

Area events to highlight overdose awareness

Ohio to observe day on Aug. 31

BLADE STAFF

In response to passage of a bill designating Aug. 31 as Ohio Overdose Awareness Day in June, local organizations have planned events for the community on Tuesday, which coincides with an international awareness day.

Ohio Guidestone, a behavioral health agency, has three events planned in northwest Ohio, while the Prevention Partnership Coalition and Bellevue Recovery and Support Services will be hosting one in Sandusky County.

Opioid-awareness events hosted by Ohio Guidestone will begin at noon at 1832 Adams St. in Toledo, 600 Freedom Drive in Napoleon, and 885 Commerce Drive in Perrysburg.

The Perrysburg event will be emceed by WTOL-TV, Channel 11 morning anchor Tiffany Tarpley. The event will have a "Canvas of Hope" where attendees will contribute to a canvas and the artwork will be displayed. There will also be flags for attendees to write a loved one's name in or pen a note of encouragement.

"This is remembering the lives of the lost to drug overdoses, honoring their family members, but also breaking the stigma," said Arian May, the director of advancement for Ohio Guidestone.

The event will be "uplifting," Ms. May said, and getting conversations started avoids a situation in which people are afraid to ask for help.

"It's empowering to ask [for help], and it's not a sign of weakness, it's a sign of courage," she said.

The Sandusky County event is planned from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Grund Drug Company at 227 S. Front St. in Fremont.

Prescription medication disposal bags, medication lock pouches, and other resources will be provided free of charge to event attendees. There will also be free training for the Save-A-Life Naloxone Program, which educates individuals on how to recognize signs and symptoms of an overdose, when to call 911, rescue breathing, and how to administer naloxone nasally.

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine signed the bill designated the day into law June 8.