

Somerville Overcoming Addiction
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Somerville Board of Aldermen
Somerville City Hall
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

August 20, 2014

Dear Honorable Members of the Somerville Board of Aldermen:

Each year, the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) declares September as National Recovery Month across the United States. In light of the recent efforts in Somerville addressing the urgent issues of recovery, addiction, and reducing the stigma around the topic of addiction, we ask the Somerville Board of Aldermen to remember this month and to mark it by resolving that September 2014 will be Recovery Month in Somerville.

In recent years, a number of concerted efforts to reduce deaths and other harm from addiction and to prevent addiction, have been instituted in Somerville, starting with Somerville Cares About Prevention (SCAP) and the Somerville Trauma Response Network. In addition, Somerville Police Department and the Somerville Fire Department have joined these efforts and have begun carrying Naloxone as a method to reduce the number of fatal opioid overdoses.

Adding its voice to these efforts is the newest collaborator, Somerville Overcoming Addiction. This grassroots organization brings together family members and friends of those lost to addiction, with a mission of connecting the community with addiction support and recovery services, removing the stigma of addiction, and eliminating overdose fatalities in Somerville. Somerville Overcoming Addiction has already created its first and very successful public education effort, the screening of a film about addiction and recovery in June, 2014. More than 200 people came to learn about recovery, many of whom were trained that day in the use of Naloxone to reverse opioid overdoses.

Somerville Overcoming Addiction has organized the first annual Candlelight Memorial Vigil, which will take place on Monday, September 8, 2014, at 6:30 pm, at the Somerville High School Atrium. In addition to speakers and reading of the names of those lost to addiction, the vigil will provide an opportunity for Somerville residents to learn more about addiction and recovery, and to join this community in supporting those struggling against addiction.

We ask that you support these efforts by resolving that the month of September 2014 shall be Recovery Month in the City of Somerville.

Sincerely,

JoAnn Riviuccio, on behalf of Somerville Overcoming Addiction