



# BCHD MEDIA ADVISORY

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Baltimore City Health Department

1001 E. Fayette Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Mayor / Leana Wen, M.D., Commissioner of Health

## ***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

### **Media Contacts:**

Michael Schwartzberg, PIO - O: (443) 984-2623 C: (443) 462-7939 E: [michael.schwartzberg@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:michael.schwartzberg@baltimorecity.gov)

Jennifer Fuson, Communications Specialist - O: (410) 545-0823 E: [jen.fuson@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:jen.fuson@baltimorecity.gov)

## **Mayor's Task Force to Release Recommendations for Combatting Heroin Epidemic in Baltimore**

*Health Department to also unveil "DONTDIE.ORG" public education campaign  
on preventing overdose deaths*

**BALTIMORE, MD** (July 13, 2015) – The Mayor's Heroin Treatment and Prevention Task Force will release its final report, including recommendations for fighting the heroin epidemic in Baltimore, on Monday afternoon. Since October 2014, the Task Force - comprised of 35 community leaders, public health experts and government representatives - examined Baltimore's heroin epidemic and developed 10 actionable ways to address it.

The Task Force report recommendations include: implementing a citywide overdose plan, ensuring 24/7 access to addiction treatment, and launching a public education campaign to encourage treatment and combat stigma. The Task Force estimates that approximately 18,900 people have used heroin in the past year in Baltimore. There were 303 total drug and alcohol overdose deaths in Baltimore City in 2014.

At the event, the Baltimore City Health Department will unveil a new campaign to inform the public about naloxone, a drug that can stop overdoses from heroin and other opioids and save lives. This is in response to two of the Task Force's recommendations. The event will take place next to a newly installed billboard that is part of the public education campaign.

**WHAT:** Release of Mayor's Heroin Prevention & Treatment Task Force Recommendations

**WHEN:** Monday, July 13, 1 p.m.

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**WHO:**

- Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
- Health Commissioner Dr. Leana Wen
- Representative Elijah Cummings (D-MD)
- Bern McBride, CEO, Behavioral Health System Baltimore/Task Force Co-Chair
- Sam Ross, CEO, Bon Secours Baltimore Health System/Task Force Co-Chair
- Karen Reese, Executive Director/CEO, Man Alive, Inc.
- Carlos Hardy, CEO, Maryland Recovery Organization Connecting Communities
- Edgar Wiggins, Executive Director, Baltimore Crisis Response
- David Zhitnitsky, Baltimore resident in recovery

**WHERE:** 2600 block of N. Fulton Avenue, corner of Francis Street

*Notes: The press conference will take place underneath the "DONTDIE.ORG" billboard. Media can park along Francis Street, adjacent to Westside Elementary School.*

*In case of inclement weather, the press conference will be held at City Hall in the Ceremonial Room.*

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