



October 27, 2020

Dr. Dan Lustig  
President & CEO  
Haymarket Center

Dear Dr Lustig,

Thank you for your efforts to expand access to critical treatment resources here in the western suburbs. Unfortunately, the combined impact of the economic downturn and COVID-19 have rates of opioid overdose and death on the rise, both here in DuPage County and nationally. In DuPage County, in the first six months of 2020, overdose deaths rose 52% compared to same period the prior year. The reasons are multifaceted, but timely and effective treatment available to all community residents is a key component to addressing this crisis effectively. ([https://www.dupageco.org/Coroner/Coroner\\_News/2020/63300/](https://www.dupageco.org/Coroner/Coroner_News/2020/63300/)).

I expect that every resident of DuPage County knows someone whose life has been devastated by addiction. Unfortunately, the scope of the problem means that our neighbors, friends, and family need far more high-quality treatment resources than our community currently offers. 2018 data placed DuPage County second only to Cook County in the number of residents who needed alcohol or substance abuse treatment and did not get it; more than 57,000 residents went without the recovery services they needed (DHS). Sadly, our rate of age adjusted heroin overdose consistently exceed national rates.

The DuPage Health Coalition is a proud partner with public health, the HOPE Opioid Taskforce, and every health system in DuPage County in efforts to expand access to treatment and recovery services. In 2019 we facilitated a planning process engaging key stakeholders across the health sector. That planning effort resulted in four recommended areas of strategic focus, one of which was growth of nonprofit substance abuse treatment services locally. Needs are especially acute for those who are uninsured, or Medicaid enrolled. While I am pleased to report that we have made progress on some of the other aims promoted by this workgroup, we have not yet seen significant improvement in this area.

We are sensitive to the concerns being voiced by some community residents and hope that efforts to find solutions that work for all parties continue, paving the way for increased local substance abuse treatment.

Sincerely,

*Kara R. Murphy*

Kara R. Murphy  
President

