

NEWS RELEASE

Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Executive and Council approve \$1 million in grants for emergency departments

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—On Monday, Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council approved opiate litigation settlement grant recommendations, provided by the Opiate Abatement Advisory Council (OAAC), for specialized emergency department services. Cleveland Clinic Akron General and Summa Health are each receiving \$500,000 in funding to continue current programming.

Nationally and in Summit County, healthcare providers in emergency departments are at the forefront of the opioid epidemic. According to Summit County Public Health data, Summit County emergency departments have treated over 350 overdoses as of October 16. Programs to train emergency department personnel to recognize the signs of opioid use and overdose enable healthcare providers to begin addiction treatment and support right away, increasing the likelihood of long-term recovery.

“Our residents struggling with substance use disorder are often living on the edges of our community, out of touch with family, friends and support services. This means we must capitalize on opportunities to provide interventions in a setting like a hospital emergency room,” said County Executive Shapiro. “We are grateful for Cleveland Clinic Akron General’s and Summa’s commitment to treatment and recovery, and confident their programming will continue to positively impact our residents.”

To support treatment and recovery in Summit County, Cleveland Clinic Akron General (CCAG) operates the Recovery’s in Reach program and Summa operates the First Step program. In all CCAG and Summa emergency rooms in the County, patients are screened for addiction, even if it is not the primary reason for the visit. If a patient’s screening indicates a substance use disorder, a referral is made for treatment services, such as medication, detox, counseling and more. Both hospitals utilize Catholic Charities peer recovery coaches, certified professionals who provide peer mentoring, a critical component to sobriety. These coaches are on call 24/7 to begin case management services. Each hospital also provides follow-up services for up to one year.

Since launching their programs, CCAG has screened 1,513 patients and Summa has screened 2,223 patients. Both hospitals have seen strong follow-up with patients accepting referral services and have seen patients maintain sobriety.

To date, Summit County has distributed more than \$380,000 in life saving medications received in settlement agreements to support all of the county’s hospital systems and their EMS services. The County

has also distributed \$16 million in opiate litigation settlement funds to local organizations, from hospitals to grassroots non-profits. More information about the OAAC is available at <https://summitoaac.org/>.

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