Barely a month after receiving training from Rushford on how to properly administer Naloxone, or Narcan, the medication which can help reverse the symptoms of an overdose, Meriden police officers were successfully able to save the life of a man experiencing an overdose who was found laying unresponsive in the street.

“This one incident alone makes it well worth the training we received,” Meriden police Sgt. Darrin McKay said at a press conference Jan. 20 to highlight the partnership between Rushford, the police department and the Meriden Healthy Youth Coalition, which provided grant funding to cover the costs for the training as well as a supply of more than 70 Narcan kits.

Though not officially designated as emergency first responders, Meriden police decided to undergo the Narcan training in recognition that officers are often the first ones to arrive at the scene of someone experiencing an overdose, and therefore can make a life-or-death difference in helping an overdose victim.

Police officials said two officers were on patrol in the pre-dawn hours on Jan. 3 when they encountered a man who was apparently unconscious on the ground. The officers noticed drug-related items near the man’s body and determined that he was experiencing an overdose. One of the officers, who had taken part in the Narcan training sessions provided by Rushford in November, administered a dose of Narcan nasal spray from one of the kits provided to the department, but the man did not initially respond. However, after administering a second dose, the man quickly revived and was taken to the hospital, police said.

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We are so pleased that the close relationship we have developed with the Meriden Police Department has led to such a positive outcome,” said Patricia Rehmer, president of the Behavioral Health Network, who added that partnerships with community stakeholders is crucial to the effort to address the ongoing epidemic in opioid abuse. She pointed out that in Connecticut last year, more than 800 people died of drug-related overdoses, a state record and more than double the number of people who died in automobile accidents.

J. Craig Allen, MD, Rushford medical director, explained how Narcan works to reverse the effects of an opioid or heroin overdose. He said Narcan kits are becoming increasingly available, but can still be relatively expensive at more than $100 per kit, on average.

“We need to make these kits more accessible so that people can keep them in their homes and other places where they can help make a difference at a moment’s notice,” he said.

Sgt. McKay thanked Rushford representatives, including Monique Allgood, APRN, who provided the training sessions, and Sheryl Sprague, Rushford prevention manager, for showing officers how easy and effective it is to administer the medication.

Financial assistance available for patients

Do you know a patient who is in need of financial assistance? Hartford HealthCare can provide help to patients in need. Learn more about the program at https://intranet.hartfordhealthcare.org/inside-hhc/patient-support.

February is Wear Red for Heart month

Friday, Feb. 3, is National Wear Red Day — a day within Heart Month to raise awareness of women’s heart health.

Heart disease and stroke cause 1 in 3 deaths among women each year, killing approximately one woman every 80 seconds, according to the American Heart Association. Fortunately, we have the power to change that because 80 percent of cardiac and stroke events may be prevented with education and action, including ThinkFAST!

Help raise awareness of women’s heart health by wearing red on Friday, Feb. 3, and encouraging others to do the same.

Let us know at socialmedia@hhchealth.org if you are planning to wear RED on your unit, and we’ll try to send a hospital photographer to take your photo for social media and internal publications.

Please remember, all employees must sign a photo release before their photos may be used for publication. And don’t forget to abide by your department’s dress code policies.
Rehmer honored for a legacy of advocacy

Patricia Rehmer, Hartford HealthCare senior vice president and president of the Behavioral Health Network, received the Bob Savage Recovery Advocate of the Year Award at the annual meeting of Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR) on Wednesday, Jan. 25. The award, named after the CCAR founder, is given annually to those who have made a lasting impact for people in recovery by consistently advocating for their interests and influencing decision-makers at all levels to support their needs.

“This is an honor I honestly did not expect,” Rehmer said before a packed room of CCAR members and others in the Connecticut recovery community, who stood and applauded. “This award means so much to me because I do believe recovery is possible, and that the most important ingredient is hope.”

Rehmer was recognized for the impact she has had on those recovering from addiction issues, both in her current role as BHN president and her previous role as Commissioner of the state Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. As the state’s most prominent figure in the effort to end discrimination against those who are suffering from addiction, Rehmer consistently fought for resources to support recovery programs and found innovative ways to partner with other organizations when faced with budget cuts, said John Hamilton, president of the CCAR Board of Directors.

“She has been a leader in the fight for more than 30 years,” he said. “She really is a champion for the recovery community.”

Holiday party is better late than never

Almost 300 employees and guests from Natchaug Hospital and Rushford attended the organizations’ first-ever joint holiday party on Saturday, Jan. 21, at Saint Clements Castle in Portland. The party, which was rescheduled after being snowed out on Jan. 7, included a sit-down dinner, photo booth, music, raffle baskets and more.
Family Resource Center Support Groups

The IOL Family Resource Center (FRC) holds regular support groups. For additional information, please contact the FRC at 860.545.7665 or 860.545.1888. All programs are free of charge and, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Massachusetts Cottage, First Floor Group Room at the IOL Campus, 200 Retreat Ave., Hartford. The upcoming IOL FRC Support Group schedule is as follows:

- **Support Group For Those Coping With A New Or Chronic Medical Condition.** Jan. 27, Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24 (Every Friday), 1 - 2 p.m. in the Center Building, First Floor Conference Room. For young adults ages 17-26 struggling with a new diagnosis, chronic medical conditions, physical symptoms or limitations. The group will help with difficult losses and limitation due to a medical condition, and build a positive, future-oriented focus with realistic goals. To RSVP, please call Elizabeth Alve-Hedegaard, APRN, at 860.545.7050.

- **Depression Bipolar Support Alliance Group (DBSA).** Jan. 30, Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27 (Every Monday), noon – 1 p.m. in the Todd Building, Bunker Room and Jan. 18, 25, Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22 (Every Wednesday), 7 – 8 p.m. in the Commons Building, 2nd Floor, Litchfield Room. Peer run support group for those who have been diagnosed with depression or bipolar disorder.

- **Alcoholics Anonymous.** Jan. 31, Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28 (Every Tuesday), 12:30-1:30 p.m. Join us for coffee and a one-hour topic discussion. To learn more, contact the AA General Service Office at 212-870-3400 or P.O. Box 459, New York, NY 10163.

- **Yoga.** Jan. 31, Feb. 28, March 28, April 25, May 30, June 27, 5 - 6 p.m. in the Commons Building, Hartford Room. Open to adult staff and family members. Mats are provided or bring your own! The class begins with breathing exercises and gentle stretches, followed by a series of poses and ends with relaxation and meditation. Instructor: Valerie Raggio, LCSW, Yoga Fit, Level 1 Certified. To RSVP or inquire, call the FRC at 860.545.7716 or email laura.durst@hhchealth.org

- **Hearing Voices Network (HVN).** Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23 (Every Thursday), 5 - 6:30 p.m. in the Todd Building, Bunker Room. Peer run support group based firmly on a belief of self-help, mutual respect and understanding where people can safely share their experiences of voices, visions, unusual sensory perceptions. The groups offer an opportunity for people to accept and find meaning in their experiences that help them regain power over their lives.

- **Support Group For Families Dealing With Major Mental Illness.** Feb. 2, 16, March 2, 16, April 6, 20, May 4, 18, June 1, 15 (First and third Thursday of each month), 5:15 - 6:30 p.m. in the Center Building, First Floor Conference Room. For family and friends of individuals who have schizophrenia, bipolar or other related disorders. Share your success and struggles. Learn to care for yourself while caring for others.

- **Al-Anon Parent Group.** Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23 (Every Thursday), 7 - 8 p.m. One hour topic discussion.

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**BrainDance Awards for Student Projects on Mental Illness**

The Institute of Living at Hartford Hospital is sponsoring an academic and art competition designed to decrease the stigma of mental illness. The BrainDance Awards encourage high school students to gain knowledge about psychiatric diseases and develop a more tolerant and realistic perspective toward people with severe psychiatric problems. The competition also aims to promote students’ interest in careers in mental health-care. New this year: A panel discussion featuring different mental health disciplines. To receive a BrainDance Award, a student must submit an academic project or an art project on themes related to severe mental illness. Projects must be submitted using a flash drive or dropbox format only (WLMP files or project files are not accepted). Acceptable video formats are WMV or MP4. Awards up to $1,000 will be given to the best submissions.

The projects will be judged by expert clinicians and renowned in the field, based on:

- Relevance to the issue of stigma
- Creativity
- Accuracy of information
- Scientific rigor

Projects on any theme related to severe mental illness will be considered for an award.

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**The Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network**

is comprised of the Hartford Hospital Institute of Living, Natchaug Hospital, Bushnell and the behavioral health departments of the Hospital and General Connecticut, Middlesex Medical Center, and The William W. Backus Hospital. For more than a century, the members of the Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network have been connecting people with services including inpatient and outpatient services in a variety of settings for children, adolescents and adults with mental health or substance abuse issues.

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The categories are: Academic, Art, and Mixed Media.

All applicants, their teachers, families and classmates will be invited to an awards day celebration hosted by the Institute of Living on April 27, 2017. This day is designed to be an educational extension opportunity and will include a lecture by a national expert on mental illness, a awards presentation, a visit to our Minds & Medicine museum on the history of mental health, and a tour of our neuro-imaging research center and a panel of experts in the mental health field. Winners are encouraged to present a brief synopsis summarizing their projects. The student lecture and presentations are designed so all participants can learn from each other.

To apply for the awards, please log on to: www.nrc-iol.org and follow the link to BrainDance for application forms, information and procedures. Submission deadline is February 1, 2017.

The awards are coordinated by: Godfrey Pearlson, MD, Director, Clin Neuro-psychiatry Research Center and Nancy Hubbard, LCSW, Director, Psychiatric Rehabilitation.

For more information: contact Nancy Hubbard at 860.545.7665 or nancy.hubbard@hhchealth.org
Family Resource Center Support Groups (continued)

- Dementia Support/Educational Group Meeting. Feb. 7, March 7, April 4, May 2, June 6 (First Tuesday of each month), 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Donnelly Conference Room, First Floor. Please join us as we bring together experts and those who want guidance, direction, and support. Space is limited — reservations are required by calling 860.545.7665.

- Anxiety Disorders: An Introduction. Feb. 7, April 11, June 27, 6:30 – 7:45 p.m. This lecture is for families and friends of individuals who have an anxiety disorder or a related disorder. Participants will acquire a basic understanding of anxiety disorders, their treatments and suggestions to help them better cope with the illness.

- Social Support Group — LGBTQ Issues (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Questioning). Feb. 8, 22, March 8, 22, April 12, 26, May 10, 24, June 14, 28 (Second and fourth Wednesday of each month), 5 – 6:15 p.m. in the Center Building, Young Adult Service Group Room. Support group for 16- to 23-year-olds who identify LGBTQ issues as being prominent in their lives. The goal is to discuss support strategies to manage life challenges.

- Substance Use Educational And Support Group. Feb. 9, March 9, April 13, May 11, June 8 (Second Thursday of each month), 4 – 5 p.m. For family members impacted by loved ones with substance abuse.

Natchaug news

Natchaug, ECSU team up for luncheon presentation

A luncheon and presentation entitled “Zeroing In On Suicide” will be held Tuesday, March 14, from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Betty R. Tipton Room at the Eastern Connecticut State University Student Center in Willimantic.

Hosted by Elsa M. Núñez, President of Eastern Connecticut State University and Pat Rehmer, President of the Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network, the featured speaker will be Marisa Giarnella-Porco, President of The Jordan Porco Foundation. The Jordan Porco Foundation (JPF) is committed to preventing suicide in the high school, college, and college entry student populations. JPF is challenging stigma around mental health and help-seeking, creating open conversations about the prevalence of suicide and mental health issues in the young adult population, and saving lives.

The minimum donation is $100 per guest. Sponsored tables of 10 are available. If interested, RSVP by March 2 to Sherry Smardon at 860.465.5910 or sherry.smardon@hhchealth.org.

The luncheon is sponsored by the ECSU Foundation, Inc., and all proceeds will benefit Natchaug Hospital educational programs.
Have you heard the news?

Introducing Hartford HealthCare’s news hub Hartford HealthCare’s new online health news site delivers lively, informative and useful health news in a whole new way. Look for print, video and audio stories produced by HHC’s News Service, as well as timely tips on nutrition, fitness, health and wellness, and medical innovations.

Don’t miss a single story! Read the latest health news or sign up for our e-newsletter at:

healthnewshub.org

About BHNews

BHNews is published every other Friday. Story ideas or submissions may be sent to matt.burgard@hhchealth.org or amanda.nappi@hhchealth.org. Articles must be submitted as a Word document. Every effort will be made to run the article in its entirety, but due to space constraints and style requirements, editing may be necessary.

Deadline for the next edition of BHNews is Tuesday, Feb. 7, at noon.