



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Everett joins PAARI to connect addicts with treatment centers

EVERETT - The Everett Police Department announced today that it has officially partnered with the Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (PAARI) as part of the department's ongoing efforts to combat the opioid epidemic and help get drug addicts on the road to recovery.

"We know that the traditional methods of dealing with addiction are not always effective and we need to think outside the box to be proactive, not reactive," said Police Chief Dan Templeman. "We will continue holding those who commit crimes accountable for their impact on the community. But for those who are ready to make a change, PAARI is another tool that helps us connect people with detox and long-term treatment."

PAARI is a partnership among national business leaders, healthcare organizations, the public sector, and educators, that aims to provide police officers with additional tools in the battle against the disease of drug addiction. Among its many efforts, PAARI collaborates with public safety agencies to encourage opioid drug users to seek recovery, including by helping police officers connect addicts with drug treatment facilities, often on scholarship if private insurance is not available.

"We are very grateful for Chief Templeman's leadership and we welcome the Everett Police Department to the rapidly growing Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative. Opioid addiction has reached epidemic proportions from Everett Washington to Everett Massachusetts and everywhere in between", said John Rosenthal, chairman and co-founder of P.A.A.R.I. "With the innovative leadership of the Everett Police, and now more than 100 other law enforcement agencies across the country, P.A.A.R.I. partners continue to provide critical new entry points into treatment, save lives, build trust in local communities and help create a long term continuum of care for anyone with the disease of addiction."

The Everett Police Department became the first law enforcement agency in Washington State to place an individual in treatment using PAARI last fall when the department's embedded social worker encountered a homeless woman on the street who was seeking drug treatment. At that time, there was no official partnership in place, but PAARI put the department in contact with Bella Monte Recovery Center in California, where the woman was able to complete intensive in-patient treatment. Since then, PAARI has assisted the Everett Police Department in getting five people into treatment centers, including three at Bella Monte.

“We are excited to partner with the Everett Police Department and PAARI to assist those in need and help communities,” said Bella Monte co-founder Randy Humphrey. “Our organization is driven by a passion to help others, with a staff that is truly committed and passionate about helping clients get clean and sober.”

Everett officers say it’s important to be able to connect individuals battling substance use issues with treatment as soon as possible after they decide to seek help. They also recognize that overcoming addiction can take a very long time – and several tries. That’s why the experienced treatment providers who are a part of PAARI help meet a critical need for Everett Police. As part of the PAARI effort, Providence Regional Medical Center Everett and Pioneer Human Services in Skagit County are providing short-term detox treatment for individuals before they are admitted into long-term recovery centers.

Balancing outreach and enforcement

As part of the City’s comprehensive Safe Streets plan, last fall, Chief Templeman created a new Community Outreach and Enforcement Team (COET) that balances social outreach and relationship building with criminal enforcement when necessary. The PAARI partnership is the next phase of that effort.

“As first responders, we are seeing an increase of people addicted to drugs and deal with them on a daily basis” said Captain John DeRousse, who oversees the department’s community outreach efforts. “We are acutely aware of the problem and know jail time will not lead to a lasting change for a portion of the people we encounter, so we’ve developed a flexible model to address the issues we’re seeing and to allow us to adjust to individual situations.”

With the help of social workers embedded with the specialized team, officers are able to look for ways outside of the criminal justice system to offer help and improve the quality of life for individuals on the streets. Through daily contact, officers try to assist frequent users and the chronically homeless by helping them overcome barriers to treatment and stability.

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