



**September 1, 2017**

### **Governor Cooper Declares September 2017 Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month in North Carolina**

**ASHEVILLE:** Governor Roy Cooper today signed a proclamation declaring September 2017 Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month in North Carolina while visiting a local treatment center.

“Alcohol and drug addiction are complex public health and public safety problems, and it’s going to take collaborative effort to solve them,” Gov. Cooper said. “We need to make sure that people suffering from substance use disorders have access to affordable treatment to help them recover and be productive members of their communities.”

Before signing the proclamation, Gov. Cooper met with individuals who are recovering from substance use disorders and helped assemble Narcan kits, which are used to reverse life-threatening opioid drug overdoses.

Addiction is a growing problem in North Carolina, and opioid drug overdoses are on the rise. According to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, more than 705,000 North Carolinians are currently living with substance use disorders, and more than 12,000 North Carolinians have died from opioid overdoses since 1999. In 2016, opioid-related deaths were up by 20 percent from the previous year.

To help more North Carolinians achieve and sustain long-term recovery, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services invites all residents of North Carolina to participate in National Recovery Month. In the proclamation, Gov. Cooper emphasized the importance of substance use disorder treatment and prevention. The proclamation also promotes the roles of friends and relatives in guiding and supporting individuals in need of treatment and recovery.

The proclamation is the latest in a series of actions Gov. Cooper has taken to address rising rates of drug addiction and overdose in North Carolina. In June, Gov. Cooper joined Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy Cohen to announce the new [State Opioid Action Plan](#), which includes several strategies to reduce opioid misuse and overdose deaths. Gov. Cooper later signed into law the [STOP Act](#), which seeks to curb epidemic levels of opioid drug addiction and overdose statewide.

Gov. Cooper also serves on the [President’s Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis](#), where he has urged his colleagues to help expand access to affordable substance use disorder treatment and mental health care nationwide.

The North Carolina Executive Mansion will be lit purple on September 1 and 2, 2017 in recognition of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month.