**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 30, 2020**

**New “Reach Out Prince George’s” Campaign and PSA encourages Self-Care and Identifying Signs of Risky Coping Behavior during COVID-19**

**PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY, MD** (December 30, 2020) – An alliance of community leaders and other stakeholders, including the Prince George’s County Council, Renaissance Treatment Center, Dementia Friendly America – Prince George’s County, and several residents who served as the primary talent for the “Better Choices PSA” have launched a new campaign called *Reach Out Prince George’s*. The campaign is committed to helping residents better understand the warning signs and risks of unhealthy alcohol and other drug use.  The campaign seeks to reach all segments of our community and underscore the importance of daily self-care, seeking help if necessary and utilizing available resources during these challenging times.

Recent research published by industry leaders reports that in Prince George’s County, since the start of the pandemic, alcohol and other substance use has increased. Overdose rates have increased significantly in proportion to many other jurisdictions in the state of Maryland; certain populations, including Older Adults, are at increased risks of complications because of unhealthy alcohol and other drug use. In addition, many of the usual resources and support that at-risk residents would normally seek out have been disrupted due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements.

Through a multi-channel outreach approach that plans to incorporate print, social media, digital, and radio, the *Reach Out Prince George’s* campaign will:

* inspire Prince Georgians to take better control of their health to navigate the pandemic more effectively as well as inform them of available resources for crisis, support and education;
* offer relevant evidence-based free CME/CEU training opportunities for professionals and human service organizations that serve Prince George’s County residents;
* feature messages of hope and encouragement from local leaders.

*Reach Out Prince George’s* activities during this month’s launch included the “Older Adults and Substance Use Disorder” CME/CEU Training Hosted by Maryland Addiction Consultation Service (MASC) and Prince George’s County District 8.  As well as, the release of the “Better Choices” Public Service Announcement video which was shared on a “**Moving Forward: Be Intentional About Your Self-Care**” webinar on December 21, hosted by Prince George’s County Councilwoman (District 8) Monique Anderson-Walker. Moving Forward series was launched in May 2020 to provide mental health support as we navigate through this pandemic.

To learn more, visit ReachOutPGC.org.  The “Better Choices” Public Service Announcement video can be viewed at [https://youtu.be/15ByOK4li3](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fyoutu.be%2F15ByOK4li3w&data=04%7C01%7CRMAFord@co.pg.md.us%7Cec9ac443f2e74d9a3aa808d8ac5ce580%7C4146bddaddc14d2aa1b21a64cc3c837b%7C0%7C0%7C637448862269801557%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=0FTzLki2KLruI8utxdmYriy1NtKCYzCi0KwmGIvj2as%3D&reserved=0)

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