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LACK OF SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES AND WORKFORCE NOW COSTING NH'S ECONOMY OVER \$2 BILLION PER YEAR

CONCORD, NH – \$2.36 Billion dollars. That is the economic cost of substance misuse in New Hampshire according to a new report released today by the non-profit advocacy organization New Futures and PolEcon Research.

The long awaited report, which details the economic impact of alcohol and other drug misuse in New Hampshire in 2014, concludes that the overall annual cost of substance misuse exceeds \$2.35 billion, not including \$604 million in costs related to premature deaths as a result of substance use disorder. The report also reveals the tremendous impact the New Hampshire Health Protection Program has had on curbing the overall economic cost of substance misuse.

"The costs to the New Hampshire economy of drug and alcohol misuse have risen to over \$2.3 billion annually, with two-thirds of that resulting from substance misuse reducing the number of people in the New Hampshire workforce as well as the productivity of workers in the labor force." said Brian Gottlob, Economist at PolEcon and lead researcher of the report. "Continued growth in the New Hampshire economy depends on our ability to expand the size and productivity of our workforce and right now substance misuse is costing the state's labor force over 12,000 individuals and limiting the productive capacity of tens-of-thousands more."

New Futures and PolEcon Research released the report alongside advocates, business and community leaders who have been directly impacted by substance misuse.

"While our updated economic report shows the cost of substance misuse on our state has significantly increased over the past two years, it is important to remember that this total number is as of 2014, prior to the height of the epidemic, and does not include the \$604.6 million in costs related to premature deaths - deaths that could have been preventable. There is no price we can place on the lives lost and the countless number of Granite Staters impacted by this epidemic thus far." Linda Saunders Paquette, President and CEO of New Futures.

The full report as well as graphics can be found at www.new-futures.org/2017NFEconomicReport.

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New Futures is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that advocates, educates and collaborates to improve the health and wellness of all New Hampshire residents. New Futures Kids Count is a branch of New Futures focused on collecting and disseminating critical and reliable state-level data, policy recommendations, and tools for legislators, public officials, and advocates to advance positive policies for Granite State children and families. Learn more at www.New-Futures.org.