

**MINUTES: Healthy Carolinians of Macon County – Substance Abuse Task Force**

**DATE:** February 19, 2009

**PLACE:** Health and Human Services Building

**TIME:** 2:00 – 4:00 PM

**ATTENDEES:** Rhonda Blanton, Jim Bottomley, Annie Breedlove, Jennifer Garrett, M. R. Hall, Marci Holland, Robby Holland, Brian Leopard, Larry McDonald, Kathy McGaha and Patti Tiberi

**GUESTS:** Debby Cowan and Angie Stahl

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
Welcome and Approval of Minutes	Robby Holland welcomed everyone to today's meeting of the Substance Abuse Task Force. Mr. Holland asked the task force members to review the minutes of the last meeting. M. R. Hall motioned for the approval of the minutes. Jim Bottomley 2 <sup>nd</sup> the motion, with a unanimous vote for approval.		
Introductions	Robby Holland asked everyone to introduce themselves and tell what organization they represented.		
Illegal Use of Prescription Drugs: Discussions with Guest Pharmacists – Angie Stahl and Debby Cowan	<p>Mr. Holland thanked our invited guests for attending today's meeting. Debby Cowan is the Director of Pharmacy at Angel Medical Center. Angie Stahl is a pharmacist at the Bi-Lo Pharmacy and is also a member of the Board of Health.</p> <p>Rhonda Blanton had previously asked task force members to submit questions for today's guests to answer. Ms. Stahl and Ms. Cowan spent the rest of the meeting answering these questions and offering many helpful ideas and suggestions for the task force members.</p> <p>Ms. Blanton received the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. How to properly dispose of unused medicines?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Remove drugs from original container</li><li>○ Grind-up drugs and mix drugs with undesirable refuse (such as used coffee grounds, mayonnaise, etc.) and put them in an impermeable, non-descript container and throw in the garbage</li><li>○ Flush prescription drugs down the toilet only if the label or accompanying patient</li></ul></li></ol>		

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	<p>information specifically instructs doing so</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If a take-back program is available, please make use of it.</li> </ul> <p>2. Is the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program used locally?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ North Carolina does have an operational PDMP. This allows authorized users the capacity to receive and distribute PDMP information. PDMP's monitor "doctor shopping", indiscriminant prescribing, and prescription forgery.</li> </ul> <p>3. Do you notice prescription drug abuse locally among our youth or elderly populations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There is some drug abuse locally among the youth and elderly. Especially among the elderly, this drug abuse might be unintentional.</li> </ul> <p>4. Besides OxyContin, what drugs are abused most?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Some of the most commonly abused drugs are Xanax, Vicodin and Lortab.</li> </ul> <p>5. How do you tell if someone is addicted?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Depending on the drug being abused the symptoms vary. Some symptoms are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Change in personality</li> <li>▪ Confusion</li> <li>▪ Red eyes</li> <li>▪ Restlessness</li> <li>▪ Irritability</li> <li>▪ Sudden weight loss or weight gain</li> <li>▪ Unexpected changes in clothing</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>6. What are the most common OTC medications that are abused?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The most common OTC medications that are abused are antihistamines, decongestants, cough medicines and pain relievers.</li> </ul> <p>7. What about herbal drugs? How bad are they</p>		

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	<p>abused?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Herbal drugs are marketed as food supplements. An herb manufacturer or distributor can make no specific claims without FDA approval.</li> <li>○ Ms. Stahl did not know about abuse of herbal drugs, but said herbal drugs could be a dangerous mix with some prescription drugs. She stated to always let your pharmacist know what herbal drugs you are using.</li> </ul> <p>8. Is doctor shopping common in this area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Doctor-shopping does occur in this area and local pharmacies have policies on how to handle this situation. Policies vary from pharmacy to pharmacy. Some pharmacies more actively pursue identifying, preventing, and prosecuting “doctor shoppers”.</li> </ul> <p>9. What are the best recommendations or suggestions for keeping medications locked up?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ms. Stahl passed around a handout of a Medication Storage Lock Box.</li> <li>○ Ms. Stahl also recommended keeping medicines out of sight in an area with low light and low humidity and out of children’s reach.</li> </ul> <p>Mr. Holland and all the task force members thanked them both for attending this meeting and answering our questions. Ms. Stahl left a packet of information for the task force to keep and use.</p>		
Next Meeting Date	The next meeting of the Substance Abuse Task Force will be held on Thursday, March 19 <sup>th</sup> , from 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM in Meeting Rooms A/B at the Health and Human Services Building.		