75.00   ☐ Other $__________________

Name:__________________________________________________________
Address:________________________________________________________
Phone:__________________________________________________________
Email:___________________________________________________________

Thank you for supporting the ECCPASA community efforts!

Please mail your tax deductible contribution to: ECCPASA, 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, N.Y. 14216