

NAATP

WEBINAR

SERIES



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Recovery Centers of America

Public Relations Strategy: Our Obligation to the Field and COVID-19

Let me start with saying

This topic is near and dear to my heart -

Because if WE don't define, educate, and explain

1. Substance use disorders / Addiction,
2. Treatment, and
3. Recovery

the Media and the Public will.



The media will continue to:

1. Misinform the public and focus on the few bad apples,
2. Stereotype those struggling with this disease and continue to use stigmatizing language,
3. Sensationalize those who relapse and normalize heavy drinking.



1. Misinformation and Negative Focus

Spent years showcasing only the bad players in the field and misinforming the public.

And we've let it happen and, in some cases, added fuel to the fire.

We know everything we see on the web isn't fact – why do jump on and forward the negative press, assuming it's true?



2. Stereotypes

Stereotypes those struggling with this disease and continues to use stigmatizing language.

Addict

*Substance
Abuser*

*Chronic
relapse(r)*

Dirty

Junkie

Drug User

Think language doesn't matter?

2 Vignettes – exactly the same, except – person referred to as:

“substance abuser” or “person having a substance use disorder.”

Asked: Should punitive actions be taken, or should treatment be provided?

Person referred to as “substance abuser”

More likely to advocate punitive measures, “jail as a wake-up call”

Endorsed SUD caused by reckless lifestyle, poor choices, person caused it

Person could be violent to self, to others.



Stigmatizing Language:

In 2017, the Associated Press (AP) Style Guide which is used by all writers

encouraged the omission of negatively connotated words like “addict” and “drug abuser”

The New York Times

Watching ‘Euphoria,’ Two Young Recovering Addicts Saw Themselves

USA TODAY

STAYING APART, TOGETHER
It's hard right now. 😞

CORONAVIRUS AND YOUR 🛡️
Will you get a check?

SUPP
Hel

[News] Sports Entertainment Life Money Tech Travel

INVESTIGATIONS

No strings attached: More opioid addicts get meds without talk therapy

3. Sensationalize and Normalize



VIRTUAL

Today, 5pm Teams Video

HAPPY

Pair your favorite bev (alcoholic or non)

HOUR!

Hang with the PTG Team
and share some laughs

And Importantly, the media will
Forget the field entirely when matters of
national importance arise -
Case in point – Coronavirus
The stimulus package
Treatment needs – Telehealth, OTP needs
Staff Needs – PPE, Testing
Patient Needs – Access, Awareness of
Options



The public

Will continue to hold inaccurate and negative beliefs about:

1. Addiction
2. People with Substance Use Disorders
3. Treatment
4. Recovery



1. About Addiction:

The public will continue to believe:

Addiction is not a disease

Addiction is Self-Induced, is a moral failure or
lack of will-power

It does not have a genetic component or a
medical treatment

It isn't an illness because that would mean people
are not responsible for their behavior



2. About **People** with SUD's:

The public will continue think:

They never get well

They are bad, not sick

They have to “Hit Rock Bottom”

They have to *want* treatment for it to work



3. About Treatment:

The public will continue think

most treatment programs:

Are ineffective, have no value

Are a rip off or are just in it for the money

Don't have physicians, nurses, professionals

Don't have/deliver evidence-based practices

Are a failure if they don't work the first time



4. About Recovery:

The public will continue think:

Someone gets treatment for 30 days and they are cured.

Being “in recovery” means –
I’m trying to quit.

People use medications as a “crutch”



What does the public think of “Recovery”?

- Ever hear “I’m a person in long-term recovery and by that, I mean I haven’t had a drink or drug for xx years?”
- Faces and Voices in Recovery did a groundbreaking survey of the general public by in 2004 and found:
- When someone says he or she is in recovery, most people think that person is still using drugs or alcohol but trying to quit.



All of which leads me to my Objectives!

1. Understand the benefits of “field-focused” rather than person or organization-focused public relations efforts.
2. Define how treatment providers at any level can impact public opinion and public relations.
3. Identify methods and tools for being part of the discussion that forms public opinion.
4. Understand how we can support the field during the current Covid-19 pandemic.
5. Understand and describe the challenges, preparation, and activities needed for participation in various media outlets.



What is PR and Why have it?

Most people/companies would say public relations strategies or PR exist to build and maintain a positive public image of your business to the public.

From hospitals to auto dealerships, PR generally works to inform prospective customers, investors, partners, employees, and other stakeholders in a way that leads them to develop or maintain a favorable view of the organization.





GEICO Providing
\$2.5 Billion to
Customers
Through Policy
Credits

Some new Covid-related PR



Why do I call PR “Our Obligation to the Field?”

Unfortunately, the public learns about substance use disorders and their treatment primarily from coverage by popular outlets including TV, radio, newspapers, social media, etc.

- They are inaccurate

- They massively cover failures & minimally cover successes

- They are not fact-based or science-based



Our Obligation

Our field has an obligation to the public that is larger than that of other types of companies or organizations.

We must strive primarily to educate the public about substance use disorders, their treatment and recovery successes, not just to promote one organization.



Our Obligation

We get so little opportunity to have a voice,
and we're so drowned out by the sensationalism and
harsh portrayals of our field, our patient's, and the
illness we treat,
that we must take those opportunities to be positively

“Field-Focused”
not
“Organization-Focused”



Why “Field-Focused”

1. Because the negative press has been “field-focused” and profoundly hurt the entire field.
2. Because this field needs all of us to survive and “field-focused” is how we do that.



Negative Press

The level and volume of negative press in the past 5-8 years has profoundly hurt everyone in the field.

We've got to stop letting them attack us
AND we've got to stop attacking each other.



But aren't there bad apples?

It's sickening when someone in our field behaves unethically, fraudulently or even illegally.

Fact – There's fraud in every industry.

And every industry should and does have mechanisms in place to report, address, and stop that fraud.

We have those mechanisms and we should continue to use them



But...

This topic has been thoroughly vetted, discussed in congress, legislation has passed, states are addressing it, etc.

The field has been held accountable and will continue to be held accountable.

But - We've got to shift to publicizing the good in our field



Publicizing the good...

We've got stop jumping on the bandwagon when a negative story about a program or a person in the field hits the press, and we've got to move to showing the good in our industry!

I've been to over 500 treatment programs in this country alone (explain how) and in everyone I see people working their hearts out to help others, giving of themselves, profoundly dedicated to this field.



Field-Focused

In an industry where the public isn't even sure what we do, doesn't see our value and doesn't want to need us, support us or pay for us –

We need to emphasize what we do well and talk about the positive impact of the field overall.

We need everyone – clinicians, directors, associations - to get out there & focus on what we do right.

Because just know - if it's a slow news day - right or wrong, true or not - the press follows the complainer...



Have I made the case?

Within the industry, we must make the effort to inform the public, or those outside of our field, unknowledgeable about the science of addiction, its treatment and recovery, will continue to influence public opinion.

If so – we can move on to –

How this relate to the Coronavirus Pandemic,
and Resources for how to do this in:

Traditional print/online media, Op Eds, radio,
federal/state venues and social media

Why this is particularly important with within the Coronavirus Pandemic

Let's look at the opportunities to impact public opinion and policy, assist those in recovery, their families and those struggling with SUD, educate the public, and be of service to the field.

1. At the onset of Covid,
2. During the height of the pandemic, and
3. After the critical period/in maintenance phase.



Our role early in Covid-19

- Heavy drinkers may not know they are in danger of withdrawal, we can educate on things the public doesn't know - everyone thinks you can die from opioid withdrawal, but few know you can die from alcohol withdrawal!
- Increase awareness of Covid hit within the community
- Education to drug users about the importance/impact of weakened immune system in the context of the virus



Topics across the Covid-19 Experience

- Lack of availability (due to transportation issues) and increased prices for street drugs and how that can lead to use of fillers, cutters, other dangerous ingredients, and transitions from Heroin to Fentanyl.
- NABH, AATOD, NAATP and others worked on:
 - Methadone take homes
 - Telehealth
- How to deal with increased depression, anxiety, social isolation, domestic violence, etc.



Opportunities to inform after the critical period/in maintenance phase

- Importance of continuing to keep spread down
- Opioid supply may show huge increase
 - Carry Narcan
- Inform re: New increases – like in Georgia..
- ?

Resources for:

Identifying various media outlets and their challenges, benefits, limitations, etc.

Or: The Who, What, Why, Where and How!

1. Media Interviews: Press, Local News/Online News
2. Op Eds
3. Radio Interviews:
4. Social Media: Twitter, LinkedIn
5. Federal Agencies, etc.



Across all platforms:

If you remember one thing about doing media – remember that no matter how long you’ve done this, how often and how good you are:

Doing this *well* takes loads of preparation –
Before, During and After – it’s up to you.

And never get so big that you’re afraid to say, “I don’t know”



Across all platforms:

Identify, communicate, write,
rehearse, practice, google, follow-up,
make relationships, make it easy for them.

And never, ever, make stuff up!

“I’ve read your articles”

“Almost all of our patients...”

“No-one’s tested positive for covid here”
(Learn to Pivot)



Media Interviews: Print News/Online News

How do you get invited?

Respond to “cold call” interview requests with a healthy skepticism.

Yes, we want to educate the public/raise awareness, but often, the media wants a juicy story, so a media inquiry may mean that something more is going on.

You have the right to ask what their questions are (to prep), decline interviews (or give them to Ben...), and *ask* to review quotes.



Media Interviews: Print News/Online News

The Process

1. Pitch
2. Someone refers you
3. They know you after 30+ years
and a few hints...



General Guidelines

Media pitches –

They should be short and sweet and not too "salesy."

Big difference between trying to raise awareness about addiction, treatment, and recovery *versus* trying to promote your program.

You will reap the benefits of a story when your program's name is mentioned.

Reporters need experts (today) to help give their story substance and the treatment field has plenty of experts at all levels.



Ex: Interview Request via email:

Sat 3/14, 7 PM:

Hi Deni, I got your name from (*Deni's good friend*)

My name is "*Jeff Smith*" and I'm at (*Really Cool*) News Place.

I am interested in interviewing you about the importance of keeping a sense of community during the coronavirus chaos happening now.

Many 12-step meetings are being canceled, preventing people with alcoholism and addiction from physically gathering.

Would love to chat about that, and perhaps get a few alternatives to physical meetings!

This would be a video for YouTube. Asking for quick Skype call.



Interview Request (Sat 3/14, 7 PM):

Thought Process:

I can do this. What would increase his enthusiasm to interview me?

Response Sun AM ☹️ (3/15/20)

Happy to do it. Give me a call on my cell to discuss! I read your article on xyz... I think I'm in a unique position - in long term recovery and got home from Italy 3/4 - Been self quarantined since then, finding alternatives to physical gatherings!

Sent with Short bio, Pic.



Print News/Online News

When they tell you what questions they will ask or give you a topic, you must prep.

Example with this request – 6 pages of notes.

Know - The art of the sound bite!

“Well, alcohol is legal, marijuana isn’t any more harmful, why shouldn’t recreational MJ be legal

Do - Local prep – interview on the opioid problem for a newspaper in NJ? It’s ALL online...



Preparation, Technology & Tenor

Do your best to learn the platforms:

Zoom WebEx GoToMeeting Skype

But don't be afraid to ask for help – they want you to succeed! Ask Chelsey!

Know when you can add some levity!



Deni in Zoom Meeting:
Xxxx advisory group

Op Eds

Often Difficult!

Must be very timely

Give them what they prefer!

Exactly



Wall Street Journal

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/op-ed-guidelines-for-the-wall-street-journal-1483740089>

It must be exclusive to the Journal.

A strong argument about an issue in the news.

Not a response to a Journal article; that's letter to the editor.

Want an idea what we're looking for? Read the editorial page.

Between 400 and 1,000 jargon-free words

We will contact you if interested. 10 days.

Don't call to confirm receipt or check for a status

You sign a contract giving us exclusive rights for 30 days after publication.



New York Times Op-Eds

<https://help.nytimes.com/hc/en-us/articles/115014809107-How-to-submit-an-Op-Ed-article>

The New York Times accepts opinion essays on any topic for the daily print page and online section, the Sunday Review, International edition....

Published pieces typically run from 400 to 1,200 words, but drafts of any length within bounds of reason will be considered.

All submissions must be original, exclusive to The Times

Submissions may be sent to opinion@nytimes.com.

Unfortunately, because of the large volume of messages we receive, we have to pass on much material of value and interest.

If you do not hear from us within three business days, you should feel free to offer it elsewhere.



Radio Interviews

1. Like all media, only say yes if you KNOW the topic - remember Ben!
2. OK, do you want to come in and do it in the studio or call in? Answer?
3. Don't be afraid to take notes with you.
4. Get to know the interviewer, listen to other shows. Ask Chelsey.



Tips for effective audio/video

1. Shut down, hide or close all other programs
2. Panel or Webex: Stay engaged, nod when others talk
3. Audio – Usually better with Headset and mic, but...
4. Mute sound notifications on computer
5. Leave you mic on if possible
6. Wired internet connection if poss
7. Stop pop-ups
8. Put phone on DND – 3 places
9. Have water, notepad, a cough drop handy (right before)
10. Basic background with lighting with good lighting
11. Dress simple: dark colors, no white...
12. Ask for test sessions with assistant... Right Chelsey?



Twitter
LinkedIn
Facebook/Facebook Live



Who Is On Social Media?



THERAPISTS



HOSPITALS/OTHER
TREATMENT CENTERS



COUNSELING SERVICES



SUPPORT GROUPS



DOCTORS



MENTAL
HEALTH/ADDICTION
COACHES



PEOPLE IMPACTED BY
ADDICTION

Social Media

For the first time ever, more Americans now get news from social media sites than from print newspapers, Pew Research said on Monday.

(Reported December 18th 2018)



AVERAGE TIME SPENT IN A LIFETIME



1 YEARS, 8 MONTHS
DOING HOUSEWORK



1 YEARS, 11 MONTHS
SOCIALIZING



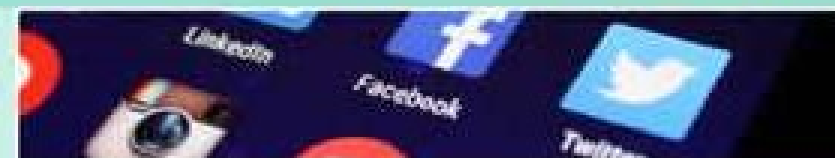
2 YEARS, 2 MONTHS
SHOPPING



3 YEARS, 7 MONTHS
EATING & DRINKING



6 YEARS, 8 MONTHS
USING SOCIAL MEDIA



8 YEARS, 4 MONTHS
WATCHING TV



26 YEARS, 5 MONTHS
SLEEPING



* According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics

Social sites explained (with donuts)

INSTAGRAM

Here's a photo
of my donut



FACEBOOK

I like donuts



LINKEDIN

My skills include
donut eating



TWITTER

I'm eating
a #donut



Twitter

Why use Twitter?

Great platform for sharing news & opinions

Great way to:

- Seek feedback about your opinions

- Provide links to your work

- Keep up to date with latest news and trends

Main Limitations-

- Has a character limit of 280 characters –

 - You must be exact and concise in your wording

- Tends to have spam accounts and false profiles

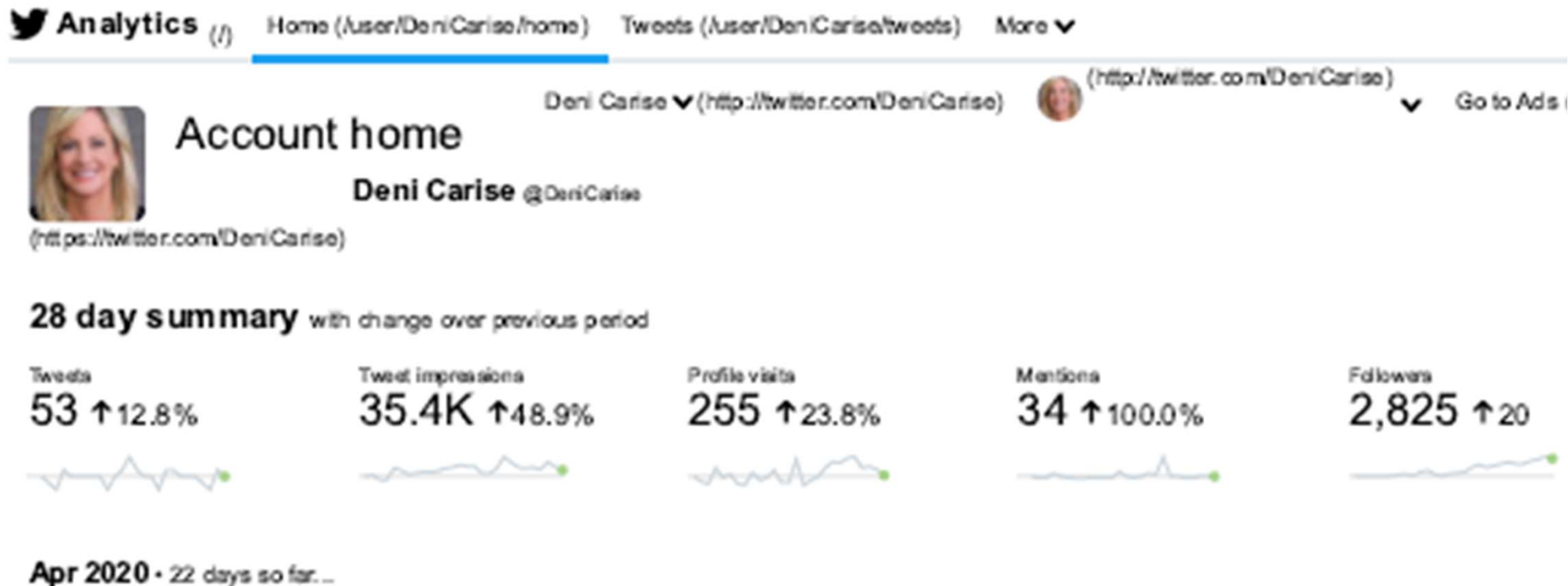


Twitter – Getting Traction

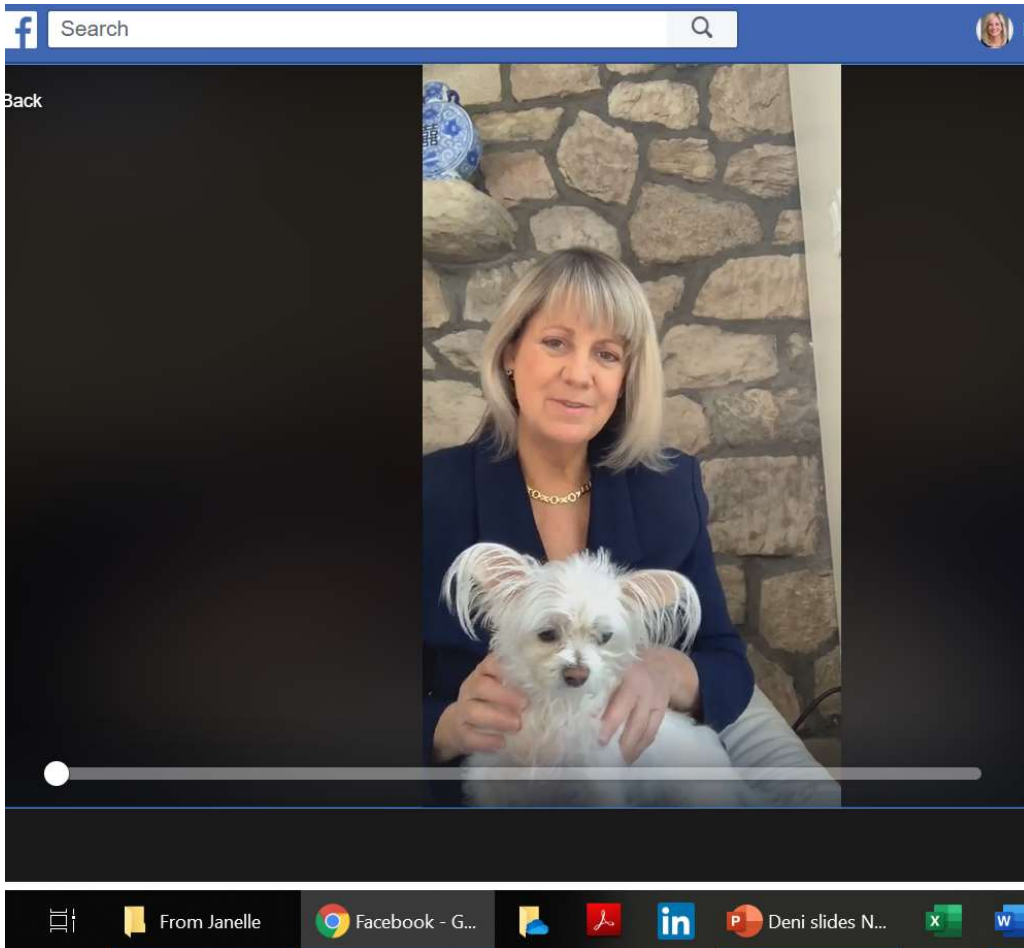
Add a profile photo - Write a description - Add header photo
Follow accounts similar to your own and associated with your field- they will be more likely to follow you back
Be active! Use Twitter daily to see results and gain followers
Tag the media and thought leaders when you comment on their articles - Hashtags are key on Twitter to increase views
Re-tweet posts from accounts you follow With comments
Get your opinion in- Be sure to reply to other tweets from those you follow
Use images – ask Teddy



Who knew? (I should!)



Resources for Setting Up A Twitter Account:



- <https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Twitter-Account>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvBPhZyLnn4>

LinkedIn

Why Use LinkedIn?

LinkedIn Is the top social media site for professional networking

Considered the best personal branding tool

Great way to keep up to date with the latest topics and trends in your field



LinkedIn - How To Get Traction

Request to join LinkedIn groups related to your profession

Post your work in Professional Groups

Message similar professionals and connect

If someone Googles your name, your LinkedIn profile will be one of the first pages to show up

Other tips/suggestions:

Take advantage of the “Featured” section

Ask colleagues for LinkedIn endorsements (these add value)

Be sure your “about” section states a solid overview of your professional experience

Don't leave any blanks: fill in experience, accomplishments, job history, etc.



Resources for Setting Up A LinkedIn Account:

- <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/learning-linkedin-3/get-started-with-linkedin>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/112133/how-do-i-create-a-good-linkedin-profile-?lang=en>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l380M3dZ4BQ>

Facebook & Facebook Live

Why use Facebook Live?

- Effective platform to educate the public about topics in your field
- Put a name to a face, put a personality behind what you are passionate about
- Get viewers engaged by encouraging them to ask questions
- Opportunity to get information out to a large audience



Facebook Facts

Facebook User Facts:

68 percent of Americans use Facebook

88 percent of Facebook users are using the mobile app

The number of Facebook users ages 65+ has doubled since 2012

Facebook is the top platform for B2B and B2C business pages

The average user spends 55 minutes a day on the app

And you gotta love Facebook Marketplace!



Facebook Live



Recovery Centers *of* America

Join Us!

On the Recovery Centers of America Facebook page as we go **LIVE** with Dr. Deni Carise to talk about a series of topics throughout the day. Discussions include:

10:00 AM — **Coffee and Morning Meditation**

1:00 PM — **Big Book topics**

4:00 PM — **Coronavirus and Recovery**

Live Q&A to follow



Deni Carise, Ph.D.
Chief Scientific Officer,
Recovery Centers of America (RCA)
Adjunct Assistant Professor, University of Pennsylvania



Facebook Live Tips

Tips/Suggestions-

Be consistent: Keep a schedule and let audiences know when you will be on (weekly, biweekly, etc)

Post in the “event” section on Facebook

Prepare in advance, keep a guide of discussion points so you don’t get off topic

Encourage viewers to ask questions and comment in the comments section

Bring your dog...



Resources for Setting Up A Facebook Business Account:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9eufY-LICBg>

Federal Advocacy

How to find Senator/Congressman

NABH

AATOD

NAATP

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UNITED STATES
HOUSE of
REPRESENTATIVES

FIND YOUR REPRESENTATIVE

Enter your zip code

[LOOK UP](#)



116th Congress, 2nd Session · The House is not in session.

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[LEADERSHIP](#)

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[LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY](#)

[THE HOUSE EXPLAINED](#)

Directory of Representatives

Also referred to as a congressman or congresswoman, each representative is elected to a two-year term serving the people of a specific congressional district. The number of voting representatives in the House is fixed by law at no more than 435, proportionally representing the population of the 50 states. Currently, there are five delegates representing the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. A resident commissioner represents Puerto Rico. Learn more about representatives at [The House Explained](#).

Key to Room Codes

- CHOB: [Cannon House Office Building](#)
- LHOB: [Longworth House Office Building](#)
- RHOB: [Rayburn House Office Building](#)
- [View the campus map](#)
- [A Note About Room Numbering](#)

By State and District

By Last Name

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UNITED STATES
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116th Congress, 1st Session · The House is not in session.

REPRESENTATIVES

LEADERSHIP

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THE HOUSE EXPLAINED

Find Your Representative

Information provided:

Zip code: 19428

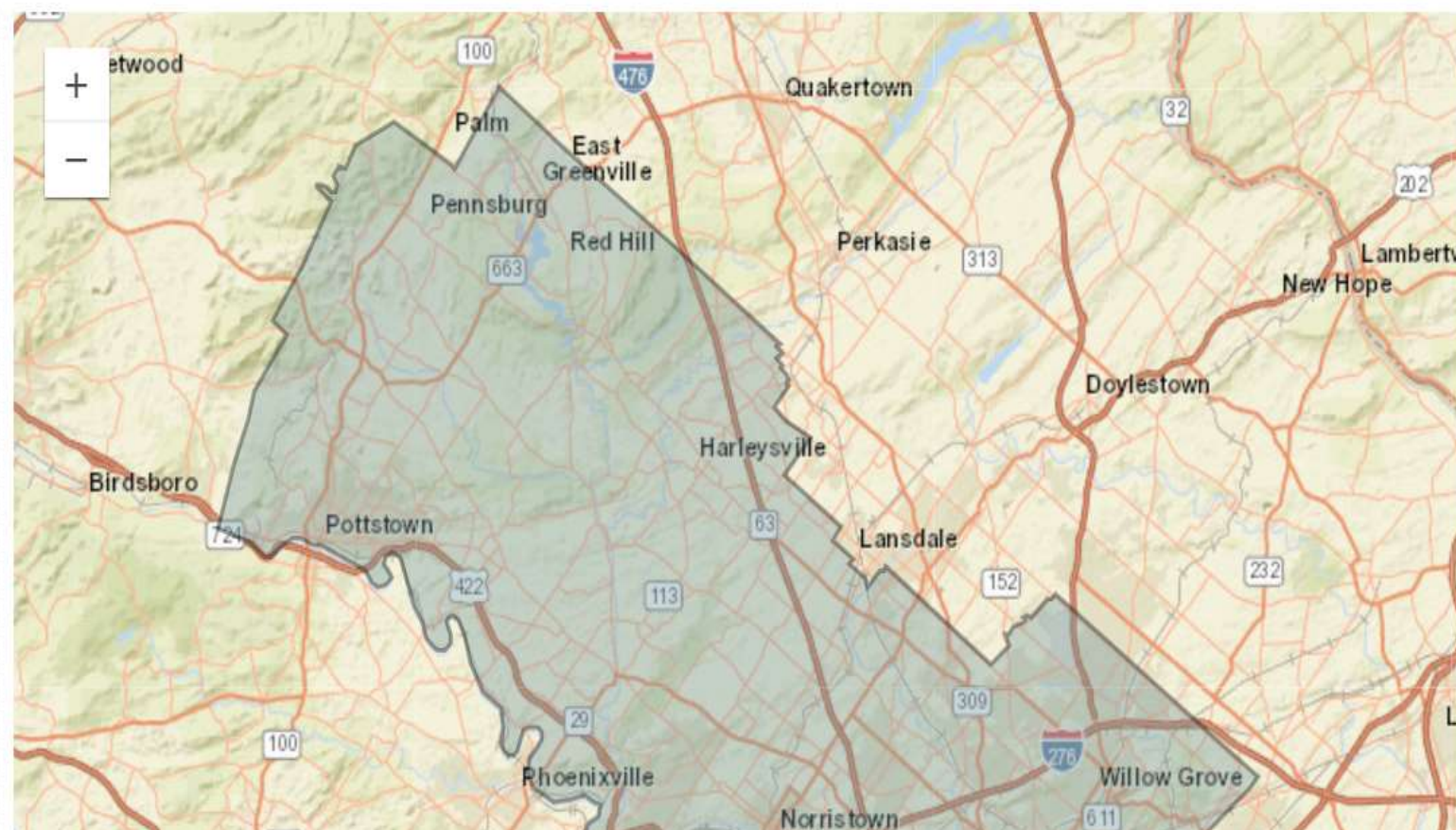
is located in the 4th Congressional district of Pennsylvania.

The representative for this district is:



Madeleine Dean

Democrat





UNITED STATES SENATE

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Choose a Class ▾

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[Alexander, Lamar](#) - (R - TN)

455 Dirksen Senate Office Building Washington DC 20510

(202) 224-4944

Contact: www.alexander.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=Email

[Baldwin, Tammy](#) - (D - WI)

709 Hart Senate Office Building Washington DC 20510

(202) 224-5653





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[What is a class?](#)

[Casey, Robert P., Jr.](#) - (D - PA)

Class I

393 Russell Senate Office Building Washington DC 20510
(202) 224-6324

Contact: www.casey.senate.gov/contact/

[Toomey, Patrick J.](#) - (R - PA)

Class III

248 Russell Senate Office Building Washington DC 20510
(202) 224-4254

Contact: www.toomey.senate.gov/?p=contact



We CAN affect change...

...and this change will result in
more understanding and
compassion for the patients,
clients and families we serve as
well as those still suffering.



Remember -

The field needs all of us to survive and thrive to help those who are suffering.

We owe it to ourselves, our patients and the field to use our voice for positive change, to rise to the challenges and help others to do the same.





NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF
ADDICTION TREATMENT PROVIDERS

Feel free to email me at:
dcarise@recoverycoa.com

And – Follow me on:



Twitter: @DeniCarise



LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/denicarisephd>



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DeniCarise>

Thank you!

Deni
Carise