

# Fighting Prescription Drug Abuse in Lake County:

A Partnership In The  
Community Between The  
Citizens, Physicians,  
Pharmacies and Law  
Enforcement

Presented by:

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Pharmaceutical Drug Diversion Unit

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# Lake County Narcotics Agency

- **Formed in 1979,**
- **Financed with County funds,**
- **To assist the county's police departments to collectively fight the new war on drugs.**
- **Three distinct units; "street drugs", DARE & PDDU.**
- **LCNA Agents are appointed, have full arrest powers and county-wide investigative jurisdiction.**

# History of the LCNA

- 1982: *Permanent* tax levy was passed to fund the Agency & an Executive Board was formed
- 1991: Executive Board was restructured to include the Lake County Prosecutor
- 1994: Tax levy funding was increased for the first time



# **SEVEN MEMBER EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Director David Frisone**

**Chairman Mayor David Anderson,  
Willoughby**

**Commissioner Robert Aufuldish**

**County Prosecutor Charles  
Coulson**

**Chief Troy Hagar, Painesville PD**

**Chief Mark Kish, Fairport Harbor  
PD**

**Chief Wayne Baumgart, Kirtland  
PD**

**Chief Randy Ice, Wickliffe PD**

# Misconceptions About Rx Drugs:

- **“Pharming” from the family medicine cabinet, or that of an extended family member, is entirely safe.**
- **Rx drugs are completely safe or safer than illegal street drugs.**
- **There is no shame or social stigma attached to using / abusing Rx drugs.**
- **There are virtually no side affects with Rx drugs.**
- **There is nothing wrong with using prescription drugs without a doctor’s prescription once in a while.**
- **Prescription pain relievers, sleep aids, anti-depressant drugs, prescribed by a doctor, provided by a pharmacist and paid for by an insurance company are not addictive.**

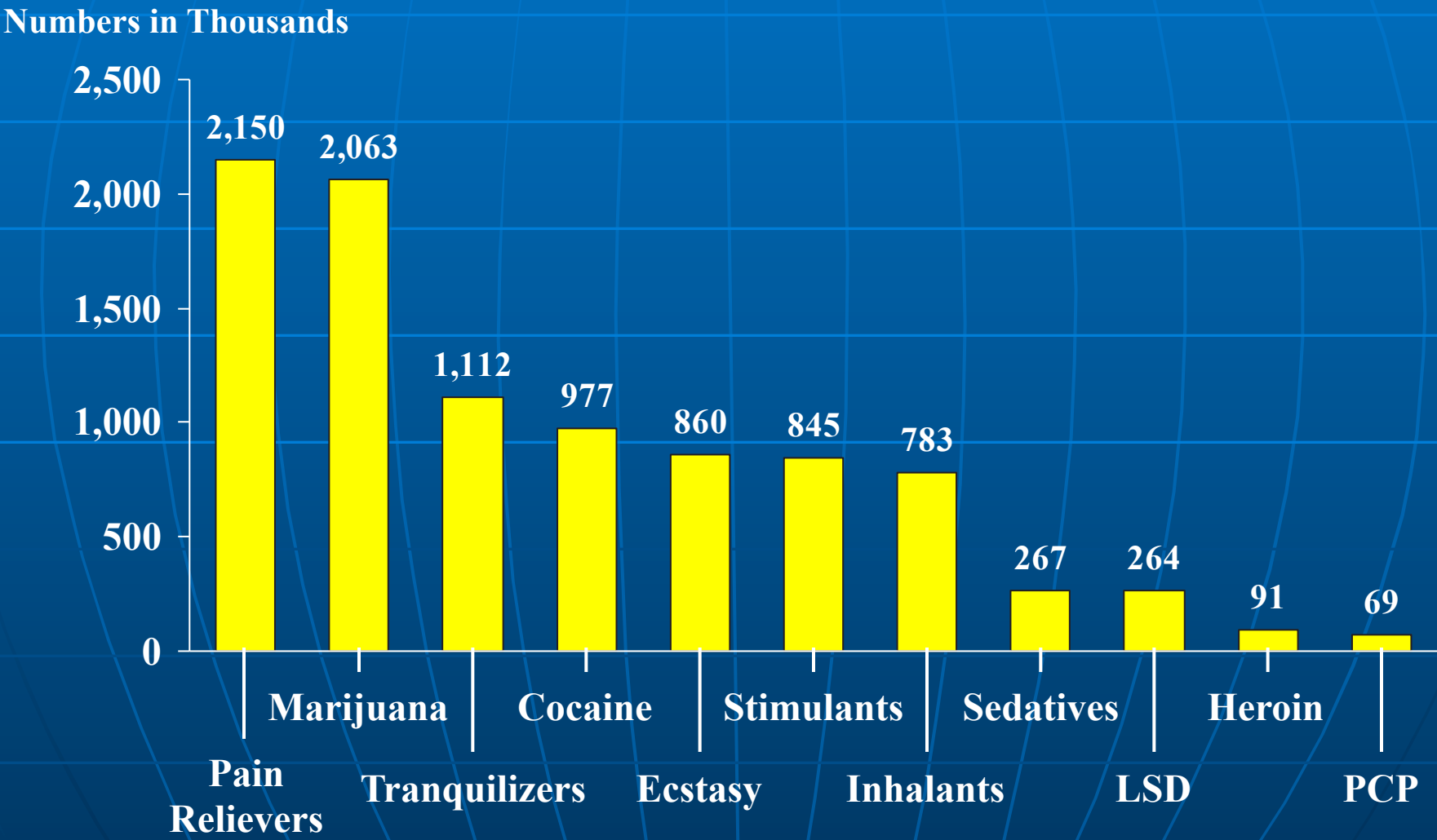
# Rx Medications: The New “Gateway” Drug

- With Rx drugs being so easy to obtain these days, by all age groups of potential abusers, and having so little negative social stigma attached to them, Rx drugs have now become the preferred drug of choice for the “first-timer” abuser of narcotic drugs.

# Results from the 2011 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)

Fig  
5.1

# Drugs Used Among Persons Aged 12 or Older: 2010



# National Statistic

- 26% of High School students participating in a recent national survey stated that they have either used, tried or experimented with someone else's Rx medications for recreational use\*.

\*(Without a prescription or beyond a legitimate medical use for the drug.)

# Average Abuse Deaths per Age Group for every 100K persons:

- 15 – 24 yrs. : 340
- 25 – 34 yrs. : 700
- 35 – 44 yrs. : 1,000
- 45 – 54 yrs. : 1,200
- 55 – 64 yrs. : 340

# So...

- What is happening in Lake County associated with the use, misuse and / or abuse of pharmaceutical drugs...?



# A Common Addiction...

- It is a very common fact that , “an opiate addiction is an opiate addiction is an opiate addiction”.
- It is a very common occurrence for a person to quickly become addicted to many different types of opiate-based narcotic drugs, or even Heroin, using both interchangeably when the need arises.

# What Is The Price of Illegal Prescription Drug Diversion?

- Private Medical and ER costs rise.
- Work loss impacts employers & co-workers.
- Health Insurance rates increase:  
first to finance the addiction, then to  
finance the rehabilitation treatment.

# The Price..., con' t:

- Innocent people are injured in MVAs due to DUI/Drugs incidents.
- Other crimes are committed, i.e. insurance fraud, thefts, robberies, burglaries, various state drug laws are violated to finance addictions.
- Taxes rise to finance the prosecution and probation of arrested persons...

# The Price, con' t...

- Personal losses; family problems, employment termination, health problems, (i.e. death), etc.
- Brings criminals into communities or neighborhoods where they would not normally enter or frequent (pill mills)

# S.A.M.H.S.A.

- “The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration announced the award of 44 new grants for **\$38.2 million** over the next three years to expand the treatment capability of adult drug courts to deal with the treatment needs of people who find themselves in the criminal justice system largely because of underlying substance abuse problems.” (Media-Newswire.com, 10/07/09)

# More Tax Money...

- On 04/11/11, Ohio Gov. Kasich announced that \$36 million\* in new funds would be allocated to help Ohioans, who are addicted to Rx drugs, get the treatment they need to get back into the workforce.

\*Source of the funds derived from Ohio Depts. Of Health, Alcohol & Drug Addiction Services, Rehabilitative Services Comm. & the Federal Gov' t.



# Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN)

- According to nationally collected data, (as of the year 2010), ~100 persons die each day from “unintentional pharmaceutical drug poisonings” (overdoses) in the United States.
- As of the year 2009 Ohio led the nation in such deaths...

# FACT:

- With this increased rate of deaths in Ohio, attributed to the abuse and misuse of pharmaceutical drugs, accidental drug overdoses now kill more Ohioans annually than traffic accidents.
- Between 2003 and 2010, >9,000 persons died from Rx drug poisonings in Ohio.  
(Per Ohio Dept. Health data)



# Leading cause of ACCIDENTAL death in Ohio:

- According the State of Ohio Department of Health, as of the year 2011, 5.8 persons die each day in the State of Ohio from “unintentional pharmaceutical drug poisonings” (overdoses).
- Highest Rx drug death rate in U.S., an increase of +250% over past two years.

# Rx Drug Deaths in Lake County

- Per the Ohio D.O.H: Lake County would average between 5 to 8 fatal accidental drug poisoning per year. (2000 - 2008)
- During the calendar year of 2010, 25 such deaths were reported to the LCNA by the L/C Coroner's Office.

# FACT:

- Per OSAM, (the Ohio Substance Abuse Monitoring program):

“The misuse of Rx opioids & poly-substance abuse account for **~70%** of drug overdose deaths in Ohio while “street drugs, such as Heroin and Cocaine, account for **< 30%**”

# 2012...

...as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of 2012, **twenty-eight** “unintentional fatal pharmaceutical drug poisonings” were reported to the LCNA by the Lake County Coroner’s Office.

(An additional 6 similar deaths were attributed to Rx drugs mixed with Cocaine or Heroin, none by Cocaine alone, and an additional **4 deaths by Heroin alone.**)

# A Question:

- So why do regular people become addicted to prescription drugs ?

# Causes For An Addiction

- Unintentional addiction
- A propensity for addictions
- Intentional or Unintentional Misuse
- Intended outright abuse

# Where Do The Drugs Come From?

- How do our family members, friends, neighbors and colleges obtain “abuseable” quantities of prescription drugs?

# Illegal Prescription Drug Diversion; Definition

- When otherwise legal prescription medications are obtained by illegal means.
- To be abused, used and misused outside of their intended medical purpose.



# How Rx Drugs Are Most Commonly Diverted:

- “Doctor Shopping” ( ‘Deception to Obtain a Dangerous Drug”, from a legal medical source)
- Forging, Altering or Stealing prescriptions ( ‘Illegally Processing” a Rx previously issued by a legal medical source)
- Theft of the drug itself (From workplace, neighbors, etc. or pretending to be a HCW)
- Buying them from a friend, associate, illegal or hostile source

# “Doctor Shopping”

- Simply, lying to a physician, pharmacist or any other health care provider who has control over the prescribing or dispensing of a dangerous drug, in order to obtain that drug.

# Illegal Processing, con't...

- Stealing, Possessing blank prescriptions OR Creating them yourself or having someone else do it.
- Altering or Forging any written record, that is required by law to be kept by a pharmacy, hospital or nursing home, etc.

# Photocopying a Prescriptions...

(Don't forget to take the original with you when you leave Kinkos or the post office!)



# Most Abused Rx Drugs:

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Opiate analgesics / Painkillers  
(Percocet, Vicodin, Methadone, Fentanyl)
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Benzodiazepines / Sedatives  
(Valium, Xanax, Clonazepam)
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Misc. Others, i.e. Ambien, Suboxone
- 4<sup>th</sup>: Alcohol + Poly-substance Rx  
drug misuse / abuse. (Accounts  
for the majority of accidental drug overdose  
deaths in Lake County)

# Street Prices of Rx Drugs

Per **ONE** Tablet:

- Vicodin \$3, \$5 or \$10
- Methadone \$5
- Percocet \$5 - \$7
- Oxycodone \$10 - \$45
- OxyContin \$40 - \$75

# Theft of Drugs

- Physically stealing a drug from a HCF, (hospital, pharmacy, nursing home, etc.) or from a person's home, vehicle or purse, etc.
- Filling another person's Rx without their knowledge or permission or "beating" another person to a pharmacy to deprive them of their drug.



# Illegal Diversion Penalties:

- If the “drug” involved is a prescription drug of **any kind**, (from blood pressure medication to birth control to OxyContin), illegal diversion automatically constitutes a 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> degree felony.
- If the quantity of the drug involved is measured at, or exceeds, the “**bulk amount**”, a felony of the first degree may have been committed. (Controlled Drugs)



# PENALTY TABLE

<u>Offense</u>	<u>Min. Term</u>	<u>Max. Term</u>	<u>Max. Fine</u>
■ F-5	6 months	12 months	\$2,500
■ F-4	6 months	18 months	\$5,000
■ F-3	1 year	5 years	\$10,000
■ F-2	2 years	8 years	\$15,000
■ F-1	3 years	10 years	\$20,000

# First Time Offenders

- Diversion to Municipal Courts for Probation Consideration.
- “Suspended” sentences / penalties at the Common Pleas Level,
- Probation Consideration,
- Substance Abuse Assistance,
- “Leave It All Behind” Options.

# L.C. Rx & OTC Drug “Turn-in” / Disposal Program

- Run by the Lake County Health District
- Initiated late 2011 / ~ 4K lbs. collected
- 7 residential drop-off / collection points.
- Final processing for weighing, statistics and disposal @ LCNA

# Drop Box Locations

1. Lake County Sheriff's Office
2. Willoughby PD
3. Willoughby Hills PD
4. Mentor PD
5. Madison PD
6. Eastlake PD
7. Lakeland Comm. Coll. PD

# Contact Information:

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