Progress Report: Overdose Response Team
(November 2023–January 2024)

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) established the Overdose Response Team (ORT) in November 2023. ORT was an agency-wide 90-day rapid response to the overdose crisis in Oregon. The goal of ORT was to build on relationships between OHA and community partners to:

- Further support harm reduction services
- Spread awareness to the public, and
- Share community insights to better inform the next steps in the long-term response to reduce:
  - Overdose deaths
  - Non-fatal overdoses, and
  - Harm to people in Oregon from substances.

Trends and outcomes summary

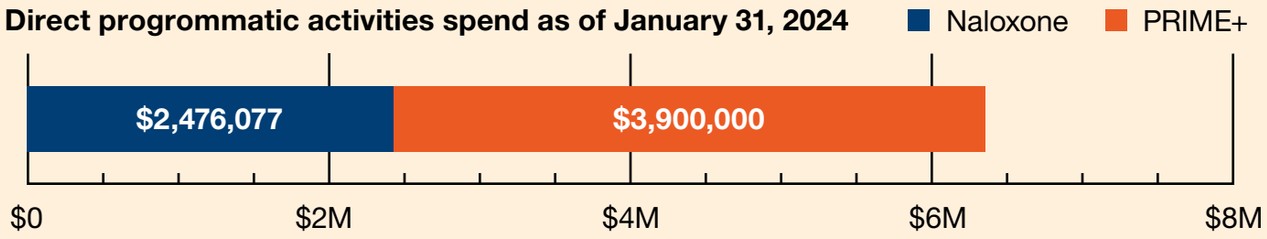
Overall trends across the state relating to the project and the desired outcomes.

Between June 2019 and June 2023, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data showed Oregon with an increase in overdose rates. The highest overdose death rates were for methamphetamine and fentanyl. The increased market supply of fentanyl throughout this period further compounded and complicated the crisis. CDC data also showed that overdose rates disproportionately impact males. The highest death rates were reported in Black, American Indian and Alaska Native populations.* OHA recognizes the disproportionate effects of substances on these communities. OHA knows the need for a thoughtful, culturally responsive approach.

ORT was established as a 90-day rapid response to these trends. The intent was to reduce the number of unintentional or undetermined overdose deaths. ORT had four goals that bring together OHA's collective resources. These goals addressed the crisis through existing agency funding and collaboration and included:

1. Hosting community listening sessions with system partners to inform the long-term response plan.
2. Increasing Naloxone distribution via clearinghouse operations during the 90 days.
3. Producing information about substance-use disorder (SUD) education and awareness.
4. Increasing peer support services in the Peer Recovery Initiated in Medical Establishments + HCV/HIV Testing and Linkage to Treatment (PRIME+) Program to support increased connection to same-day medication-assisted treatment (MAT).

Spending and use



1. Benefits of the funding allocated for the 90 days were anticipated to go beyond the 90 days.
2. The funding reflected is for only direct programmatic activities (materials, contracts, etc.) for the 90 days. It does not include funding for base capacity and infrastructure for staff support.
3. OHA has provided funding to the Nine Federally Recognized Tribes of Oregon. The outcomes achieved with this funding will be shared in a separate report.

* See the CDC Overdose Prevention Dashboard for more data.

Goals, outputs, and impacts

How funding addresses overall outcomes and trends

Goal	Outputs	Effects
Goal 1: Community listening sessions	Produced Overdose Response Recommendations Report based on **five cross-regional listening sessions** with engagement from **more than 75 partners**.	These sessions enabled OHA to determine themes and gather the most **helpful response approaches for the longer-term plan** in the needs identified by partners. For example, policy changes, budgetary needs.
Goal 2: Naloxone distribution	The clearinghouse distributed **63,109** units of Naloxone, **305,100** syringes, and **$72,253** of hygiene and wound care supplies.* Supplies were distributed to **307 harm reduction agencies**, and **590 schools, colleges, universities and school-based health centers (SBHCs).**	Efforts with Save Lives Oregon during the response: • Reduced overdoses • Saved lives, and • Supported safer communities These showed the significant effect of harm-reduction services.
Goal 3: Communications for substance use disorder (SUD) education and awareness	Posted **24 social media posts (English and Spanish)**, **six newsletter stories**, and **12 media releases**. The fentanyl-related posts were boosted (services were paid to amplify for more views) on social media. These posts **reached 228,892** people. Published **two Measure 110 success stories in the media**. There are **seven** more in **development as of January 2024**.	OHA's communications efforts around education strive to: • Bring awareness to the harms of substances • Share available support resources, and • Offer life-saving approaches for overdose.
Goal 4: PRIME+ Peers	Allocated **$3,900,000** to hire and recruit **eight additional PRIME+ peers**.	OHA increased program capacity with additional peer support services (hiring and training to serve persons in need). Peers work directly in communities they are from and support people in all stages of recovery.

***** Access the Clearinghouse data dashboard for additional details on outputs.

Considerations

Discussion of project considerations for the future.

The 90-day rapid response has concluded, and ORT will begin to carry out the long- term strategy. OHA plans to expand peer support services and primary prevention methods and continue community listening sessions based on the Overdose Response Recommendations report.

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