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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Natick Remembers Our Community Members Impacted by Addiction This Holiday Season**

In any year, the holiday season can be a difficult time for individuals and families who have been impacted by substance use disorder. But unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated what is already a challenging time, because of the many factors related to stress, isolation, economic and other concerns. Families who would normally gather for the holidays are cautioned not to do so because of state-mandated gathering limits. In addition, loved ones may also be separated from each other due to stays in treatment settings, strained relationships, or in the most tragic of circumstances, because a loved one has lost their life due to a substance disorder. Many individuals are reaching a tipping point in this currently overwhelming and unprecedented time. In an effort to support people and families who have been touched by addiction, Natick community members are invited to participate in a local initiative that assists people in early recovery and remember those who lost their lives due to substance use disorder.

On Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 – 8:00 PM, Natick will host its seventh Annual (Virtual) Interfaith Vigil in memory of all lost and all who still struggle with substance use disorder. This event is sponsored by the Natick Interfaith Clergy Association, Natick 180, SPARK Kindness, SOAR (Supporting Outreach and Addiction Recovery) Natick, the Natick Fire Department, the Natick Health Department, the Natick Police Department, and the Natick Public Schools, with special thanks to The Journey Bereavement Support Group. The vigil will include a virtual candle-lighting ceremony, interfaith prayer, music, inspirational testimony and comments by community leaders. All are welcome.

The registration link for the Vigil can be found on the Natick 180 website at <https://natick180.org/take-action/watch-read/the-180-blog/>

Immediately following the vigil, participants will have the option to attend either a virtual overdose prevention session to be trained in naloxone (“Narcan”) administration in order to save a life from opioid overdose, or check-in with The Journey Bereavement Support Group. For those who wish to obtain the intranasal overdose reversal agent Narcan, kits are available for free to the public through the Natick Health Department and JRI (Justice Resource Institute) Health.

For more information, please contact Katie Sugarman at 508-647-6623 or [csugarman@natickma.org](mailto:csugarman@natickma.org)