

Prescription drug/opioid prevention

Overview

To address the opioid crisis in Washington State, The Health Care Authority's Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (HCA/DBHR) and partnering agencies support opioid and prescription medication prevention strategies that align with the Washington State Opioid and Overdose Response Plan.

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/assets/program/WashingtonStateOpioidandOverdoseResponsePlan-final-2021.pdf>

Prescription drug/opioid misuse is a critical health issue. Young adults ages 18-25 are the largest group misusing opioid pain relievers and other medications. Opioid misuse can lead to opioid use disorder and an increased risk of death from overdose. Most young people who misuse prescription drugs are taking medications prescribed to others, often friends, and family members. Up to sixty percent of prescribed medications are unused by patients, and much of this unused medication remains in private homes. Often, they are not stored securely, providing easy access to young people and others seeking medications.

Starting in 2014, DBHR had a mini-grant program to provide funding to qualifying Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative (CPWI) coalitions, enabling grantees to purchase, install, and maintain permanent secure medication drop boxes. This program has now grown to be imbedded in other federal grants to expand these services. With the award of the State Targeted Response (STR) to the Opioid Crisis grant in 2017, five new CPWI sites and four community-based organizations (CBOs) were funded to expand statewide opioid prevention efforts, including implementing evidence-based direct service programs aimed at reducing opioid misuse, and participation in local, state, and national drug take-back events. Grantees partnered with law enforcement, coalitions, and community-based organizations to collect 5,573 pounds of medication on October 26, 2019, National Drug Take-Back Day.

In 2018, DBHR expanded to an additional 18 CPWI sites with funding from both the State Opioid Response (SOR) and the Partnerships for Success 2018 grants. With SOR, Washington funded nine community-based organizations to implement prevention services in high-need communities around the state. In 2020, DBHR was awarded the SOR II grant to continue this work with 23 CPWI sites and 10 CBO grantees and was also able to expand to an additional 19 CPWI sites in identified high need communities, bringing the total number of opioid prevention coalitions to 42 across the state.

DBHR staff are key members and leads of the Opioid Prevention Workgroup implementing the following goals and strategies of the Washington State Opioid Response Plan:

- Engaging our community to implement strategies to prevent opioid misuse, especially among youth
- Training and supporting health care providers to use best practices when prescribing opioids
- Increasing the use of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program among health care providers to coordinate care
- Educating the public about the risks of opioid use, including overdose, through public education campaigns, such as the Starts with One campaign: www.getthefactsrx.com and www.watribalopioidsolutions.com
- Promoting safe home storage and implementing a statewide drug-take back system
- Collaborating with law enforcement and stakeholders to decrease supply of illegal opioids



Eligibility requirements

CPWI coalitions, community-based organizations, and state agency partners with a demonstrated need and key leaders' readiness and support to implement a project.

Authority

DBHR is authorized as the single state agency to receive and administer STR and SOR grants that focus on comprehensive opioid prevention strategies.

Budget

The STR Grant provided \$2,355,768 per year from 2017-2019 for primary and secondary prevention. The SOR grant provided more than \$6.3 million per year for two years for prevention activities for Washington State from 2018-2020. The SOR II grant provides over \$5 million per year for two years from 2020-2022. All other prevention education and awareness efforts are unfunded and implemented with existing staff and resources.

People served

In Years One and Two of the SOR Grant, the CPWI initiative served 4,894 individual participants were served through evidence-based programs, coalition activities, and trainings in communities in Washington that have the highest risk for opioid use disorder. Local coalitions served another 59,198 duplicated participants through environmental (policy) and information dissemination strategies and reached 94,861,162 individuals through public education campaigns. We served another 1,351 program participants through evidence-based programs with our community-based organization (CBO) grants.

In Year One of the SOR II Grant, 1,936 unduplicated participants were served through evidence-based programs, coalition activities, and trainings through CPWI, with another 185,434 served through environmental and information dissemination strategies. We served 35,414 students through school-based prevention and intervention services. We served another 923 program participants through evidence-based programs with our community-based organization (CBO) grants. Over 23

million people were reached through our Starts With One campaign. Through the TelePain program 1,392 primary care providers attended case consultations.

Partners

This coordinated opioid prevention work continues through ongoing partnerships with the Washington State Department of Health, Labor and Industries, University of Washington, Washington State University, Washington State Poison Center, several other state agencies, and local community-based organizations and providers supporting the goals of the Washington State Opioid Response Plan.

Oversight

Internal: Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery
External: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/ Center for Substance Abuse Prevention

For more information

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