



Macon County Public Health

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Press Release

MountainWise of Macon County Substance Use Task Force Encourages Stigma Reduction through Educational Awareness

Franklin, NC – April 30, 2018 – The MountainWise of Macon County Substance Use Task Force is comprised of agency & organization members from across the Macon County community. The group meets bi-monthly to discuss, develop and implement education and prevention strategies to prevent substance use in Macon County.

Formerly known as the Substance Abuse Task Force, the group recently rebranded itself as the Substance Use Task Force in order to acknowledge the need for stigma reduction surrounding the epidemic that has plagued much of the region.

The task force is promoting the use of *Language of Recovery* when referring to and working with individuals. “Terms that have been used by us traditionally when working with those in recovery, have been found to be ineffective. When a person is trying to get their needs met, the use of threatening terminology can break someone’s sense of self-worth,” says task force chair, Tony Corbin. “Furthermore, I’m proud that our has task force has taken the lead to ensure that we are referring to people in the most respectful way – People are people, no matter where they are in their road to recovery.”

“Our goal is to tear down the stigma for individuals who have substance use disorders and put the person first,” explains Jim Bruckner, Macon County Public Health Director. “The Substance Use Task Force has begun the process by working to educate and address the need for community respect and treatment of individuals with substance use disorders as a health issue instead of referencing them as

criminals. A culture shift of this nature is possible, but it will require the full support of everyone in our community.”

For those interested in receiving information about the *Language of Recovery*, please contact Lynnda Baker, Macon County Public Health Section Administrator, at (828)349-2437 or lbaker@maconnc.org.

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