

Iowa Department of Public Health
Division of Behavioral Health/Bureau of Substance Abuse
Opioid Update: February 2022

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) offers the Opioid Update to share information about opioid use and Iowa's efforts to address the national opioid epidemic. Please feel free to submit topics to RaChel Greenwood at rachel.greenwood@idph.iowa.gov.

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Department News

Naloxone for Iowa Organizations and Businesses

To help address the issue of opioid misuse, the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) is launching a new initiative. Funded through the State Opioid Response (SOR 2) grant, IDPH is offering eligible organizations and businesses free naloxone nasal spray kits (naloxone is the opioid overdose reversal medication). The purpose of this initiative is to equip organizations and businesses in the event that they encounter someone experiencing a suspected opioid overdose. While the hope is, there would never be a need for the use of naloxone, having this medication available as part of a first-aid response could save someone's life.

Eligible organizations and businesses may include retail/convenience stores; libraries; restaurants; bars; community or social services; event venues and mobile service providers. In the event that an organization or business type not listed believes they have a need for naloxone kits, an [exception request](#) can be submitted to the [SOR Helpdesk](#) for consideration.

For more information, please contact RaChel Greenwood at rachel.greenwood@idph.iowa.gov.

State Opioid Response 2 Grant First Year Accomplishments

Federal grants make a positive impact on Iowans served by substance use disorder prevention and treatment agencies. During the current opioid crisis, Iowa has received several federal grants focusing on increasing prevention, treatment, and recovery support services for people impacted by opioids or stimulants.

The Bureau of Substance Abuse at the Iowa Department of Public Health has compiled this infographic on the main accomplishments during year one of the State Opioid Response (SOR2) grant's activities.

To view this document, please click on this link: [IDPH](#)

Opioid News

Trends in and Characteristics of Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Illicitly Manufactured Fentanyl — United States, 2019–2020

This recently published CDC report highlights the sharp increase in deaths involving Illicitly Manufactured Fentanyl (IMFs) in Midwestern, southern, and western jurisdictions during 2019–2020 as well as the substantial stimulant co-involvement.

The authors state that the findings demonstrate the urgent need to reverse the rapid increases in drug overdose deaths involving IMFs and other drugs by:

- Enhancing access to substance use disorder treatment
- Expanding harm reduction approaches that address the risk factors associated with IMFs by:
 - Improving and expanding distribution of naloxone to persons who use drugs and their friends and family
 - Distributing fentanyl test strips to test drug products for fentanyl,
 - Increasing overdose education and access to comprehensive syringe services programs.

To read this report, please click on this link: [CDCIMF](#)

Acceleration of Opioid-Related EMS Runs in the Spring of 2020: The National Emergency Medical Services Information System Data for 2018-2020

Researchers reviewed opioid-related EMS runs from 2018-2020 across the U.S. to compare opioid-related runs before and after COVID. The study found similar trends of gradually increased opioid-related EMS runs from spring until a peak in August. This similarity has been noted in other studies and the authors suggest that this trend should be expected during the spring-summer period. In 2020 however, this annual EMS runs pattern changed with a sharp increase in opioid-related EMS runs after the stay-at-home (SaH) orders were implemented in March.

The authors of this study conclude that unlike mortality data, which is always delayed, NEMSIS paired with temporal trend analysis is a potentially timely tool for the early detection of opioid overdose trends.

To read this article, please click on this link: [NEMSIS](#)

Reduced Emergency Department Visits and Hospitalization with the Use of an Unsanctioned Safe Consumption Site for Injection Drug Use in the United States

This recently published, peer-reviewed journal article describes the outcomes of an evaluation of the effects of an unsanctioned Supervised Consumption Site (SCS) on medical outcomes. The study took place from 2018-2020, with 494 people who inject drugs enrolled. Participants were interviewed at the time of entering the study (baseline), 6 months into the study, and 12 months into the study.

The study authors found that “the likelihood of visiting the ED, frequency of ED visits, likelihood of hospitalization and number of hospitalized nights were significantly lower among people who were using the SCS than people who were not.”

The study concludes that SCS's could be a helpful component in reducing the burden on the medical system of increased service utilization due to rising levels of medical harms related to injection drug use.

To view the funding announcement, please click on this link: [JOFIM](#)

Resources

DEA Administrator Anne Milgram encourages people to spread the word that One Pill Can Kill as DEA launches new online resources

The DEA has launched the "One Pill Can Kill" Campaign, which was created to raise awareness about the dangers of counterfeit prescription drugs containing fentanyl due to the sharp increases the DEA found in fake prescription pills containing fentanyl and meth.

The partner toolbox contains materials, resources and information designed to increase awareness of the potentially deadly drugs.

To access this toolkit, please click on this link: [OPCK](#)

Center of Excellence for Integrated Health Solutions provides new toolkit on oral health, mental health, and substance abuse treatment coordination and integration

This new toolkit developed by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing and Bowling Business Strategies in partnership with national experts provides a comprehensive set of resources designed to increase coordination and integration across oral, mental health, and substance use treatment services.

This toolkit offers practical suggestions, resources, strategies and on-the-ground examples for implementation of new care models across a continuum as well as innovative examples from others that have re-engineered traditional care pathways.

To access this toolkit, please click on this link: [OMHSUC](#)