



Lincoln-Lancaster County Methamphetamine Collaborative Planning Initiative Executive Summary

Problem

Methamphetamine is a serious public health issue and fast growing problem nationally, regionally, and locally.

Response

In response to this growing problem on a local level, the Lancaster County Substance Abuse Action Coalition and Lincoln Action Program Lincoln Free To Grow partnered on a comprehensive, collaborative planning initiative, funded by a grant from the Community Health Endowment of Lincoln. The purpose was to engage the community in developing solutions to the effects and problems associated with methamphetamine.

Planning Process

Planning Partners have sought public input on methamphetamine by means of:

- focus group sessions with community health and human service providers and organizations;
- focus group sessions with neighborhood organizations, direct service providers in neighborhoods, and neighborhood property and safety stakeholders;
- one-on-one surveys with neighborhood residents in the Clinton, Near South, and Everett neighborhoods;
- written surveys with community residents, clients, public health nurses, drug court participants, physicians, and individuals in treatment and recovery for a methamphetamine addiction; and
- Lincoln Action Program's Community Needs Assessment Survey.

Results

The results of these public input sessions and other data collection efforts have been compiled, analyzed, and formulated into implementation recommendations, which can be found in this report..

Next Steps

The Planning Partners and the Community Health Endowment of Lincoln are collaborating to transform these recommendations into bold solutions that, collectively, will reduce problems associated with methamphetamine use, production and treatment in Lincoln and Lancaster County.



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IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

Mobilize community leaders and champions to advise and direct unduplicated efforts to combat methamphetamine in Lincoln and Lancaster County in a coordinated fashion.

- Strategy 1.1: Receive the support and endorsement of the Implementation Recommendations from Mayor Chris Beutler.**
- Strategy 1.2: Establish a Lincoln-Lancaster County Methamphetamine Action Team (MAT) for the purpose of addressing the Implementation Recommendations included in this report.**
- Strategy 1.3: Hire a Project Director for the purpose of providing staff support to the MAT and the Implementation Recommendations included in this report.**
- Strategy 1.4: Compile an inventory of current methamphetamine-related programs in the community, including their client demographics and provided services, for the purpose of having a clear picture of available capacity, need, and service gaps.**
- Strategy 1.5: Engage MAT in an innovative pilot walk-through of community systems related to methamphetamine production, abuse, and treatment for the purpose of developing a clear and coherent view of the current system's strengths and limitations.**

RECOMMENDATION 2

Document a clear and accurate picture of the impact of methamphetamine on Lincoln and Lancaster County (children, families, agencies, neighborhoods), publish the information, and distribute to policymakers, treatments providers, law enforcement, corrections, educational institutions, and other community organizations.



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- Strategy 2.1:** Form a Data Subcommittee of MAT that includes persons with knowledge and expertise in data collection, information technology, existing community linkages, and other related specialties.
- Strategy 2.2:** Hire a Data Coordinator to work with the MAT Data Subcommittee, law enforcement, corrections, treatment providers, and other health and human services agencies to determine what community data is available regarding methamphetamine abuse, treatment, and enforcement.
- Strategy 2.3:** Determine future data tracking needs, comparable standards and protocols for data collection, and the need for a separate data collection system for methamphetamine similar to the system used to collect domestic violence data in Lancaster County.
- Strategy 2.4:** Develop a methamphetamine cost analysis to measure the full financial impact of methamphetamine on the community.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Significantly impact the general lack of knowledge regarding methamphetamine among residents of Lincoln and Lancaster County through community education and awareness efforts.

- Strategy 3.1:** Expose the extent of methamphetamine production and abuse in Lincoln and Lancaster County through a coordinated public education campaign.



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- 3.1.1 Partner with Mayor Chris Beutler as a spokesman for methamphetamine awareness and utilize his public visibility and access to media outlets and notable individuals for purpose of regular community education.**
- 3.1.2 Work in partnership with local media sources to highlight the specific and significant impact of methamphetamine on the community. For example, engage the local newspaper to consolidate methamphetamine related crimes into a weekly feature that also provides information on how residents can report suspected methamphetamine related activity.**
- 3.1.3 Provide timely and accurate information to the community on emerging trends in methamphetamine production and distribution, i.e. “strawberry meth.”**

- Strategy 3.2: Schedule, coordinate presenters, and identify key neighborhoods and organizations for Meth360 presentations to raise awareness of methamphetamine.**
- Strategy 3.3: Create specific joint parent/child methamphetamine presentations.**
- Strategy 3.4: Utilize the unique perspectives and experiences of persons in recovery in public education opportunities.**
- Strategy 3.5: Provide education and outreach efforts in a culturally and language appropriate format to racial and ethnic communities.**



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RECOMMENDATION 4

Identify and successfully address public policy issues to impact the abuse of methamphetamine in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

- Strategy 4.1:** Facilitate the collaboration between the Lincoln-Lancaster County Methamphetamine Action Team (MAT) and the local chapter of the national Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Program to identify issues that affect the abuse of methamphetamine in Lincoln and Lancaster County. This partnership will facilitate the coordination of efforts by law enforcement, medical providers, child welfare workers, and other agencies to ensure that children found in unsafe environments where methamphetamine is present will receive appropriate attention.
- Strategy 4.2:** Continue to advocate for adequate insurance coverage for methamphetamine treatment. Advocate for policy revisions for methamphetamine treatment as determined. Advocate for parity in insurance coverage for substance abuse and mental health treatment.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Expand affordable and accessible treatment opportunities for methamphetamine abusers in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

- Strategy 5.1:** Facilitate a partnership between MAT and Lincoln and Lancaster County's treatment community to research and identify best practice projects and alternatives to treatment that support successful treatment and decrease recidivism by methamphetamine users.
- Strategy 5.2:** Engage the treatment community to use local methamphetamine data and the Implementation Recommendations in this report to leverage funding for expanded methamphetamine treatment.



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Strategy 5.3: Develop affordable and accessible after care and step down treatment programs to sustain the methamphetamine treatment and recovery progress for recovering methamphetamine abusers.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Address the unique and significant needs of children with methamphetamine addicted parents.

Strategy 6.1: Implement an information sharing and response system that allows educators and social service providers to more effectively share information and respond to individual children who are at risk of being negatively impacted by methamphetamine abuse.

Strategy 6.2: Convene educators, social service providers, treatment and health care providers, law enforcement, and other adults who come into contact with children affected by methamphetamine abuse to research best practices and investigate potential policy changes that enable children to safely report methamphetamine abuse.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Raise awareness among health care providers about methamphetamine abuse and treatment in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

Strategy 7.1: Provide health professionals, who provide prenatal services, with specialized resources to assist in the identification and referral of pregnant methamphetamine users. Resources may include educational materials regarding the impact of methamphetamine on fetal health, peer support programs, and information on treatment options.

Strategy 7.2: Work closely with the Lancaster County Medical Society and the Lincoln District Dental Association to disseminate information and education to medical professionals regarding patient identification, medical implications of methamphetamine abuse, and how to approach patients regarding their abuse of methamphetamine.



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RECOMMENDATION 8


Empower new and existing neighborhood networks to address methamphetamine within neighborhoods and on individual blocks.

- Strategy 8.1:** Increase neighborhood access to information related to the identification, reporting, and follow-up process of suspected drug activities through existing and/or new Neighborhood Watch Programs.
- Strategy 8.2:** Utilize methamphetamine related crime statistics and other related data to create and implement a portable neighborhood specific “Methamphetamine Response Project.” The project would include, but not be limited to, identifying existing and potential neighborhood leadership; offering opportunities for leadership training; providing support and technical assistance to identify problem properties; creating a targeted response; facilitating follow-through, and achieving desired outcomes for the purposes of improving the health and safety of neighborhoods located throughout Lincoln and Lancaster County.

RECOMMENDATION 9

Raise awareness throughout the local business community about methamphetamine abuse in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

- Strategy 9.1:** Provide education and presentation opportunities, such as Meth360, to employers regarding the signs and symptoms of methamphetamine abuse and steps for reporting and assisting employees abusing methamphetamine.
- Strategy 9.2:** Continue to support cooperative efforts of law enforcement and retailers with programs such as Meth Watch, to help curtail the suspicious sale and theft of common household products used in the illicit manufacturing of methamphetamine.



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SAAC

Lancaster County Substance Abuse Action Coalition



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The Methamphetamine Collaborative Planning Initiative was funded by a grant from the Community Health Endowment of Lincoln.