



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

McHenry County sees a 35% drop in Overdose Deaths!

January 2, 2019: The McHenry County Mental Health Board is pleased to announce a **35%** reduction in overdose deaths when comparing CFY17 to CFY18.

Overdose deaths recorded in McHenry County ballooned to 78 lives in CFY17 and dropped to 51 (confirmed) in CFY18.

Anne Majewski, McHenry County Coroner, attributes this to the hard work of all the dedicated professionals in McHenry County who have collaborated on emergency response, immediate and long-term treatment, and education of the community.

Mental Health Board Executive Director, Scott Block, states “it goes without saying that a single death by overdose is too many as each person lost is a member of our community and furthermore, a member and loved one of someone’s family, but the recent reduction is encouraging.”

Block believes the comprehensive set of strategies supported by Mental Health Board funds and carried out through several health and human service agencies, local units of government and municipal partners is to be credited for this reduction.

Local strategies include *Drug Take Back* events and *drop off locations*, the *A Way Out Program*, the *Twenty Second Circuit Adult Drug Court*, various *outpatient and medication assisted treatment services*, and access to *recovery related community housing*.

Primarily, Block believes the reduction in overdose deaths this past year is directly related to Naloxone training and distribution amongst local Law Enforcement Officers/First Responders.

Through Mental Health Board supported programs administered by Northwestern Medicine (formerly Centegra Health System) and Live4Lali, law enforcement members and community members alike have access to Naloxone training and distribution. Naloxone is known as the “opioid overdose reversal drug.”

From December 1, 2017 - November 30, 2018 McHenry County First Responders have reported 51 Naloxone Administrations and 44 were survivals equaling an 86% survival rate. Each survival is a new opportunity at life.

For additional information, please contact Scott Block, McHenry County Mental Health Board Executive Director at 815-788-4364.