



Northern Shenandoah Valley

Substance Abuse Coalition

305 East Piccadilly Street
Winchester, Virginia 22601
(540) 536-5000
www.roadtorecovery.info

January 16, 2019

Violent Crimes Increase as Drug Trend Changes *Stimulant Use on the Rise in the Northern Shenandoah Valley*

WINCHESTER – The Northern Shenandoah Valley saw a 45 percent decrease in heroin overdose deaths in 2018 compared to the prior year, but as opioid deaths went down the area has experienced an increase in stimulant use. This latest trend further demonstrates that addiction is a chronic, relapsing brain disease and individuals living with addiction should seek help.

Law enforcement typically sees drugs come in five year trends. The heroin epidemic peaked between 2013 and 2017 and as law enforcement and leaders with the Northern Shenandoah Valley Substance Abuse Coalition expected, the prevalence of a new drug trend has emerged. Law enforcement have seen an increase in cocaine and methamphetamine use and arrests. Included among the indictments by a Winchester Circuit Court grand jury on December 18 were 12 charges related to possession of cocaine or methamphetamine.

The shift in a drug of choice often means a change in crimes attributable to the substance being used. Historically as stimulant use increases so, too, do violent crimes. Cocaine use can quickly lead to a psychological dependence on the drug therefore, the sooner a person gets help, the better.

If you suspect that a friend or family member has a substance use disorder you should talk to the person about your concerns and offer help and support without being judgmental. Finally you should seek help by:

- Visiting www.roadtorecovery.info and clicking on the treatment or resources tabs at the top of the page.
- Calling the Northwestern Community Services Peer2Peer Regional Warm Line 24 hours a day/7 days a week at 1-833-626-1490.
- Visiting the Peer Recovery Center at Northwestern Community Services at 1014 Amherst Street, Winchester, VA, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

###