

Monroe County needle exchange extended, opioid awareness commission named

By Lauren Bavis | 812-331-4376 | lbavis@heraldt.com Dec 11, 2017

Monroe County will continue its needle exchange program for at least the next two years.

A needle exchange program, interchangeably called a syringe exchange program, allows injection drug users to receive clean needles intended for one-time use and has been operating in Monroe County since February 2016.

A new Indiana law allows county health departments to operate needle exchange programs without first receiving state approval, and also allows these programs to be approved every two years rather than annually.

“We were not surprised, and very pleased, the commissioners agreed to extend the syringe services program,” Penny Caudill, administrator of the Monroe County Health Department, said Monday.

The county commissioners last week approved the program in Monroe County through the end of 2019.

Opioid Awareness Commission members

- Chris Abert, director of the Indiana Recovery Alliance
- Amanda Barge, Monroe County commissioner
- Beverly Calender-Anderson, director of the city of Bloomington's Community and Family Resources Department
- Mark DeLong, executive director of Amethyst House
- Brandon Drake, co-founder of Courage to Change sober living house
- Efrat Feferman, executive director of United Way of Monroe County
- Gina Forrest, Indiana University School of Public Health

- Dorothy Granger, Bloomington City Council member
- Paulina Guerrero
- Kathy Hewett, Monroe County Health Department lead health educator
- Karen McKibben
- Steve Malone, Monroe County Community Corrections office drug court coordinator
- Kim Myers
- Beth Sarchet
- Merrie Sloan
- Shelli Yoder, Monroe County Council president pro tempore
- Brad Swain, Monroe County sheriff

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