

BATTLING OPIOIDS

A PROJECT OF PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC MEDIA

WHYY WITF WLVT WPSU WQED WQLN WVIA

For immediate release

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Pennsylvania Public Media's "Battling Opioids" Television Series Addresses Current and New Treatments in Part Four.

[Pittston, PA January 5, 2020] Pennsylvania experienced a drop in fatal overdoses in 2018 — an 18% decrease. However, according to a report from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, there has been a decrease in some counties while the crisis has significantly increased in other parts of the commonwealth.

Part Four of Pennsylvania Public Media's "Battling Opioids" television series focuses on new and current treatments. Viewers can hear personal stories of recovery from across the state in addition to an in-studio panel discussion moderated by Paola Giangiacomo. Battling Opioids Part 4 will air on Thursday evening, January 30th on Pennsylvania Public Television.

See local channel listings for time.

Segments include:

Blue Guardian program: Lehigh County's Blue Guardian program pairs police with certified recovery specialists who visit individual's within a few days of being revived by naloxone. The goal of this program is to offer support to families and to encourage those struggling with addiction to seek recovery programs.

PROSPER: The PROSPER program is an early intervention program that works with children and their families to help young people avoid substance abuse and behavioral problems.

Back On My Feet: Therapists and researchers agree that there are benefits of exercise, which can help individuals in recovery maintain their sobriety. Donald Davalos has struggled with substance use for more than 20 years. He recently discovered Back on My Feet, a national non-profit that serves people in recovery through organized running groups and other services.

Neonatal NAS Program: Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome is a group of problems that occur in a newborn who was exposed to opiate drugs while in the mother's womb. NAS is a program created to help expecting mothers that are addicted to opioids.

Panelists Include:

Senator Gene Yaw who represents Pennsylvania's 23rd Senatorial District.

Senator Yaw is also the Chairman of the Center for Rural Pennsylvania.

Jesse Miller, Director of Drug and Alcohol Programs at Robinson Counseling Service Center of Wyoming Valley.

John Jezick, a Community Recovery Specialist, with Treatment Trends in Allentown.

Cammie Anderson, a certified prevention specialist and student assistant program trainer.

Maria Kolcharno, Director of Addiction Services at The Wright Center for Community Health. Ms. Kolcharno also supervises the Healthy Moms and the Opioid Use Disorder Center of Excellence Program.

ABOUT

Battling Opioids is a project of seven Pennsylvania of Public Media stations.

Pennsylvania has one of the highest opioid overdose death rates in the nation. Every day, thousands of Pennsylvanians—mothers, and fathers, children, neighbors—struggle to overcome addiction. Rural and urban, rich and poor, the opioid crisis affects all of us. Neither people nor communities can fight this battle alone. Public media has a unique potential to connect Pennsylvanians across boundaries, and, in an unprecedented collaboration, we are doing just that. Our local reporting and programming have covered the opioid crisis for years—but now we are uniting to show you how Pennsylvanians statewide are confronting the epidemic of heroin and prescription opioid abuse. We are increasing awareness and empathy to reduce the stigma around opioid use, aid prevention, and help people find treatment.

Pennsylvania Public Media stations [WHYY](#) (Philadelphia), [WITF](#) (Harrisburg), [WLVT/PBS39](#) (Greater Lehigh Valley), [WPSU](#) (State College), [WQED](#) (Pittsburgh), [WQLN](#) (Northwestern Pennsylvania), and [VIA](#) Public Media (Northeastern Pennsylvania) are collaborating to produce educational programming that focuses on the opioid crisis and its impact.

To listen to the Battling Opioids Podcast, visit battlingopioids.org/podcasts