

Trumbull County clinic expands to treat heroin epidemic

Posted: Dec 06, 2015 12:14 PM EST

Updated: Dec 06, 2015 1:31 PM EST

By Lindsay McCoy, Reporter CONNECT



WARREN, Ohio - Less than a year after opening its doors, Trumbull County's first stand alone center for fighting the heroin epidemic is growing.

As many addicts come to learn, becoming clean often doesn't end with a stint in detox, that's why First Step Recovery in Warren is finding new ways to help patients find their path to a sober life.

"There's been tremendous growth here at First Step in a very short period of time, I think that, that's a response to the needs of the community," said Cindy Woodford, CEO of First Step Recovery.

At least 1,000 patients enrolled in detox programs at [First Step Recovery](#) since its grand opening in May. Instead of returning to the pressures of their past lives, the center now offers a way to stay focused and clean.

New dorms opened in the fall, which can hold up to 16 men and 16 women at a time.

With a limited number of detox beds in the county and across the state, Nick Schroeder, a recovering heroin addict, had to search for somewhere to find help. He traveled from Ashtabula to find the treatment he was desperately looking for.

"I wasn't that ideal member of society," Schroeder said.

He began abusing alcohol and marijuana around age 11. Schroeder then turned to prescription pills. It wasn't long before he tried heroin and was hooked.

"That's when I fell in love, because it controls those feelings," he said. "It becomes your coping mechanism," he said.

He says drugs helped him deal with tough times. Schroeder came from a broken home, he moved often throughout his childhood and he admits he didn't have many positives influences in his life.

While kicking his heroin addiction wasn't easy, Schroeder says that now he's on the other side of treatment, he's not looking back.

"It sounds crazy to a lot of people, I'm almost grateful that it happened to me, because it opened up so many doors, it opened up this opportunity to absolutely better myself."

Schroeder's been clean for six months.

First Step Recovery is also helping former addicts like him with intensive outpatient programming, which is offered down the street at the old Enta Building off of Youngstown Road SE.