



BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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For more information, contact:

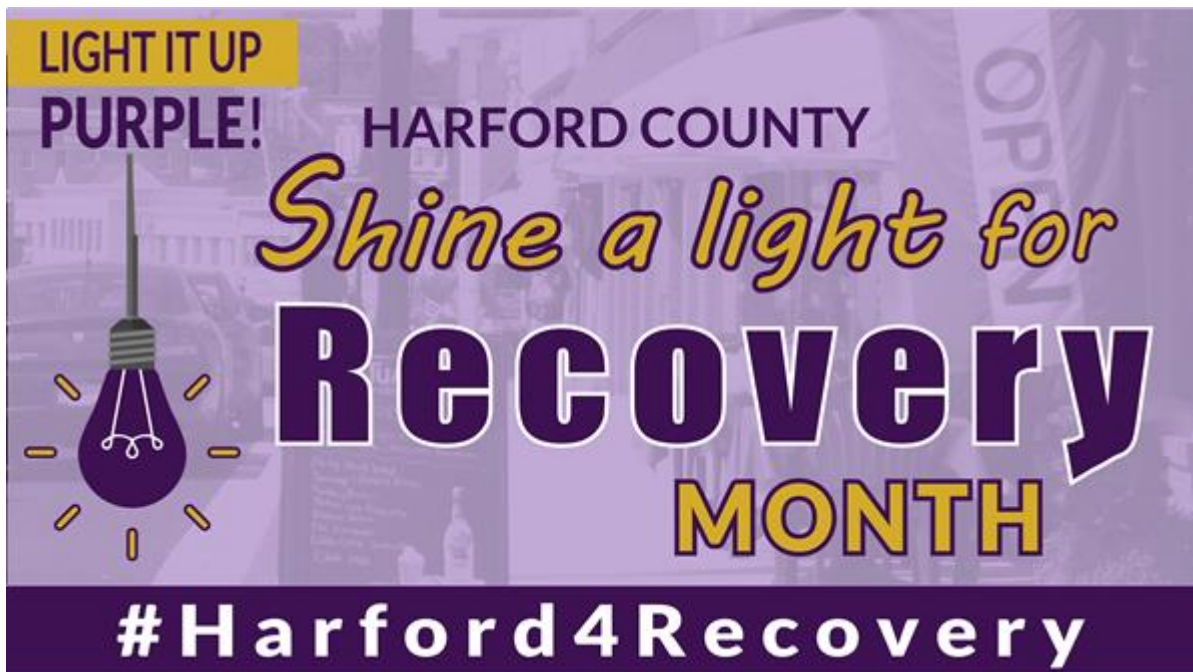
Cindy Mumby

Director of Governmental & Community Relations

410-340-5376

camumby@harfordcountymd.gov

Harford County Shines a Light on National Recovery Month



BEL AIR, Md., (Aug. 28, 2020) - National Recovery Month in September raises awareness about substance use disorders and recognizes those who have overcome addiction and behavioral health issues. This September, individuals and community partners are coming together throughout Harford County to shine a light on recovery.

Harford County government, Harford County Health Department, Harford County Sheriff's Office, Harford County CORE Services Agency, Healthy Harford, the town of Bel Air, city of Havre de Grace, University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health, the Klein Family Harford Crisis Center, and numerous other partners will launch the celebration on September 1 with purple lights on buildings

to symbolize recovery, purple painted “Recovery Rocks!”, 30 days of inspiring posts from individuals in recovery and an online art gallery featuring work by individuals who have been impacted by addiction and mental health disorders.

“Celebrating Recovery Month is more important than ever as the pandemic has disrupted recovery routines and communities,” County Executive Barry Glassman said. “Isolation, stress, anxiety, unemployment and depression have contributed to this year’s 5.8% increase in fatal overdoses and a 64% increase in relapse of individuals in long term recovery in Harford County. In response, our Office of Drug Control Policy is working with treatment partners on strategies to re-connect with treatment program alumni, developing campaigns to reach individuals in recovery, and finding safe solutions for hosting and attending meetings. Everyone in Harford County has the power to help by raising awareness about Recovery Month and by checking in on individuals in recovery and connecting them to resources if they need help.”

Shining a Light on Recovery

Buildings throughout Harford County will be illuminated in purple during September, including: the county government administrative building at 220 S. Main Street in Bel Air, volunteer fire companies in Level, Fallston, Norrisville and Whiteford, and the Havre de Grace Ambulance Corps; the Bel Air Armory; Bel Air Library; Saxon’s Jeweler buildings in Bel Air and Aberdeen, and the Harford Mutual Insurance Company. In addition, lights on Main Street in Havre de Grace will shine purple in September, as will lighting at the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health campuses in Bel Air and Havre de Grace. The Harford County Health Department is also providing strings of purple lights to businesses on Main Street in Bel Air.

Recovery Rocks!

Citizens should also keep an eye out for purple “Recovery Rocks!” Hundreds of rocks, generously donated by Greenspring Nursery of Jarrettsville, were hand-painted with inspirational messages by individuals in recovery and will be placed along trails and sidewalks. Rocks can also be picked up in front of the Harford County Department of Community Services office at 125 N. Main Street in Bel Air and placed around the county. Everyone is encouraged to take pictures of the rocks they find and post them on social media with the hashtag, #Harford4Recovery.

The Art of Recovery Gallery

Harford County government will showcase art by local residents who will also describe how creating art aided their recovery. The art will be displayed on the [county website](#) and social media, including paintings, drawings, photography, poetry, performance art, music and dance.

Social Media Support Storm

Harford County agencies have also collaborated on a social media campaign that will run during the month of September. Daily posts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram will share moving stories of recovery, treatment resources and recovery events.

Reducing Stigma


Leanne B., a Harford County citizen in recovery, said, "It is no secret that addiction is a highly stigmatized disease. Shame, guilt, regret, and a low sense of self are all very familiar to someone like me. Seeing all the overwhelming support in this county, all of the purple lights and people wearing purple, means we don't have to be ashamed anymore. We can hold our heads high. We can grow and heal with pride knowing that our community is there for us and wants to help us succeed in our journeys."

On Wednesday, September 23, County Executive Glassman is encouraging everyone to wear purple for Recovery Awareness Day in Harford County, which honors family members, friends and neighbors who have overcome addiction.

"The opioid epidemic has brought terrible suffering to our community and our nation, but there are encouraging stories of recovery too," County Executive Glassman said. "This month we celebrate thousands of individuals who have overcome addiction in Harford County. Sharing these stories reduces stigma and sends an important message to families – you are not alone."

For additional event details and other Recovery Month activities, please visit www.harfordcountymd.gov/ODCP or contact the Harford County Office of Drug Control Policy at 410-638-3333. If you or someone you love is struggling with addiction, please call for help at 800.639.8783.

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