



News from the Office of **ADAM J. BELLO** **MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

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County Executive Adam Bello Announces Monroe County's First Ever Addiction Services Director

*Will work alongside Public Health Commissioner Dr. Michael Mendoza to address
addiction crisis in Monroe County*

ROCHESTER, NY -- Today, Monroe County Executive Adam Bello announced the addition of Dr. Tisha Smith as Monroe County's first Director of Addiction Services. In this newly created role, Dr. Smith will oversee the 8-member Monroe County Improving Addiction Coordination Team (IMPACT) to help combat the ongoing substance abuse disorder crisis within the county.

"Dr. Smith has an extensive background in addiction treatment and coordination, and has been on the frontlines, caring for people and families of all backgrounds throughout Monroe County," said Bello. "We all know the terrible toll the opioid crisis has taken on our community, it has touched every corner and too many families in Monroe County. Through her vision and leadership, the IMPACT team will operate a comprehensive, multi-faceted program that will be in the community, proactively helping those most closely effected by this epidemic."

Prior to being appointed Director of Addiction Services, Dr. Smith served as Director of Inmate Drug and Alcohol Programs for the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, where she developed reentry programs and coordinated resources for the drug and alcohol program. Dr. Smith has also served as Addiction Therapist Supervisor at Rochester Regional Health – Unity Hospital and as an Adjunct Professor at Rochester Institute of Technology and Genesee Community College.

"I am excited to serve the community as Monroe County's first Director of Addiction Services, and am pleased that County Executive Bello is rightly treating chemical dependency as a chronic health condition," said Dr. Smith. "I look forward to engaging our residents to help promote effective strategies that deal with addiction so more families don't have to deal with this pain and suffering."

The IMPACT program will operate out of the Monroe County Department of Public Health, and will coordinate services and care with Public Health Commissioner Dr. Michael Mendoza and the Public Health Department staff. As Director of Addiction Services, Dr. Smith is responsible for coordinating the disparate, multi-discipline treatment and prevention efforts already underway throughout the county. She will also work to get the message out about the services and programs available for individuals and families affected by the chronic illness of addiction.

“Dr. Smith brings valuable experience to our team at a profound moment in our community’s response to the mental health and substance abuse crises. I am looking forward to her leadership on these issues,” said Dr. Mendoza.

In addition to the Director of Addiction Services, the IMPACT team will include a Senior Research Analysis Coordinator who will work with data to make sure the IMPACT program’s efforts are properly targeted and effective. And, six Outreach Coordinators will work directly with individuals struggling with substance abuse disorder and their families to provide coaching and help with finding treatment beds, mental health care, housing assistance or any other services they may need as they work toward recovery.

The IMPACT program will adapt portions of the successful Buffalo MATTERS program, which expedites patient access to comprehensive and effective opioid use disorder treatment. In addition to ensuring individuals admitted to a hospital emergency room receive an immediate dose of Suboxone, the program will also ensure that individuals will be able to make an appointment for long-term treatment to begin within 24 to 28 hours.

“Too many lives are being damaged and too many families are being hurt by the opioid epidemic. It is time for Monroe County to address this public health crisis by putting the proper resources into the system and designing a program that will help the people who need it most,” concluded Bello.

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