



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES  
OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL POLICY

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**COMMUNITY OVERDOSE RESPONSE DEMONSTRATION PILOT PROJECT  
2021 SUMMARY REPORT**

Pursuant to W. Va. Code §16-5T-6(i), the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) Office of Drug Control Policy (ODCP) hereby submits the 2021 Summary Report for the Community Overdose Response Demonstration Pilot Project. Two Community Overdose Response Demonstration Pilot Projects (referred to herein as “Pilot Projects”) were established in West Virginia, one in Wyoming County and one in Berkeley and Jefferson counties. Under W. Va. Code §16-5T-6(k), the Pilot Projects will expire on July 1, 2022.

**ODCP Summary Recommendations**

The Pilot Projects have transformed the addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery landscape in their respective counties. As the Pilot Projects progressed, ODCP and DHHR co-opted many of their successful strategies in other communities by building local coalitions, identifying gaps in treatment access, and strengthening recovery supports. Many of the initiatives of the Pilot Project counties have served as templates to develop addiction care in other counties. As each Pilot Project wraps up in July 2022, ODCP will receive a final report with specific outcomes and best practices. Despite the challenges across West Virginia, with both COVID-19 and the increase in the prevalence of fentanyl, ODCP continues to see success in building opportunities for every West Virginian to receive the effective evidence-based treatment that they deserve.

**Pilot County History**

The first Pilot Project, announced in February 2018, is based in Wyoming County and is a partnership between the ODCP and Marshall University. In February 2019, Governor Jim Justice announced a partnership between ODCP and West Virginia University on a pilot project in Berkeley and Jefferson counties. Both Pilot Projects are focused on work with community partners to strengthen and expand prevention and recovery resources and implement activities across the continuum of prevention, early intervention, treatment, overdose reversal, family support, and recovery.

Successful approaches and lessons learned will be shared with other counties and communities in West Virginia to promote understanding of specific models and innovative activities effective in preventing and reversing overdose; reducing stigma; and providing comprehensive services across the continuum of care for individuals impacted by substance use disorder (SUD).

## **Berkeley and Jefferson County Overdose Response Demonstration Pilot Project – West Virginia University 2021 Project Summary**

This Pilot Project builds upon community assets and develops a coordinated community action response to prevent and combat the impact of SUD and opioid use disorder (OUD) for families in Berkeley and Jefferson counties. Evidence-based practices across the continuum from prevention to recovery have been implemented in each county, expanding upon existing strategies and programs while launching new initiatives in the following areas:

- Rural outreach to bring services and education directly to communities: Community Outreach for Resources and Education (CORE)
- Supporting families with SUD
- Naloxone education and distribution
- Stigma reduction

### **Project Goal and Objectives**

***Goal: Develop and implement innovative, evidence-based initiatives in a community response to prevent overdose in Berkeley and Jefferson counties.***

#### **Objective 1: Establish and launch rural outreach teams to bring services and education directly to communities - Community Outreach for Resources and Education (CORE)**

Community Outreach Teams seek to improve access to life-saving information, resources, and services for persons with SUD, OUD, and their families. These teams will engage community members and organizations, receive referrals, and respond to deliver the following services free of charge: prevention and harm reduction services, therapy support, recovery support, case management, education, and connection to resources to individuals with SUD and OUD and their families in need throughout the community.

In 2021, the CORE team had over 1,000 direct connections to resources for individuals with SUD, with 101 individuals connected to prevention, treatment, and recovery resources, and 91 individuals connected to housing. CORE teams meet people where they are physically and along the continuum of care providing evidenced-based support. In addition to providing direct behavioral health, case management, peer recovery support, and public health services in community settings, the CORE team also held seven community wide events. Mobile medical visits via telehealth were established and the mobile Harm Reduction Program grew each week.

#### **Objective 2: Provide wraparound care and support for women and families via Critical Interventions to Recover through Community Linkages and Empowerment (CIRCLE)**

CIRCLE is a recovery-oriented system of care that provides clinical and nonclinical services to individuals and families affected by SUD. CIRCLE establishes wraparound services to provide a continuum of care in a clinic in Jefferson County.

In 2021, the CIRCLE program had 187 family members impacted by SUD referred to the program via linkages between local health systems, social services, agencies, community ministries, schools, and the criminal justice system. A total of 85 family members received a tailored treatment plan with CIRCLE's Multidisciplinary Treatment Team (MDTT). There are 44 family members currently active in a treatment

plan. The ability to utilize the CORE mobile unit to reach and support family members in the CIRCLE program has led to increased treatment plan retention and overall client outcomes.

**Objective 3: Expand naloxone education and distribution throughout each county**

Over the past five years, Berkeley and Jefferson counties have expanded community naloxone distribution. While these efforts have led to many lives being saved, there is still a tremendous need to provide naloxone education and distribution to those at risk or who know someone at risk for overdose.

In 2021, over 1,100 kits of naloxone have been distributed through Berkeley and Jefferson counties. Individuals with SUD who have built relationships and rapport with project personnel revealed many areas where overdose events are common yet not reflected in data. Coupled with first responder data, the stories of have can guided a wider reaching and more impactful distribution strategy.

**Objective 4: Coordinate a targeted stigma reduction campaign in systems and communities in both counties**

The primary target for stigma reduction is individuals/systems that interact with those impacted by SUD or OUD, with the focus on the healthcare system, first responders, child and adolescent services, and other agencies who provide services to people and families impacted by SUD. Campaigns are focused on unifying factors, positive examples and community success stories.

Throughout 2020 and 2021, 30 evidenced-based trainings on Adverse Childhood Experiences Trauma-Informed Care, burnout, compassion fatigue, and stigma reduction were held in both Berkeley and Jefferson counties. A total of 515 professionals attended across healthcare, school systems, and social work sectors and multiple trainings have been requested by other target populations.

**Wyoming County Overdose Response Demonstration Pilot Project –  
Marshall University November 2021 Project Summary**

**Project Components**

A summary of progress for each component of the continuum of care that is being developed in Wyoming County is provided below.

**Prevention**

The prevention programs in Wyoming County are having an enormous impact. The Future Leaders Program (FLP) is serving more than 80 students each semester and was successful in continuing the program during the spring 2021 semester using a virtual format. Students enrolled in FLP participate in community service that teaches leadership, teamwork, communication and speaking skills, project planning, problem solving organizational skills, and time management. FLP participants completed almost 200 hours of community service.

The Prevention Task Force evolved from the Wyoming County Prevention Coalition and works with the Power House Youth Center, which served over 150 students during the summer of 2021 with food and prevention activities. The Task Force supported the Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) Chapters in seven schools in the Wyoming County in 2021 with monthly prevention messaging on topics

such as suicide, substance use, and bullying. SADD Chapters have provided over 2,500 students and families with prevention messages and activities.

### **Early Intervention**

During 2021, the Wyoming County Health Department discontinued their harm reduction program due to COVID-19 and new licensure requirements for harm reduction programs. To compensate for this closure, the Wyoming County leads for treatment, recovery, and recovery supports increased education and distribution of naloxone. The Wyoming County Health Department will re-evaluate community-based outreach with or without a syringe service program in early 2022. At a minimum, they will continue to collaborate with community partners to provide naloxone and comprehensive services to individuals with SUD.

### **Treatment and Recovery**

Wyoming County currently provides Suboxone and Vivitrol services. Southern Highlands is working on evaluating their current SUD program in Wyoming County, bringing in an additional office-based medication-assisted treatment (OBMAT) provider, and trying to make improvements to how they serve the community. They are working to streamline the process and shorten the timeframe between an initial appointment with the provider and medication-assisted treatment (MAT) induction. Southern Highlands hired a Director of OBMAT Services to work with SUD services in McDowell, Mercer, and Wyoming counties to strengthen the fidelity of their processes between all OBMAT programs.

Southern Highlands is also expanding the continuum of care in Wyoming County by establishing a community-based, family-oriented treatment facility in Pineville. The center is referred to as the Rock View facility. The blueprints for Rock View have been completed to adjoin the space with the behavioral health clinic and add an external access point. The goal is to make this space available to the community after hours to provide SUD support groups. This space will allow for a wide range of services including:

- Parent-Child Interactive Therapy
- Children's Intensive Outpatient Treatment
- Hub for Telehealth
- Hub for Children's Wraparound Services
- Transportation to Services
- Peer Recovery Support Specialists (PRSS)

A quick response team (QRT) is active in Wyoming County and operated through Southern Highlands. They continue to partner with law enforcement to provide intervention for substance use when an overdose report is received. In Wyoming County, the QRT is composed of a social worker, PRSS, law enforcement officer, and emergency medical technician (when available). This team is used to promote a community approach to intervention, referral, and linkage to treatment. The team also trains people at risk for future overdose, and the community in general, on the use of naloxone.

### **Recovery Support**

One Voice, operational since July 2020, engages communities in workforce, training, and education to create a recovery community, recognizing the critical link between a healthy recovery community environment and sustained economic growth. One Voice is committed to leading the recovery

community in protecting and enhancing the community environment stigma free. The organization provides regular communications to and training for employees to heighten awareness of and pride in recovery community environmental issues by operating as a community hub to provide services and workforce to bridge the gap between formulation and implementation.