SUMMARY STATEMENT

ITEM NO.:        DRPA-19-081

SUBJECT:       Opioid Dependency and Addiction Awareness & Resource Initiative

COMMITTEE:     Labor

COMMITTEE MEETING DATE:   September 10, 2019

BOARD ACTION DATE:    September 18, 2019

PROPOSAL: That the Board provides its support for a comprehensive multifaceted Opioid Dependency and Addiction Awareness & Resource Initiative that will focus on substance abuse, initially calling attention to opioids and vaping, an emerging public health crisis.

This initiative is the result of a collaborative effort that includes our partners, Gallagher Benefit Services and AmeriHealth of New Jersey. To demonstrate its support for this new awareness initiative, AmeriHealth has provided an additional wellness credit for our use in 2019.

PURPOSE: To educate and raise awareness about a problem that is a national health epidemic, and eliminate the stigma and shame that often prevents people from seeking help to address an addiction. Our comprehensive approach to raising awareness will include, but not be limited to, the following initiatives:

- Launching “Regain”, an educational campaign designed to educate, build awareness and provide those in need with details related to support. The campaign will provide important information about opioids, opioid dependency and opioid addiction. The Regain toolkit includes a short video which tells an inspiring, real-life story of opioid dependency and recovery, and employee communications that include emails, desk drops, home mailers and posters;

- A new focus on opioid dependency, opioid addiction and vaping at the annual Health Fairs scheduled to take place in October. Vendors will be onsite who, in various ways, will educate employees about some of the facts and statistics concerning opioids, opioid dependency, opioid addiction and vaping. Information describing the signs of addiction will also be available, along with guidance on how to support someone who may be suffering from dependency and/or addiction. Health Fair exhibits and handouts will, include, but not be limited to the following:
  - A Mock Teenager Bedroom to highlight the signs of
possible drug use, including places a teenager may hide drug paraphernalia;

- An interactive, educational presentation by a non-profit organization addressing substance abuse, misuse, and addiction;
- A naloxone (Narcan®) education session by DRPA’s Public Safety Department;
- Educational giveaways such as stickers to be affixed to insurance cards directing pharmacists to warn employees if the drug dispensed is an opioid; and
- Safe storage is a critical part of reducing misuse and abuse of prescription opioids. Research shows that misuse often begins at home. As such, employees will receive guidance on how to safeguard prescriptions to decrease the opportunity for abuse.

- Safe disposal of prescription opioids can help prevent misuse. Employees will learn how to safely dispose of expired and/or unused medications. To support the disposal of opioids safely, drug disposal packets will be distributed. Employees will also receive a list of drop-off locations near the zip codes of the six (6) Authority facilities to dispose of unused prescriptions;
- Prescription opioids are strong pain-reducing medications. Often opioid dependency begins because individuals do not understand they have been prescribed a powerful opioid. Accordingly, employees will receive information concerning the names of common short and long-acting opioids. In addition, to raise awareness and spark a conversation about prescriptions, risks and options, our partner, Gallagher, has provided sufficient “OPIOIDS: Warn Me” labels” for all Authority employees. The labels may be affixed to insurance cards and will send the message to medical professionals that our employees and their family members take the opioid issue seriously;
- A suite of resources including various drug and alcohol slide guides will be distributed to ensure employees “know the facts” about substance dependency and addiction; and
- Information describing supportive benefits, including counseling available through the Authority’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP); and

- After the health fairs, we will continue this important conversation. Additional training presentations will be scheduled and offered in 2020 at One Port Center (OPC), all bridge locations, and PATCO. Employee attendance at the sessions will be voluntary.
To shine a light on the Addiction Awareness and Resource Initiative, we have created a new tagline: “No Stigma. No Shame. Know the Facts!” We have also created a new logo. As part of the branding related to this multifaceted initiative, the new tagline/logo, as seen below, will be featured on all relevant educational pieces.

BACKGROUND: The opioid crisis is a major public health challenge for the United States. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), opioids are a class of drugs that include (1) pain relievers legally prescribed, such as oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), codeine, morphine, methadone; (2) synthetic opioids such as fentanyl; and (3) the illegal drug heroin. Research shows that four out of five heroin users abused a prescription opioid before turning to heroin. (Jones CM Heroin Use and Heroin Use Risk Behaviors among Nonmedical users of Prescription opioid pain relievers – United States, 2002-2004 and 2008-2010. Drug Depend 2013; 132 (1-2): 95-100).

Opioids can be safe and effective when properly prescribed by a medical professional for treating short-term, severe pain. However, even when taken as prescribed, patients may still become addicted. The problem arises when opioid painkillers are prescribed for long-term, chronic pain. When opioid painkillers are prescribed for minor surgeries like wisdom teeth removal, or for chronic conditions like back pain or arthritis, this can lead to physical dependence on the opioid, often leading to painful symptoms of withdrawal when the drug runs out. Frequently, this leads to opioid addiction. (https://www.cdc.gov/drug_overdose/opioids/prescribed.html) Opioid addiction can lead to heroin use, a synthetic and highly addictive opioid. (https://www.cdc.gov/drug_overdose/data/heroin.html) According to the Centers for Disease Control, most heroin addictions begin with painkiller prescription abuse.

The rise in opioid overdose deaths has been traced to three distinct periods. The first wave began in the 1990s with the increase in opioid prescriptions. (https://www.cdc.gov/drug_overdose/opioids/prescribed.html). The second wave began in 2010, with a spike in overdose deaths involving heroin. (https://www.cdc.gov/drug_overdose/opioids/heroin.html) The third wave
began in 2013, with significant increases in overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids, particularly those involving illicitly-manufactured fentanyl. (https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/opioids/fentanyl.html)

From 1999 to 2017, more than 700,000 people died from a drug overdose including prescription opioids and illegal opioids like heroin and illicitly manufactured fentanyl. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 70,237 overdose deaths in 2017 involved an opioid. The rate of overdose deaths in 2017 was six times higher than in 1999. On average, 130 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose. (Wide-ranging online data for epidemiologic research WONDER http://wonder.cdc.gov.)

Recognizing that the opioid epidemic continues to devastate families and communities across New Jersey, Gov. Murphy on January 23, 2019, unveiled new initiatives designed to strengthen New Jersey’s fight against the opioid epidemic. In New Jersey, individuals may call 2-1-1 for information about community resources related to addiction or, they may call 1.844.ReachNJ (1-844-732-2465) or visit www.reachnj.gov for information about substance abuse and family support services.

The Wolf Administration has noted that the opioid-use overdose epidemic is the worst health crisis in Pennsylvania, and the nation, in almost a generation. On June 14, 2019, Gov. Wolf signed the Sixth Renewal of his Opioid Disaster Declaration which was first put into place in January 2018. In Pennsylvania, individuals may access the Get Help Now Hotline at 1-800-662-HELP. For more information about the work the Wolf Administration is doing to combat the opioid crisis, visit pa.gov/opioids.

Both the Murphy and Wolf Administrations are taking an “all-hands-on-deck” approach to preventing addiction, saving lives and getting individuals into treatment. The initiatives in both states have resulted in progress reducing the number of opioids prescribed, increased the number of people who are eligible for treatment and saved lives with the use of naloxone (Narcan®).

Employers are currently feeling the impact of this crisis. Economic research has found a strong link between rising opioid prescriptions and declining workforce participation rates, estimating that nearly half of men ages 25 to 54 who are not in the workforce take pain medication daily and that there is a higher rate of absenteeism among opioid abusers who work. (https://www.courier-journal.com/story/opinion/contributors/2019/07/11/kentucky-opioid-crisis-response-program-business-aid-employers/1704626001/).
The Delaware River Port Authority is a community of public servants committed to safety and providing exemplary customer service. As such, like the Murphy and Wolf Administrations, we are taking a hands-on approach to ensure that our employees are well-educated about this national epidemic. We are taking proactive steps to provide all employees with access to information and resources to raise awareness about the risks associated with opioid dependency, opioid addiction and vaping, an emerging public health crisis. To address issues related to opioid dependency and opioid addiction, national public health epidemics, the Authority will launch in October a new Opioid Dependency and Addiction Awareness Initiative geared at educating, training and providing appropriate support and guidance to Authority employees. The goal of the initiative is to address the national opioid epidemic head-on by eliminating any stigma and/or shame related to dependency and addiction and making sure employees “know the facts” about opioid dependency, opioid addiction and vaping. In keeping with our stewardship commitment, we want to maintain a safe and healthy work environment and prevent substance dependency and/or addiction from becoming a problem in our workplace.

As part of this initiative and to bring additional attention to prevention, addiction and recovery, we will light the Ben Franklin Bridge and several PATCO stations and concourse purple to support the following:

- September 18 - 21 – for Heroin and Opioid Awareness Week
- September 27 and 28 – for National Recovery Month
- May 2020 (one day between 12-18) for National Prevention Week
- August 31, 2020 – for International Overdose Awareness Day

**SUMMARY:**

| Amount:         | TBD                  |
| Source of Funds:| AmeriHealth Wellness Funds |
| Capital Project #: | N/A |
| Operating Budget: | N/A |
| Master Plan Status: | N/A |
| Other Fund Sources: | N/A |
| Duration of Contract: | N/A |
| Other Parties Involved: | Gallagher Benefit Services & AmeriHealth of NJ |
| Estimated Number of Jobs Supported: | N/A |
RESOLUTION

RESOLVED: That the Board of Commissioners of the Delaware River Port Authority provides its support for a comprehensive multifaceted Opioid Dependency and Addiction Awareness & Resource Initiative that will focus on substance abuse, initially calling attention to opioid dependency and opioid addiction epidemic and vaping, an emerging public health crisis; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Board of Commissioners at the Delaware River Port Authority recognizes that this Initiative is the result of a collaborative effort that includes our partners, Gallagher Benefit Services (the Authority’s Health & Welfare Broker) and AmeriHealth of New Jersey, and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Board of Commissioners at the Delaware River Port Authority recognizes that AmeriHealth of New Jersey provided an additional wellness credit for Plan Year 2019 for the purpose of helping to raise awareness about opioid dependency, opioid addiction and available support services; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Board of Commissioners at the Delaware River Port Authority support this initiative, which is designed to eliminate the stigma and shame that often prevents people from seeking the help needed to address dependency and addiction challenges; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Board of Commissioners at the Delaware River Port Authority support a comprehensive strategy to raise awareness which will include, but not be limited to the following initiatives:

- Launching “Regain”, an educational campaign designed to educate, build awareness and provide those in need with details related to support. The campaign will provide important information about opioids, opioid dependency and opioid addiction. The Regain toolkit includes a short video which tells an inspiring, real-life story of opioid dependency and recovery, and employee communications that include emails, desk drops, home mailers and posters;
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- A suite of resources including various drug and alcohol slide guides will be distributed to ensure employees “know the facts” about substance dependency and addiction; and
- Information describing supportive benefits, including counseling available through the Authority’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP); and
• After the health fairs, we will continue this important conversation. Additional training presentations will be scheduled and offered in 2020 at One Port Center (OPC), all bridge locations, and PATCO. Employee attendance at the sessions will be voluntary.

RESOLVED: That the Board of Commissioners at the Delaware River Port Authority acknowledges that to shine a light on this new Addiction Awareness and Resource Initiative, we have created a new tagline: “No Stigma. No Shame. Know the Facts!” and logo. As part of the branding related to this multifaceted awareness initiative, the new tagline/logo, as seen below, will be featured on relevant materials and emails.

RESOLVED: The Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Chief Executive Officer must approve and are hereby authorized to approve and execute all necessary agreements, contracts, or other documents on behalf of the DRPA. If such agreements, contracts, or other documents have been approved by the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer and if thereafter either the Chairman or Vice Chairman is absent or unavailable, the remaining Officer may execute the said document(s) on behalf of DRPA along with the Chief Executive Officer. If both the Chairman and Vice Chairman are absent or unavailable, and if it is necessary to execute the said document(s) while they are absent or unavailable, then the Chief Executive Officer shall execute such documents on behalf of DRPA.

SUMMARY:

| Amount:        | TBD                  |
| Source of Funds: | AmeriHealth Wellness Funds |
| Capital Project #: | N/A                 |
| Operating Budget: | N/A                  |
| Master Plan Status: | N/A                 |
| Other Fund Sources: | N/A                 |
| Duration of Contract: | N/A                 |
| Other Parties Involved: | Gallagher Benefit Services & AmeriHealth of NJ |
| Estimated Number of Jobs Supported: | N/A |