

A REPORT BY THE OFFICE OF THE
BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT



*Stopping Drugs Now-
Protecting Bronx Neighborhoods Today*

Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrión, Jr.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Drug abuse and drug dealing are problems that plague many neighborhoods throughout New York City, including the Bronx. This report, prepared by Office of the Bronx Borough President, was written in response to a demonstrated concern of Bronx residents in various neighborhoods about the noticeable presence of drugs dealing and drug abuse.

Despite the problems created by drugs, the Bronx has experienced an unprecedented economic boom in last several years, and it has a thriving local economy today. This report was written on the premise that if there is not greater attention by the City government to drug dealing and drug abuse in the Bronx, then these problems could get worse and could affect the economic growth of the borough.

Specifically, this report looks at drug dealing and drug abuse in the Bronx, and at how four different New York City government agencies- New York City Police Department (NYPD), Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and Human Resources Administration (HRA) - use their distinct resources, based on their missions, to better address these problems. The goal of this report is to identify areas for improvement by City agencies in the fight against drug dealing and drug abuse in the Bronx, and then work in partnership with these agencies to reduce these problems.

Significantly, this report follows the Borough President's efforts last year to call attention to these problems by participating in a night-time inspection ride with the NYPD's Narcotics Division of suspected drug dealing locations in the Bronx. In addition, this report is being released at the same time that the Borough President is launching, "**The Bronx Anti- Drug Anonymous Tip line: 718-590- 3551,**" which is a hotline for Bronx residents to report drug crimes in their neighborhood. Suspected locations of drug dealing that are reported to this line are followed up on by the Office of the Bronx Borough President with the New York City Police Department.

REPORT FINDINGS

Statistics about Drug Dealing and Drug Abuse

- In 2004, the Bronx had twice the average rate of adult drug arrests compared to the rest of the City and it was the location of 1/3 of the city's drug arrests.¹
- The three Police Precincts with the highest number of drug arrests- the 40th, 44th and 46th - made up more than 46% of the total 28,790 drug arrests in all 12 Bronx Police Precincts in 2004.²

¹ "2004 NYC Prisms: Risk Profile for Bronx," New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, October 2004

² OLBS Citywide Drug Arrests from January 2004 to December 2004, New York City Police Department

- Due to the level of drug abuse, the Bronx had the highest number of adult drug-related deaths in the city in 2004.³
- Across the board, the Bronx had twice the average city rate of adult residents being hospitalized for drug abuse; twice the average city rate of adult residents in state-funded drug treatment; and twice the average city rate of adult drug-related deaths.⁴
- Between 1999 and 2003, the highest rates of hospitalization rates for drug use and drug-related deaths in the Bronx were in the 40th, 41st, 42nd, 44th and 48th Police Precincts.⁵

Concerns City Agencies Should Consider:

- NYPD has done a great deal to address the problem of drug dealing in the Bronx. Yet, since this borough is disproportionately more affected by the problem of drug dealing than other boroughs in the City, how could NYPD be more effective in the distressed areas of the Bronx and does NYPD have the resources it needs to tackle the problem. Additionally, what is NYPD doing to encourage landlords to participate in the Operations Clean Halls initiative.
- DYCD has provided substantial funding for numerous youth programs in the Bronx focused on substance abuse and gang intervention. However, it appears that DYCD's gang intervention programs are located in Police Precincts less affected by the problems of drug dealing and drug abuse. Therefore, the question is whether DYCD could replicate their effective gang intervention programs and increase their number in Police Precincts with higher levels of drug-dealing.
- DOHMH has launched serious initiatives to address the use of heroin and crystal methamphetamine in the City. Nevertheless, recent news articles about major drug arrests in the Bronx and information from the Office of the Bronx District Attorney indicate that the most commonly used drugs are crack cocaine and marijuana. Consequently, it raises the question of what is DOHMH doing to address drug abuse with crack cocaine and marijuana in the Bronx, as these drugs appear to be left out of DOHMH priorities.
- In the effort to help unemployed people find work, HRA has established a very effective system in the City for screening public assistance recipients for substance abuse and for placing those testing positive in case management programs. Still, Bronx residents are in HRA substance case management in greater portion than their percentage of the overall City general population. As a result, the question raised is whether HRA needs to provide greater resources to

³ New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, as indicated above.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ New York City Police Department, as indicated above.

addressing the problem of drug abuse for public assistance recipients in the Bronx.

THE DRUG PROBLEM IN THE BRONX

DRUG DEALING

A recent survey found that “drugs or drug dealing” was ranked the top day-to-day quality of life problem that residents face by 23 Bronx neighborhood leaders.⁶ In response to a question about the problems that Bronx residents and their families face, another survey done last year found similarly that “crime, drugs and gangs” was the third biggest personal worry for Bronx residents after housing and jobs.⁷

The results of the two surveys might seem surprising, given that crime has decreased dramatically in the Bronx over the past decade. Since 1993, crime has gone down 65% overall in the Bronx. In the last four years alone, the overall level of crime in the Bronx has gone down 21%, and murder has gone down by 42%.⁸ In the same way, the borough also experienced a reduction in drug-related crime over the last decade. According to the Office of the Bronx District Attorney, they have seen the percentage of drug-related cases decrease by more than 20% over nearly a decade, from accounting for 65% of all felony-level defendants in 1996 to 43% in 2004.⁹

Yet, two recent police actions to dismantle drug dealing operations tell a different story of a persistent problem:

- Just this week, 24 drug dealers, part of four different gangs, were arrested by NYPD’s Bronx Narcotics Division in an alleged crack, heroin, and cocaine drug ring. Police estimated that the ring made revenues of over \$1 million annually. Members of the drug ring sold drugs in and around the Bronx River housing projects in the 43rd Police Precinct. The drug ring also employed children as young as 15 to run and sell the drugs.¹⁰
- Last month in March, 43 alleged gang members were arrested for running a highly organized crack-dealing operation based in the 40th Police Precinct that raked in \$7 million a year in profits. All the buildings in the housing project were affected, and the operation had been going on for at least the past five years.¹¹

⁶ “Neighborhood Problems and Quality of Life.” Citizens for NYC and Baruch College’s e-Town Panel, November 2004

⁷ “The Unheard Third 2004: Bringing the Voices of Low-Income New Yorkers to the Policy Debate.” Community Service Society of New York, January 2005.

⁸ <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/pdf/chfdept/cspbbx.pdf>

⁹ “Narcotics Bureau 2004 Annual Report,” Office of the Bronx District Attorney

¹⁰ Chiamonte, Perry, “24 arrested in Bronx undercover drug probe,” New York Post, April 5, 2005

¹¹ El-Ghobashy, Tamer; Kennedy, Helen and Sclafani, Tony, “Crip City’s Drug Bust, 43 Collared in Bronx Project.” The New York Daily News, March 4, 2005

Importantly, the two examples indicate, along with analysis of other reported arrests of major drug-dealing operations¹² as well as information from the Narcotics Bureau of the Office of the District Attorney that crack cocaine continues to be a problem in the Bronx.¹³ More significantly, these two examples tell a larger story that the problem of drug dealing continues at high levels in certain areas of the Bronx, despite the reductions in overall crime in the borough and the city as a whole.

In fact, in 2004, the Bronx had twice the average rate of adult drug arrests compared to the rest of the City¹⁴ and it was the location of 1/3 of the city's drug arrests.¹⁵ But drug-related arrests were not evenly distributed across neighborhoods in the borough: the three Police Precincts with the highest number of drug arrests- the 40th, 44th, and 46th- made up over 46% of the 28,790 total drug-related arrests in all 12 Bronx Police Precincts in 2004. Significantly, the 44th Police Precinct in the Bronx had nearly 20% of all the drug arrests in the Bronx in 2004 and nearly twice the number of drug arrests as the borough of Staten Island had for the whole year.¹⁶

Neighborhood Impact of Drug Dealing

How has drug dealing affected the buildings where it has occurred and their surrounding neighborhoods? The answer to this question explains why recent surveys have shown that the persistent problem drugs dealing in various neighborhoods has become the top day-to-day quality of life concern for some Bronxites: in short, drug dealing becomes the root of many other crimes that occur in a neighborhood.

When drug dealing flourishes, the apartment buildings attract both customers who care little about the property and more violent criminals involved in the drug trade. Consequently, the drug dealing reduces the quality of life in the neighborhood, and increases other crimes and problems, such as "loitering, littering (including drug paraphernalia and used condoms), trespassing, prostitution (including illegal sexual activity on the property, in nearby yards, in alleys, or in driveways), drug use, abandoned vehicles, speeding vehicles, parking problems, unwanted additional foot, car and bicycle traffic in residential neighborhoods, public drinking, public urination, gang formation, graffiti (establishing turf ownership of a drug market), assaults, auto theft, auto break-ins, residential and commercial burglaries, possession of and trafficking in stolen property, weapons violations (including gun possession and gun trafficking), robberies, drive-by shootings, or other violent crime (including drive-by shootings and homicide)."¹⁷

¹² Analysis of news articles about drug dealing in the Bronx from 2003- 2005, Office of the Bronx Borough President

¹³ Interview with Nestor Ferraro, Narcotics Bureau, Office of the Bronx District Attorney, March 28th, 2005.

¹⁴ "2004 NYC Prisms: Risk Profile for Bronx," New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, October 2004

¹⁵ New York City Police Department, as indicated above

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Sampson, Rana. "Drug Dealing in Privately Owned Apartment Complexes." U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

The Relationship between Drug Dealing and Gangs

Although estimates for gang membership in the Bronx were unavailable for this report, arrests made from major drug-dealing operations in the Bronx have substantiated that some were run by highly-organized drug gangs.¹⁸ The NYPD has determined that there are approximately 23 gangs in the City. The most prominent of these include the Bloods, Latin Kings, Crips, Nietas, Five Prisoners, Silenciosos, Matatones, Rat Hunters, and Zulu Nation.¹⁹ The NYPD has reported that gang membership in the City was approximately 15,000 in 2003, with about a 5,000 active and not in prison.²⁰ In between 2002 and 2004, NYPD recorded 2,436 gang motivated incidents in the City, with 611 in 2004.²¹

While gang activity has declined nationwide since 1996, this drop-off has not been experienced in cities, such as New York, with populations over 25,000. Many attribute the increase in gang activity in the City to the impact of “deindustrialization” and the subsequent loss of jobs and community structure that was first experienced in the 1970’s.²² In the Bronx, like in the rest of New York City, social economic changes have led to high levels of unemployment for minority males, which have created the conditions ripe for gangs to recruit young minorities.

The NYPD defines a drug gang as one that exists primarily for the purpose of distributing illegal narcotics or marijuana.²³ While some gangs may be involved in drug dealing, the City has not seen the widespread evolution of youth gangs into mini-drug dealing corporations that has occurred in other cities.²⁴ Although drugs use and the drug dealing occurs in many of the neighborhoods inhabited by City gangs, a recent report found that gangs are not the major source of drug trafficking in their neighborhoods, but that their territory often overlaps with drug dealing locations.²⁵

DRUG ABUSE

Drug abuse comprises a public health problem in the Bronx. It has reached a health crisis level in portions of the Bronx and is severely affecting many residents. Data gathered for this report confirms that there is a large correlation between areas where drug dealing is taking place to drug abuse. The neighborhoods with largest amount of drug dealing in the Bronx also have the most adult residents being hospitalized for drug abuse; the most adult residents in state-funded drug treatment; and unfortunately, also the most adult drug-related deaths.

Here are some statistics about drug abuse in the Bronx:

¹⁸ El-Ghobashy, Tamer; Kenneday, Helen and Sclafani, Tony, “Crip City’s Drug Bust, 43 Collared in Bronx Project”, The New York Daily News, March 4, 2005
< <http://www.nydailynews.com/front/story/286733p-245412c.html>>.

¹⁹ “Youth Gang Recruitment,” New York City Council’s Committee On Youth Services, January 25, 2001

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ “The Mayor’s Management Report: Fiscal 2005 Preliminary,” City of New York, February 2005, Page 106

²² “Oversight: Youth And Gangs,” New York City Council Committee On Youth Services, November 10, 2003

²³ New York City Council Committee On Youth Services, as indicated above

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

- Across the board, the Bronx had twice the average city rate of adult residents being hospitalized for drug abuse; twice the average city rate of adult residents in state-funded drug treatment; and twice the average city rate of adult drug-related deaths.²⁶
- There were 6,446 adult drug-related hospital discharges in the Bronx in 2004.²⁷
- As far as drug abuse treatment, more than 1,898 adult Bronx residents participated in state-funded treatment in 2004.²⁸
- In 2004, there were nearly 54 adult drug-related deaths in the Bronx.²⁹ Significantly, the Bronx had also the highest number of adult drug-related deaths in the city in 2004.
- Between 1999 and 2003, the highest rates of hospitalization rates for drug use and drug-related deaths in the Bronx were in the 40th, 41st, 42nd, 44th and 48th Police Precincts.³⁰

THE CITY'S RESPONSE TO THE BRONX DRUG PROBLEM

NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

The New York City Police Department (NYPD) provides the essential services of tracking down criminals and bringing those who deal in illegal drugs to justice. One major drug strategy for the Police Department is called "Driving Drug Dealers Out of New York City." This strategy outlines the Department's zero tolerance drug policy and addresses "the nexus between illicit narcotics and other types of crime by bringing uniformed officers back into the war on drugs." The Department deploys specialized narcotics investigation units to drive open-air drug activity off the streets and to close down indoor drug locations. Following this strategy, uniformed officers from precincts hold the retaken areas. The strategy targets mid-level drug dealers more aggressively and goes after their guns, cash, drugs and cars.³¹ In 2004, the NYPD made 96,965 narcotics arrests. As for drug confiscations, in 2004, the NYPD seized 834 pounds of Heroin; 5,236 pounds of Cocaine; and 57,953 pounds of Marijuana.³²

The main police unit that handles drug-related crime, Narcotics Division, works in coordination with other Bureaus, Department Units, and law enforcement agencies to dismantle drug crime organizations that operate within the City. The Division also contains various specialty squads and task forces such as the Drug Enforcement Task Force, which

²⁶New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, as indicated above

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, as indicated above

³¹ <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/chfdept/strategies.html>

³² "The Mayor's Management Report Fiscal 2005 Preliminary: Supplementary Indicator Tables," City of New York, February 2005, Page 69

consists of federal, state, and OCCB investigators working together to target middle and upper level drug traffickers and importers, and the Narcotics Investigation and Tracking of Recidivist Offenders (NITRO), which handles the development and coordination of narcotics intelligence.³³

On top of Narcotics Division, the NYPD has also reduced drug crime in the past two years through an initiative called, “Operation Impact.” This initiative targets serious and violent crimes (including those related to drug dealing organizations) by flooding police officers into “Impact Zones,” or high crime areas. NYPD then tracks crime patterns within the zone, and provides officers with daily intelligence briefings. As each zone improves, the Police Department shifts the zone’s boundaries or creates an entirely new zone in order to respond to the needs of each geographic area.³⁴

Additionally, the NYPD has worked to reduce drug crime through the initiative entitled, “Operation Clean Halls.” In this effort to rid buildings within a precinct of unauthorized people trespassing for the purpose of drug dealing or drug use, landlords request that a beat officer covering their area to conduct vertical patrols within the building and remove persons loitering within the building who do not reside there.³⁵

The NYPD has undertaken a number of comprehensive anti-youth gang initiatives, which also serve to reduce the problem of drug dealing. Central to this effort has been the formation of the “Youth Gang Division,” which aggressively combats street gangs. The Gang Division uses the resources of over 200 members and a “Compstat” style database to identify, record and analyze information relevant to gang activity. The Gang Division also contains uniformed suppression officers and detective investigators who work to reduce street gang violence and dismantle the criminal enterprises involved with gangs. The Gang Division has established a Community Relations Unit, which educates community residents on ways to identify and prevent youth from joining gangs.³⁶

With two special initiatives, the NYPD Deputy Commissioner of Community Affairs’ Youth Services Section aims to reduce youth violence, prevent drug use, promote child safety, and improve relationships between police and young people, with a special emphasis on youth most at risk. Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) is a national drug abuse education and prevention program for kindergarten through sixth grades. Specially trained DARE police officers visit classrooms and teach children about the consequences of using and how to resist tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs. This school year DARE expects to reach over 60,000 young people. Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) is an eight-week classroom program for seventh and eighth grade students with a curriculum aimed at achieving two main goals, to educate young people about the consequences of gang involvement and to reduce gang activity. Specially trained GREAT police officers teach lessons that include facts and fiction about gangs and violence, refusal skills practice, anger

³³ <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/occb/narco2.html>

³⁴ http://www.nyc.gov/portal/index.jsp?epi_menuItemID=c0935b9a57bb4ef3daf2f1c701c789a0&epi_menuID=13ecbf46556241d3daf2f1c701c789a0&epi_baseMenuID=27579af732d48f86a62fa24601c789a0&pageID=mayor_press_release&catID=1194&doc_name=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nyc.gov%2Fhtml%2Fom%2Fhtml%2F2005a%2Fpr021-05.html&cc=unused1978&rc=1194&ndi=1

³⁵ <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/pct/pgm044.html>

³⁶ New York City Council Committee On Youth Services, as indicated above

management tips, and conflict resolution techniques. This school year GREAT expects to reach over 40,000 young people.³⁷

NYPD in the Bronx

The NYPD Narcotics Division and the Youth Gang Division operate throughout the Bronx, targeting areas where drug- dealing and gang activity occurs. The Operation Clean Halls initiative, DARE and GREAT also takes place in throughout the Bronx. Since 2003, the Operation Impact initiative has been targeted at the 40th, 43rd, 44th, 46th, 47th and 52nd Police Precincts, along with the Millbrook, Mitchell, Mott Haven and Patterson housing projects.

Concerns about NYPD

In 2004, as stated before, the Bronx had twice the average rate of adult drug arrests compared to the rest of the City and it was the location of 1/3 of the city's drug arrests.³⁸ NYPD has done a great deal to address the problem of drug dealing in the Bronx. Yet, since this borough is disproportionately more affected by the problem of drug dealing than other boroughs in the City, how could NYPD be more effective in the distressed areas of the Bronx and does NYPD have the resources it needs to tackle the problem. Additionally, what is NYPD doing to encourage landlords to participate in the Operations Clean Halls initiative.

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) supports youth programs that provide NYC youth with opportunities for fun and enrichment on the weekends and after school on weekdays. These programs are essential to keeping NYC youth active outside of school and safe from the negative influences of drug-dealers and gangs.

DYCD funds community based organizations who educate adults and families on early identification of substance abuse issues, provide information on HIV/AIDS, other infectious diseases associated with drug use and the adverse effects of alcohol and drug abuse. Information is offered by community based organizations on Substance Abuse Prevention services, and referrals are provided for short-term counseling and intensive counseling, other activities for children at-risk from families affected by substance abuse and addiction.³⁹

DYCD provides funding to community based organizations to specifically target youth who are at risk of becoming involved with gangs through the Comprehensive Street Outreach (CSO) program. As an example, the Forest Hills Community House operates a CSO program named "Hot Spots." In response to a number of complaints regarding youth in neighborhood streets, the Hot Spot program hired outreach workers to constructively engage youth. The outreach workers encourage street youth to participate in structured

³⁷ <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/dcca/dccayouthprograms.html>

³⁸ New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, as indicated above

³⁹ <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/services-family-support-substance-faq.html>

sports programs, and eventually comprehensive programs where they can participate in activities geared to prepare young people for either employment or college entrance.⁴⁰

DYCD Services in the Bronx

DYCD funds 22 substance abuse prevention programs in the Bronx. Of the 105 substance abuse programs that DYCD funds citywide, approximately 21% are located in the Bronx. DYCD's substance abuse programs are located in 11 of the 12 Police Precincts in the Bronx. Only the 45th precinct does not have a substance abuse programs.⁴¹ In the Police Precincts most impacted by drug dealing and drug abuse- the 40th, 44th and 46th, DYCD has eight substance abuse programs.

DYCD funds 9 gang intervention programs in the Bronx. Of the 40 gang intervention programs that DYCD funds citywide, 22.5% are located in the Bronx. DYCD spends nearly \$816,596 citywide on gang intervention programs and approximately \$151, 632 in the Bronx, or 18.5% of the citywide total. DYCD's gang intervention programs are located in four Police Precincts in the Bronx. In the Police Precincts most impacted by drug dealing and drug abuse- the 40th, 44th and 46th, DYCD has only has one gang intervention program, which located in 40th Police Precinct.⁴²

Concerns about DYCD

The concern about DYCD's efforts to address drug- dealing focuses on location. DYCD has provided substantial funding for numerous youth programs in the Bronx focused on substance abuse and gang intervention. However, it appears that DYCD's gang intervention programs are located in Police Precincts less affected by the problems of drug dealing and drug abuse. Therefore, the question is whether DYCD could replicate their effective gang intervention programs and increase their number in Police Precincts with higher levels of drug- dealing.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) collaborates with other city agencies to provide "specially targeted" treatment and prevention programs for substance abuse.⁴³ DOHMH has a Bureau of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services that is the lead city unit for planning and coordinating both substance abuse services, such as prevention and education efforts.

DOHMH currently has a few key priority initiatives aimed at improving the lives of City residents with drug dependency:

- Promotion of Buprenorphine Treatment for Opioid Dependence: This Buprenorphine initiative is designed to help treat dependence on opioid- based

⁴⁰ New York City Council Committee On Youth Services, as indicated above

⁴¹ Data on substance abuse programs funded by DYCD, Monique Morales-Mason, Community Coordinator, Office of External Relations, New York City Department of Youth & Community Development, April 1, 2005

⁴²New York City Department of Youth & Community Development, as indicated above

⁴³ <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/bureau/basas.html>

drugs, such as Heroin. The City has an estimated 200,000 heroin users. DOHMH is promoting the use of buprenorphine by physicians and heroin users as a viable approach to the treatment of opioid addiction.⁴⁴

- Take Care New York Initiative: This campaign is a comprehensive health initiative focused on health and mental hygiene interventions. The drug-related efforts are as follows- promotion of new treatments for substance abuse; advocacy for substance abuse treatment parity in public and private health insurance coverage; promoting the expansion of syringe exchange programs; and providing educational information to the public about recognizing drug abuse problems and obtaining treatment.⁴⁵
- Prevention of Crystal Methamphetamine Use: This initiative aims to decrease the number of individuals who use crystal methamphetamine by preventing use of the drug and by improving access to treatment for those already using the drug.⁴⁶

DOHMH Services in the Bronx

DOHMH operates 5 syringe exchange programs in the Bronx located in the 40th, 41st, 43rd, 46th, and 48th Police Precincts. Of the 16 syringe exchange programs that DOHMH operates in the City, 31% are located in the Bronx. In the Police Precincts most impacted by drug dealing and drug abuse- the 40th, 44th and 46th, DOHMH has syringe exchange programs in two Precincts.

There are 29 New York State Office Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services certified drug treatment programs in the Bronx. Of these programs, DOHMH has contracts for service delivery with 5 Bronx clinics. DOHMH has contracts with Bronx Lebanon Hospital Center, Hunts Point Multi-Service Center, Our Lady of Mercy Medical Center, South Bronx Mental Health Center, Inc., and Women In Need, Inc. These clinics are located in four Police Precincts, the 40th, 41st, 42nd and 47th. Only two clinics- Hunts Point Multi-Service Center and Women In Need, Inc- are located in a Police Precinct with a high level of drug abuse, which is the 40th.

Concerns about DOHMH

The concern about DOHMH relates to the continued problem of crack cocaine and marijuana in the Bronx. DOHMH has launched serious initiatives to address the use of heroin and crystal methamphetamine in the City. However, an analysis of recently reported major arrests of drug dealing operations⁴⁷, as well as information from the Narcotics Bureau of the Office of the District Attorney, indicate that crack cocaine and marijuana are more pervasive drug problems in the Bronx.⁴⁸ Therefore, the question arises: what is DOHMH doing to address drug abuse with crack cocaine in the Bronx, as it appears to be left out of

⁴⁴ "Local Government Plan: Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services," New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, 2005

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Office of the Bronx Borough President, as indicated above

⁴⁸ Interview with Nestor Ferraro, Narcotics Bureau, Office of the Bronx District Attorney, as indicated above

DOHMH priorities except in a general sense of educating the public about recognizing drug abuse problems and obtaining treatment.

HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION

The Human Resources Administration (HRA) administers a broad range of social welfare programs and services for New York City residents. The main aim of the HRA is to help those who are struggling to get back on their feet. In efforts to reach this goal, HRA provides public assistance, through programs such as Welfare to Work, to the unemployed so that they can be empowered to overcome obstacles to employment.

HRA has some built-in mechanisms to respond to substance abuse problems that interfere with their public assistance recipients' ability to work. HRA screens all public assistance recipients for substance abuse problems. Annually HRA performs 50,000 substance abuse assessments and reassessments.⁴⁹ If public assistance participants are found to have a substance abuse problem, they are placed into a case management system and required to receive treatment and to work as part of the treatment, after a brief stabilization period while being tracked for compliance.⁵⁰ Any one time, there are approximately 13,000 individuals being mandated for drug treatment by HRA for substance abuse problems.⁵¹

HRA Services in the Bronx:

Of the 13,000 individuals citywide being mandated for drug treatment, there are 4,000 individuals in case management for substance abuse problems. HRA provides funding in the Bronx for coordinated clinical case management for substance abuse to University Behavioral Associates, who are located at Montefiore Medical Center. This program is one of three programs citywide. Out of the 4,000 cases for substance abuse problems citywide, there are approximately 1,000 outpatient cases of Bronx residents. Stated differently, 25% of all outpatient cases for substance abuse problems in City are Bronx residents.⁵² The majority of Bronx residents in this case management program are participants in the public assistance program entitled, "Safety Net Assistance," which is focused on single adults.⁵³

Concerns about HRA

In the effort to help unemployed people find work, HRA has established a very effective system in the City for screening public assistance recipients for substance abuse and for placing those testing positive in case management programs. Still, Bronx residents are in HRA substance case management in greater portion than their percentage of the overall City general population. As a result, the question raised is whether HRA needs to provide greater resources to addressing the problem of drug abuse for public assistance recipients in the Bronx.

⁴⁹ Interview with Joan Randell, Associate Commissioner, Customized Assistance Services, Human Resources Administration, April 2005

⁵⁰ <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/bureau/basas1.html#new>

⁵¹ Human Resources Administration, as indicated above

⁵² Interview with Tim Mulligan, Legislative Affairs, Human Resources Administration, March 31, 2005

⁵³ Interview with Joan Randell, Human Resources Administration, as indicated above

CONCLUSION

Poverty and drug abuse often take place hand-in-hand in neighborhoods. Throughout the City, drug dealing and drug abuse are persistent problems. In the Bronx, these are problems that exist in some pockets.

As long as drugs are available, some people will be tempted to use them. The only way to win the war is to cut them off at the source by targeting drug dealers. In addition, cracking down on drug offenses will help cut crime in general. Drug dealers and users are likely to commit other crimes, either to support their habit or protect their business.

In short, besides the human and social cost of drug use, there is a monetary cost relating to both the health and responsibility problems. Additionally, drug users may be victims, but they don't only hurt themselves. The use of illegal drugs is linked to a host of quality-of-life problems that can affect a community.

More needs to be done in the Bronx than just arresting drug dealers and drug users. It must not be overlooked that behind the numbers provided in this report are real Bronx residents impacted by drug use. Successful redevelopment of the entire Bronx can work if drug addicts can rebuild their lives through drug rehabilitation programs and job opportunities.

To improve the problems of drug dealing and drug abuse in impacted Bronx neighborhoods, the Borough President recommends that these concerns be considered by city agencies.

- NYPD has done a great deal to address the problem of drug dealing in the Bronx. Yet, since this borough is disproportionately more affected by the problem of drug dealing than other boroughs in the City, how could NYPD be more effective in the distressed areas of the Bronx and does NYPD have the resources it needs to tackle the problem. Additionally, what is NYPD doing to encourage landlords to participate in the Operations Clean Halls initiative.
- DYCD has provided substantial funding for numerous youth programs in the Bronx focused on substance abuse and gang intervention. However, it appears that DYCD's gang intervention programs are located in Police Precincts less affected by the problems of drug dealing and drug abuse. Therefore, the question is whether DYCD could replicate their effective gang intervention programs and increase their number in Police Precincts with higher levels of drug- dealing.
- DOHMH has launched serious initiatives to address the use of heroin and crystal methamphetamine in the City. Nevertheless, recent news articles about major drug arrests in the Bronx and information from the Office of the Bronx District Attorney indicate that the most commonly used drugs are crack cocaine and marijuana. Consequently, it raises the question of what is DOHMH doing to address drug abuse with crack cocaine and marijuana in the Bronx, as these drugs appear to be left out of DOHMH priorities.

- In the effort to help unemployed people find work, HRA has established a very effective system in the City for screening public assistance recipients for substance abuse and for placing those testing positive in case management programs. Still, Bronx residents are in HRA substance case management in greater portion than their percentage of the overall City general population. As a result, the question raised is whether HRA needs to provide greater resources to addressing the problem of drug abuse for public assistance recipients in the Bronx.