

Q CASE STUDY

Delaware Community Response Teams and Action Plan

THE CLIENT

State of Delaware (DE), Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health (DPH) with funding from a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Cooperative agreement grant

THE PROJECT

Delaware Community Response Team (CRT) Development and Action Plan

THE CHALLENGE

To develop Community Response Teams in high burden areas across seven communities, in three counties, to address opioid overdose activity and substance use disorder (SUD).

THE APPROACH

HMA helped Delaware develop the Community Response Team action plan and the CRTs themselves to prepare for, and respond to, sentinel overdose events in targeted counties selected by using overdose activity data from first responders.

The first step for HMA colleagues was to approach the communities and recruit key stakeholders from hospital emergency departments, community treatment providers, first responders, behavioral health providers, faith-based organizations, community advocates, social service providers and peer recovery specialists of those impacted by opioid use disorder (OUD).

Once assembled, the teams met in each county to establish structure and develop an action plan for response to a sentinel opioid event in the community. With two co-chairs on each team, they focused on developing tools and templates, housed on a SharePoint site, to use during an opioid emergency. These items were designed to ensure all teams and partners use the same materials and messages in the response. The CRTs will take collective action in specific areas including naloxone distribution, focusing on not only deployment of the drug during seminal events, but also education in advance of an event to ensure the public is aware of its availability and ensure rapid distribution.

HMA staff plan to train all CRT members as “train the trainers” so that they may train and provide naloxone to individuals most at risk for overdose. HMA provides hands-on training, capacity building, overdose prevention and stigma-reducing measures to the CRT stakeholders.

THE RESULTS

The official CRT launch is January 2020 with teams continuing to practice procedures for response and fine-tune plans and templates. The HMA team, along with DPH leadership, identified a tiered approach to building the teams and found changing the vernacular from calling everyone a “volunteer” to using titles such as “member” and “partner” gave those involved on the CRTs more buy-in and increased participation and support.

While no community wants to deal with an opioid overdose crisis, these communities in Delaware are now much better prepared to respond to an overdose event and save lives in their state.

For more information about HMA's Opioid Crisis Response, contact:



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