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Governor Wolf Details A Better Way Forward with 2017-2018 Budget, Discusses Investments in Battling the Opioid Epidemic

Harrisburg, PA – Today, Governor Wolf joined members of his cabinet, local and community leaders, medical professionals, and members of the law enforcement community at TW Ponessa & Associates Counseling Services Inc, a center of excellence, to discuss how his 2017-2018 budget is a better way forward and how it will help in the continuing battle against the opioid epidemic.

“Since becoming Governor, I’ve travelled around the commonwealth hearing stories from parents, friends, first responders, and community members about their firsthand experience with people who have fallen prey to this crisis,” said Governor Tom Wolf. “We must continue to use every tool in our tool box to combat this crisis, and help those who are suffering from substance use disorders. My budget proposal will continue to expand upon the efforts we’ve already made to fight the heroin and opioid crisis, the worst public health crisis we’ve seen in a generation.”

“TW Ponessa & Associates Counseling Services Inc., a provider of Co-occurring Drug and Alcohol and Mental Health services since 1991, is honored to host Governor Wolf’s Round Table event today,” said TW Ponessa President Tom Ponessa. “We applaud the Governor’s new initiatives and expanded funding for Lancaster County and across the state to help save lives and provide access to treatment for those suffering from the devastating effects of opioid dependence. As a Pennsylvania Center of Excellence, we will work within our community to build strong and clear cut pathways to recovery.”

Earlier this week, Governor Wolf offered a budget proposal that represents a responsible solution to Pennsylvania’s fiscal challenges and takes a better path forward than the way things have been done for a generation. By identifying

specific programs that can work more effectively, and others that are no longer working at all, Governor Wolf's budget proposal identifies over \$2 billion in savings without compromising the quality of services offered to the people of Pennsylvania.

Instead of slashing services for Pennsylvanians who most need our help, Governor Wolf has invested in what matters most to the citizens he serves.

New investments in battling the opioid epidemic in the 2017-2018 budget include:

- \$10 million to expand access to naloxone for first responders through competitive grant funds will be awarded through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD).
- \$3.4 million to expand specialty drug courts in PCCD to expand treatment strategies to divert offenders into more meaningful treatment and recovery.
- \$26.5 million in federal Cures Act funds beginning in 2017-18 that will be used to expand access to treatment services, particularly for individuals who are uninsured or underinsured.

Continued investments in battling the opioid epidemic in the 2017-2018 budget include:

- \$20.4 to continue the 45 Centers of Excellence throughout Pennsylvania which will help coordinate holistic treatment for people suffering from substance use disorder.
- \$45M to continue to fund services to address heroin and opioid addiction through the Single County Authorities.
- Over \$3 million for the prescription drug monitoring program which allows medical practitioners to see what their patients are being prescribed, and to make sure that what they're prescribing is not at odds with that person's health. It will also allow a medical practitioner help a person get into treatment if they believe they have identified a patient suffering from a substance use disorder.

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