

**Contact: [Name of person who is available to answer questions from the media]
[Phone number of contact person – include office and cell numbers]
[E-mail address]**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Name of Organization] Hosts Event to Educate [community] about Prevention and Recovery

[Organization] is sponsoring an event in [town/city] on [day, month] at [location]. The event will raise awareness of substance use disorders by promoting positive ways of combating stress, encouraging a healthy lifestyle, and informing the community about the available prevention, treatment, and recovery resources. Many people who endure prolonged high levels of stress can develop substance use disorders, especially people in the military, the workforce, older adults, and families.

The [event] will be held as part of the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services' Prevention and Recovery 77 Initiative. This initiative wants to educate all Oklahomans in all 77 counties of Oklahoma the importance of prevention and treatment for addictive disorders. "The fact of the matter is, saving lives saves us money, and in our current economic climate we need to save as much as we can." said Caletta McPherson, Deputy Commissioner of substance abuse services at ODMHSAS.

McPherson said that Oklahoma employers spend more than \$600 million extra a year in medical costs for the 200,000 Oklahoma workers dealing with depression and addiction. Not only are we helping these people become healthy, but we also help the state in the process. Public awareness efforts pave the way to reversing negative trends of these issues.

Prevention and Recovery 77 is part of a national initiative known as *National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month)*, which is sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) Center for Substance Abuse (CSAT), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This year marks the 21st annual celebration of *Recovery Month*, which honors people in recovery from substance use disorders, as well as those who provide treatment and recovery services, and promotes the need for treatment access and long-term recovery.

"Events like these help raise awareness about the need for treatment and the prevention of addictive disorders and give a hopeful outlook at how recovery is a reality in Oklahoma." said Steven Buck, Deputy Commissioner of Communication and Prevention Services. "It also provides an excellent opportunity to help policy leaders understand the importance of readily available services for Oklahomans."

The event expects attendance of more than [number] community members, and has received support from local businesses and sponsors, including [list one or two local prominent guests, businesses, or sponsors]. The[event] includes information on substance use prevention and treatment, stress management, and support groups, while participants took advantage of other health care services, such as [service provided]. The public is invited and encouraged to attend.

Keynote speakers, including [name], a local police officer; [name], the CEO of [prominent local company]; [name], a retired adult; and [name], a mother of four children, shared their stories of overcoming substance use disorders triggered by stressful situations, and their lives in recovery.

“By working together as a community, we can raise awareness of addiction during *Recovery Month*, and encourage those in [county] to seek the treatment services they need,” said [name of keynote speaker], a local [key-note speaker] who is in long-term recovery.

National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month) is celebrated each September in communities across the country to help people recognize that substance use disorders are treatable and recovery is possible. Treatment and other recovery support programs are as effective as treatment for other chronic conditions such as diabetes or heart disease – yet nationally, only 10 percent of Americans who need treatment for substance use disorders actually receive it, according to the 2008 *National Survey on Drug Use and Health*. *Recovery Month* encourages people affected by addiction to seek treatment and recovery services so they can reclaim healthy and productive lives in their community. For more information on PR 77, visit www.odmhsas.org.

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