

Addressing Opioid and Stimulant Misuse and Disorders: The Impact of State Targeted Response and State Opioid Response Grants

Background on State Targeted Response and State Opioid Response Grants

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) administers the State Targeted Response to the Opioid Crisis (STR) and State Opioid Response (SOR) grant programs. The STR program was designed to address the opioid crisis by increasing access to treatment, reducing unmet treatment need, and reducing opioid overdose–related deaths through the provision of prevention, treatment, and recovery support activities for opioid use disorder (OUD). Following STR, the SOR program similarly aims to address the opioid crisis by increasing access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) using the three Food and Drug Administration (FDA)–approved medications for treatment of OUD and through the provision of prevention, treatment, and recovery activities for OUD. In addition, the SOR program supports evidence-based prevention, treatment, and recovery support services to address stimulant misuse and use disorders, including for cocaine and methamphetamine.

In FY 2017 and FY 2018, grantees received a total of \$1 billion through STR. From FY 2018 through FY 2020, states, territories, and jurisdictions received a total of \$4 billion in SOR grants.

Single State Agency (SSA): Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDAS)

In FY 2017 and FY 2018, the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) received a total of \$6 million in STR funding. From FY 2018 through FY 2020, the state received a total of \$18.3 million in SOR funding.

Overview of Kansas’s efforts to address opioid and stimulant misuse and disorders

KDADS is responsible by statute and holds the authority and responsibility for coordinating mental health care and substance use services across the state. The Behavioral Health Services Commission partners with care providers, communities, and community mental health centers to help Kansans with mental health, addictions, and prevention services. There are approximately 40 Kansas providers currently treating an estimated 3,000 clients with opioid/stimulant use through the STR/SOR grants. Clients in treatment have greater access to evidence-based treatments, practices, and interventions regardless of their ability to pay. Those diagnosed with an OUD receive MAT using the three FDA-approved medications: methadone, buprenorphine products, and naltrexone. In emergencies the medication naloxone, a proven lifesaving medication, may be administered as needed to overdosed patients by first responders and/or others as available.

In addition to MAT, clients receive the full spectrum of prevention, treatment, and recovery services. Clients with co-occurring physical or mental illness are treated as well with psychosocial services based on individual needs including outpatient, primary care, inpatient, and community-based recovery housing. The State has implemented awareness and prevention efforts targeting the four Native American communities in Kansas: Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, Kickapoo Tribe, Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, and Sac and Fox Nation. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth has been used extensively in assuring ongoing clients' access to their programs of treatment, particularly in the rural and frontier areas of the state. Additional activities addressing opioid/stimulant use disorders include two media awareness campaigns, one focusing on college-age young adults at two state universities and the other aimed at the general population. Community prevention groups have access to materials and programs to educate their youth and adults about the dangerous use of opioids and stimulants. The Learn Lock Lead campaign provides seniors and others with information about safely storing and disposing of medications.

Innovative service delivery models

- Expansion of MAT
- Collaboration with Tribal communities to implement culturally appropriate services
- Recovery housing for those leaving correctional or rehabilitative settings
- Statewide naloxone program
- Tobacco cessation programs during OUD and stimulant use disorder treatment and recovery

Building workforce capacity

The state has provided Drug Addiction Treatment Act (DATA)-waivered training for opioid treatment professionals with recruitment and partnership by KDADS and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. To date, there are 230 DATA-waivered health care professionals in Kansas.

Collaborating with public and private entities

Federal funds have supported state and local collaborations to combat the opioid and stimulant crisis in Kansas.

KDADS works with community coalitions to increase community capacity and prevention efforts. The agency collaborates with health care providers (physicians, nurses, pharmacists, physician assistants, emergency medical staff, etc.) to increase access to treatment, identification of OUD, best practices, improvement of emergency department protocols, and other issues. In addition, KDADS works with law enforcement, criminal justice, and first responders to increase capacity for implementing naloxone programs and overdose protocols. Work has also occurred with the general public and other professions to increase awareness of the issue at the state and local levels. Also, KDADS has engaged addiction professionals, peer support providers, social workers, and others to increase capacity to implement treatment and recovery services across the state.

Preventing opioid and stimulant misuse before it starts

KDADS continues to encourage the use of Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT), an evidence-based delivery approach, for early interventions and treatment of opioid/stimulant use disorders and/or for those at risk of developing disease. As a result, there are more SBIRT screenings and earlier detection and intervention taking place for those at risk of these diseases.

Education and public awareness

Opioid and Stimulants Awareness Campaigns

Two media awareness campaigns have been developed and implemented under the “It Matters” theme. The messages inform and encourage Kansans to be aware of the dangers associated with the use and misuse of opioids and stimulants. One of the campaigns is focused on college-age students and adult fans of the state’s two Division I universities: Kansas State University and the University of Kansas. The messages include videos taped by sports coach spokespersons, digital signage at sporting event venues, and TV and radio ads during coaches’ game shows and during postseason play. Social media ads were included in 2020 on Fan365 media. The overall estimated media impressions total some 3.2 million in a year’s time.

The other campaign, also under the “It Matters” theme, focuses on the general statewide population with emphasis on youth, young adults, and seniors as well as the rural/frontier areas of Kansas. The recently revised message involves creating positive, strength-based messages that promote healthy non-use norms, community protective factors, and efforts to reduce drug use by changing attitudes and behavior as opposed to using scare tactics. Public relations materials and media recommendations include a toolkit for community group usage for producing local materials for distribution; the development and purchase of media advertising to support the message; placement of MedSafe containers in communities; and virtual and in-person educational presentations for encouraging safe storage and disposal of unwanted medications.

Education and Training

KDADS has implemented virtual and in-person first responder and provider education across the state, including education on OUD; best practices for treating individuals with OUD; SBIRT; and naloxone administration. Individual communities have also conducted various outreach and educational events.

Additionally, sessions at the Kansas Opioid Conference have been funded annually since 2017, providing education to law enforcement officers and prescribers. This conference provides an opportunity to identify best practices for prevention across disciplines to build a proactive response to and prevent the escalation of the opioid issue in Kansas. The conference highlights strategies regarding how to address the crisis through the different lenses of prescribing, prevention, treatment, recovery, law enforcement, and intervention. The annual attendance is 350–400 treatment and prevention professionals.

KDADS collaborates to provide statewide OUD prevention/education materials and resources to all law enforcement agencies, oral surgeons, funeral homes, senior centers, areas on aging, and home care and hospice agencies in Kansas. Free e-learning modules and virtual training resources on naloxone have also been created for first responders, law enforcement, and the general public.

Overdose reversal efforts: saving lives

Early in the implementation of the grants, funding was used to develop and provide statewide resources for law enforcement agencies and other first responders to implement agency naloxone programs. A sample naloxone policy was created that may be customized for each agency. KDADS developed and provided pocket guides for quick information on how to identify and respond to an opioid overdose. In addition, plastic wallet-sized cards with the Kansas addiction treatment referral phone line were created and are disseminated statewide with information about SAMHSA’s treatment locator services. Law enforcement officers and others can use it, when needed, to refer individuals for treatment. More

recently, KDADS has developed a statewide, one-stop resource for any first responder agency, health care organization, community group, or resident to obtain free naloxone.

Increasing access to treatment

KDADS, collaborating with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, hosts several in-person DATA-waivered trainings for physicians and other authorized health care providers each year. The trainings are accredited and address requirements for obtaining the DATA waiver certification. After completing the in-person training, providers can complete the remaining online requirements for certification on their own. Other state trainings include provider education on OUD and community education.

Supporting long-term recovery

With STR/SOR funds, KDADS increased its capacity to provide additional recovery services for individuals with OUD across the state. Recently, individuals with opioid/stimulant use disorders or a history of these disorders, who are transitioning from a correctional or another rehabilitative program, may be supported in a community recovery group home offering peer services.

Serving special populations

Special Services for Pregnant Women

KDADS has identified pregnant women as a special service population. This group receives priority and specialized services to meet their need for treatment. A pregnant woman must be offered an assessment within 24 hours of initial contact and offered treatment admission, as clinically indicated, within 48 hours.

Prevention for High-Risk Communities

KDADS provides subgrant funding to nonprofit organizations and coalitions for community-level prevention initiatives in high-risk areas of Kansas. Materials are downloadable and may be used with community identification for addressing prevention efforts locally. A subgrant also works with communities on implementing medication disposal initiatives (MedSafe) to reduce diversion of prescription opioids and to target high-risk communities with no local options for safe medication disposal. Virtual and in-person presentations are readily available to promote safe storage of medications in the home.

Demonstrating outcomes for a healthier future

- The number of opioid prescriptions written by providers for every 100 persons was 64.3 in 2018, a 20% drop compared with 2011.
- From March 2020 through February 2021, Kansas provided opioid/stimulants treatment services to 5,005 clients, with 1,642 of them receiving opioid MAT services and 3,363 treated for stimulants.
- As of 2021, Kansas has 230 DATA-waivered health care providers.
- Since July 2020, KDADS has provided naloxone training to 1,130 people and distributed 3,272 naloxone kits to individuals, agencies, and organizations throughout the state.

- Since October 2020, KDADS has provided opioid/stimulants recovery services to 75 individuals transitioning from corrections or another rehabilitative program.

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