



Hope and Healing: The Church Responds to the Opioid Crisis
Diocesan Addiction and Recovery Team (DART)
The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

Background:

- In 2017, opioids claimed the lives of over 1400 individuals in Virginia and impacted countless others in our state.¹ Thousands of Virginians struggle with opioid use disorder every day, affecting families, housing, employment, and entire communities.
- The Church is uniquely positioned not only to facilitate spiritual healing and forgiveness, but also to connect those who suffer from substance use disorder and their loved ones to community resources where they can begin the processes of physical and mental healing.

How your parish can get involved:

- **Pray:** Remember those who are affected by the opioid crisis in your personal prayers, and in the Prayers of the People on Sunday morning. Consider holding special recovery worship service to support those impacted by the opioid crisis.
- **Open your doors:** Host recovery support meetings and post recovery meeting information in your newsletters, calendars, websites, and bulletins.
- **Increase awareness:** Bring in speakers from local recovery community organizations to educate your parish on the opioid crisis, effective means of addiction prevention, and non-opioid pain management options. Host a parish event, such as a book study or movie night using one of the book or movie resources listed below.
- **Build community capacity:** Host a naloxone (Narcan) administration training or organize a Mental Health First Aid training in your area.
- **Rebuild and restore:** Support individuals and families through food, housing, or employment assistance programs. Partner with the community to support foster families by organizing a clothing or child care products drive.
- **Connect and Collaborate:** Find a local recovery organization in your community and ask how your parish can support them and the important work they do.

Resources:

SpiritWorks Provisions for the Journey recovery resource website:

<http://www.provisionsforthejourney.org/>

¹ Virginia Department of Health website: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/data/opioid-overdose/>

Sesame Street in Communities Parental Addiction Resources: <https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/parental-addiction/?activity=its-not-your-fault>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Center Opioid Toolkit for Faith-based organizations:

<https://www.hhs.gov/about/agencies/iea/partnerships/opioid-toolkit/index.html>

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew's Recovery Ministry Pages: Statement of Ministry

<https://www.brothersandrew.net/Ministries/recovery.html>

and **Resources:** <https://www.brothersandrew.net/Ministries/recovery-resources.html>

Dopesick: Dealers, Doctors, and The Drug Company That Addicted America by Beth Macy, 2018

Dreamland: The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic by Sam Quinones, 2015

Virginia Episcopalian Magazine, Summer 2018, "The Hour has Come: Time to take Action on the Opioid Epidemic," by Amanda Kotval. http://www.thediocese.net/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/Virginia_Episcopalian/VE_summer-2018-final-web.pdf

Chasing the Dragon: The Life of an Opiate Addict (FBI documentary):

<https://youtu.be/pzHD2MyeIbY>

Love's Grace in the Midst of Crisis (sermon, The Rev. Deacon Barbara Ambrose): <http://st-andrewsoregonhill.org/sermon/loves-grace-in-the-midst-of-crisis/>

DART Goals:

- Develop a diocesan-wide network linking parishes and regions with service providers and local recovery agencies
- Distribute resources for parishes to use in the implementation of their own opioid response ministries, including resources for recovery, education, advocacy, and liturgy.
- Facilitate the development of programs and outreach activities at parish and regional levels.

Your Diocesan Addiction and Recovery Team:

- Mr. Karl C. Colder, St. David's, Ashburn. Retired Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration; Co-Chair of the Province III Task Force on the Opioid Epidemic. Contact: kc.coldersr@verizon.net
- The Rev. Amanda Kotval, Associate Rector, St. Paul's, Ivy. Vice Chair of General Convention's Task Force on the Opioid Epidemic. Contact: amanda@stpaulsivy.org
- The Rev. Deacon Barbara Ambrose, LCSW, St. Andrew's, Richmond. Contact: cats4cats@comcast.net