

## **Actor Hoffman's Death: Hope it Serves as a Call to Action**

Statement from Debra L. Wentz, PhD, CEO of NJAMHAA

The tragic death of Philip Seymour Hoffman from a heroin overdose is the latest high-profile example of this crisis. Meanwhile, the epidemic continues to take many lives - including many teenagers and young adults - and devastates families in all walks of life.

Whether or not a celebrity brings this critical issue into the spotlight, there must be a constant focus on addressing this crisis. Education is critical for students, parents, physicians, teachers - everyone - and access to prevention and treatment services must be prompt and consistent. Education must include information about the Good Samaritan Act so that more people know they can potentially save lives of individuals who experience overdoses and not face any legal ramifications.

Members of the New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc. (NJAMHAA) are ready and able to help everyone in need of prevention, treatment and support services.

Our dedicated, expert providers help individuals with substance use disorders manage these very real illnesses. They also support entire families throughout the recovery process. NJAMHAA providers are listed by county on [www.njamhaa.org](http://www.njamhaa.org); scroll down the home page and click on the "Need Treatment?" button on the left-hand side.

Every life lost is a tragedy that we must continually work to prevent. We hope Hoffman's death serves as a call to action to ensure timely access to substance use prevention and treatment services.

Together, we can rein in this crisis and not allow any more lives to be lost.