

## Addressing Opioid Misuse and Use 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): Louisiana Department of Health Office of Behavioral Health (OBH)

In FY 2017 and FY 2018, the Louisiana Department of Health Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) received a total of \$16 million through STR. From FY 2018 through FY2020, Louisiana received a total of \$46.6 million through SOR.

### Overview of Louisiana’s efforts to address opioid misuse and use disorders

The Louisiana Department of Health’s mission is to protect and promote health and to ensure access to medical, preventive, and rehabilitative services for all residents of the State of Louisiana. The Department supports five program offices representing the Office of Aging and Adult Services, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, OBH, Louisiana Medicaid, and the Office of Public Health. OBH has the lead role for the Louisiana Opioid Response Plan. The plan highlights the following goals: Data-Driven Response, Prevention, Intervention, Treatment Services, and Recovery. Released in September 2019, the plan can be accessed [here](#).

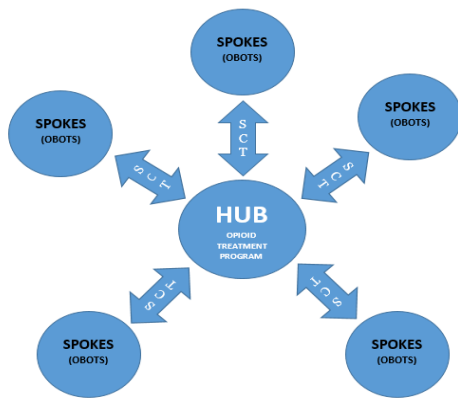
Louisiana’s STR grant focused on educating the public, providers, prescribers, and other health care professionals about prescription opioid use and prescribing risks, use of naloxone, MAT to treat OUD, and training professionals to implement evidence-based practices (EBPs). The goal of the STR initiative was to increase the number of individuals with an OUD diagnosis who received evidence-based

treatments, especially MAT, by 1,670 individuals, as well as to increase recovery support services by 600 individuals.

## Innovative service delivery models

### Hub and Spoke Network

Louisiana’s SOR (“LaSOR”) grant funds are utilized to enhance and expand capacity of OUD treatment providers to provide a full array of comprehensive services, including screening, assessment, orientation, urine drug screens, MAT management, counseling (individual, group, and/or family), and case coordination. OBH utilizes a multifaceted, collaborative approach to implement a “hub-and-spoke” network to expand access to MAT and increase accessibility to other services.



**Spokes** are the ongoing care system comprised of prescribing physicians who monitor adherence to treatment, care coordination, and provide SBIRT. (OBOTS)

**SCTs** are staffed with a nurse and Licensed Mental Health Professional and are the liaisons between the hubs and spokes. (Support Teams)

**Hubs** are the designated Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) responsible for coordinating the care of individuals across systems and providing appropriate MAT as well as connecting to appropriate community services where necessary.

**Commented [A1]:** AUTHOR: In the first text below, add spellout for OBOTs? Note that it is spelled out later in the regular text as “office-based opioid treatment providers” but in other briefs OBOT is “office based opioid treatment” (referring to the treatment, not the provider).

In the second text box below, what does SCT stand for?

## Building workforce capacity

### Center for Prevention Resources

OBH and Southern University and A&M College have established the Louisiana Center for Prevention Resources (LCPR), which provides training and technical assistance services to the substance abuse prevention workforce. LCPR has increased capacity, skills, and expertise to ensure and enhance delivery of effective substance use prevention interventions, trainings, and other prevention activities. These services are available to youth, communities, professionals, institutions of higher education, and others in the community. Technical assistance and resources are coordinated by the Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) funded regionally by SAMHSA.

## Collaborating with public and private entities

OBH implemented the STR and SOR grants with several partners, including 10 Local Governing Entities (LGEs), ten OTPs, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections (DPS&C), Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center (New Orleans), Tulane University, Louisiana State University Social Research and Evaluation Center (SREC) (Baton Rouge), and the Office of Public Health in the Louisiana Department of Health. Other collaborators include local provider agencies and coalitions and office-based opioid treatment providers (OBOTs).

### Increased outreach to community programs

OBH collaborated with the LGEs statewide to deploy Crisis/Outreach Mobile Teams (CMTs) to help fight the opioid epidemic. CMTs are comprised of a Licensed Mental Health Professional, nurse, and a peer support specialist, who are available and responsive to calls for services at the request of law enforcement, emergency medical personnel, and families. The purpose of implementing this model within the LaSOR project is to divert individuals from unnecessary incarcerations or emergency room visits and to serve as a liaison, or navigator, for individuals in need of mental health, substance use disorder, or medical services. Members of these CMTs are skilled at helping to stabilize clients and assume responsibility for securing identified service needs.

## Preventing opioid misuse before it starts

### Prevention Focused on Youth

The state implemented the new *LifeSkills Training* Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention (LST Rx) Module that gives adolescents the skills and knowledge necessary to help them avoid the misuse of opioids and prescription drugs. This module is particularly useful for school districts, community-based organizations, and agencies serving students in grades 6–9, because it can be implemented as a stand-alone prevention initiative for the middle school population. The LST Rx Module is now being used by the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, reaching approximately 50,000 students per year.

### Prevention Across the Lifespan

LGEs were encouraged to provide opioid prevention education and resources across the lifespan with implementation of Generation Rx. Generation Rx is an opioid-specific program with seven modules designed to provide education on prescription drug misuse and promote medication safety with individuals of all ages. The seven modules focus on elementary, teen, college, adult, patients, seniors, and workplace populations. Specific modules were used to educate people about the potential dangers of misusing prescription medications and to enhance medication safety. Generation Rx was facilitated in schools and community settings.

OBH also recently partnered with the Louisiana Department of Health, **Office of Aging and Adult Services**, to present the Older Adult Module of Generation Rx at their quarterly meetings for providers statewide. Meeting participants included administrators of companies who have staff that provide in-home assistance to the elderly and aging population for things such as errands, picking up prescriptions, and overseeing medication administration. Meeting presentations include education, resources, and available services specific to opioid misuse within the elderly/aging population.

### Prescription Drug Drop-off Boxes, Safe Storage, Proper Disposal

Each of the 10 LGEs purchased a combination of prescription drug drop-off boxes and safe storage and proper disposal containers. These containers are placed strategically in their catchment area in both traditional locations such as clinics and pharmacies and nontraditional places such as the coroner's office and university housing units. OBH is also working with Medicaid to reduce prescription limits and support policies for prescriber education.

## Education and public awareness

### Public Service Campaign

OBH designed and implemented an opioid awareness and education public service campaign. The campaign directs people with an opioid addiction (and/or their families, friends, and loved ones) to the appropriate treatment resources, which were made available to all LGEs to disseminate.

### Provider Education

In an effort to support the state's Training Education and Technical Assistance Coordinators (TETAs) within the state's 10 LGEs, OBH developed a SharePoint Site where TETAs could easily and readily access resources.

## Overdose reversal efforts: saving lives

Louisiana distributed naloxone kits to LGEs, OTPs, DPS&C, coalition members, community providers, residential providers, recovery homes (Oxford Houses), first responders, clients and families, sheriff's offices, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), and emergency departments. An ad hoc committee of OBH, the Office of Public Health, the Attorney General's Office, and Emergency Management Services was formed to ensure collaboration of distribution. Efforts were coordinated with existing Partnerships for Success (PFS) grantees at the local level.

## Increasing access to treatment

OBH enhanced and expanded existing OUD treatment availability statewide by building the capacity of the local OTPs and other substance use provider networks to provide access to evidence-based treatments, particularly MAT, and recovery support services to individuals with OUD. The priority populations focused on include the under- and uninsured; those involved in the criminal justice system; state-recognized Tribes; and pregnant women or women with infants experiencing neonatal opioid withdrawal symptoms. SAMHSA resources through the South Southwest Addiction Technology Transfer Center are being utilized.

The state enhanced and expanded capacity to provide a full array of comprehensive services, including but not limited to screening, assessment, orientation, urine drug screens, methadone management, individual counseling, group counseling, family counseling, and case coordination. In addition, each OTP was provided with funding to hire one resource coordinator and one peer recovery support specialist who function as liaisons or intermediaries to form sound partnerships and collaborations with their LGE and the other staff to carry out the goals of the project.

- The OTP resource coordinator ensures that each patient requesting services is assessed for need, enrolled in benefits, admitted to treatment, and/or put in contact with the appropriate community providers for services that are not available at the point of entry site. They also help those in the criminal justice system prepare for reentry.
- The OTP peer recovery support specialist provides direct assistance in accessing recovery-focused meetings, one-to-one recovery coaching, outreach and publicity efforts, assistance with transportation needs, and other related services.

DPS&C provides two treatment programs for returning citizens in the Greater Baton Rouge area (one for male clients and another for females). Treatment is individualized and includes MAT as well as other comprehensive counseling approaches.

A relationship has been developed with the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center to provide support, training, and technical assistance to the identified OBOTs identified as spokes. Currently, 47 spokes are providing services within each LGE's catchment area. The exact number and location of spokes are contingent upon each LGE's needs. Tulane University is providing the peer-to-peer consultation through the ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) model to ensure that professionals are receiving training and providing the most updated, advanced, and appropriate practices.

## Supporting long-term recovery

### Peer Services

To ensure continuity of care and engagement and retention of clients, nine LGEs and the state's OTPs provided funding to hire a regional behavioral health peer recovery support specialist (BH-PRSS). The 10th LGE, Metropolitan Human Services District, received funding through SAMHSA's Medication-Assisted Treatment – Prescription Drug and Opioid Addiction (MAT-PDOA) grant program to hire peer support specialists. The regional BH-PRSSs assist with continuity of care and support the ongoing recovery effort of each individual receiving treatment services. They also play a vital role mentoring and advocating for participants and providing the supports necessary to help engage and retain them, including the use of outreach efforts to prescreen likely target individuals, and establishing an early trust bond. All regional BH-PRSSs were trained using an existing statewide system established by OBH, which was developed by RI International of Arizona (formerly Recovery Innovations).

### Recovery Housing

The state is funding three peers/outreach workers to expand recovery homes. Two outreach workers are working on housing issues with the DPS&C for the reentry population. One outreach worker serves as a peer trainer to target Oxford Chapters and provide workshops/trainings on MAT statewide. Oxford has successfully collaborated with DPS&C to serve as a conduit for persons with OUD transitioning from incarceration to safe recovery housing in the community. Reentry centers offer face-to-face workshops on OUD and MAT. One hundred individuals statewide will be trained on MAT per year. These trainings encourage nondiscrimination against persons who are receiving MAT in their recovery.

## Serving special populations

### Prevention for Special Populations

OBH partnered with the Louisiana Department of Health Bureau of Family Health to pilot a Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) program at a local hospital aimed at identifying women with OUD who are either pregnant or have a child with neonatal opiate withdrawal symptoms. Those identified are referred to the program that prioritizes co-location of the mother and infant, maternal access to OUD treatment, and promotion of practices that minimize harm and improve outcomes in infants. This program provides services for opioid-exposed infants that are safe alternatives to the intensive care unit in existing community or hospital settings. The objective is for the hospital to integrate SBIRT into their regular screening and assessment procedures for clients, eliminating the need for a SBIRT coordinator.

OBH also coordinated with an educational provider agency, the Woman's Foundation, to provide statewide continuing medical education for physicians, nurses, social workers, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, chiropractors, and other medical and health care professionals on the unique treatment needs of women and special populations.

#### Identifying and addressing needs of state-recognized Tribes

OBH developed a partnership with the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs to request that state-recognized Tribes participate in this project. The Louisiana State University SREC engaged the United Houma Nation and Isle de Jean Charles band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Tribal groups to identify and address needs surrounding Louisiana's opioid crisis. SREC investigated opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery awareness and needs among the Tribes.

SREC conducted five listening sessions with Tribal citizens across the state, with 54 people attending. SREC subsequently conducted three interviews and attended Tribal meetings to provide information about the opioid crisis and to update Tribal citizens on listening session activities.

### Demonstrating outcomes for a healthier future

#### Outcomes: STR

There were five main areas of focus for the STR initiative emphasizing prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery services. The initiative aimed to educate the public, providers, prescribers, and other health care professionals about prescription opioid use and prescribing risks, naloxone, MAT to treat OUD, recovery support services, and training professionals to implement use of EBPs.

- A robust educational series for physicians, physician assistants, nurses, nurse practitioners, and clinicians was developed to support the goals of the initiative. Each series consisted of four sessions held throughout the state. Implementing the training model created by the Woman's Foundation, 14,836 providers, pharmacists, and other health care professionals participated in education and awareness activities, with an additional 1,179 professionals being trained on EBPs for treating OUD.
- OBH used additional funds to distribute Narcan kits to rural health clinics, universities, FQHCs, and first responders. A total of 19,665 naloxone kits were distributed to these identified agencies, with an additional 727 kits purchased to distribute to COVID-19 isolation sites in March of 2020.
- Utilizing STR funding, the Louisiana Department of Health provided MAT for clients who were unable to self-pay for services to ensure a seamless transition into Medicaid. In addition to MAT services, transportation was offered to clients unable to secure transportation to treatment. The resource coordinator and the peer recovery support specialist assisted with transitioning into mainstream services. As a result of these services, 2,754 clients were enrolled in OUD treatment and recovery support services.

#### Outcomes: LaSOR

##### Increased access to MAT:

- As of September 30, 2020, 543 individuals with an OUD diagnosis received MAT within OTPs/HUBs with SOR funding.

##### Increased access to recovery support services for patients on MAT:

- Twelve new Oxford Houses were opened with 90 available beds; eight homes for men, one for women, and three for women with children. As of September 30, 2020, 88 individuals are living in the twelve homes. Oxford recruited, hired, and trained three new Peer Outreach Staff. Peer Outreach Staff successfully researched properties, selected safe environments that support recovery, negotiated with property owners, and ensured residents moved in and provided any necessary peer supports.

Increased public and professional awareness, education for prevention and treatment for prescribers

- As of September 30, 2020, 1,938 prescribers have been educated and trained on various topics related to opioid use and misuse.

Distribution and accessibility of naloxone kits:

- As of September 30, 2020, 8,344 Narcan kits have been distributed by OUD Prevention Specialists and other stakeholders statewide.

Increased number of prescription drug drop boxes and disposal bags:

- Prescription drug drop-off boxes provide a place where unused prescription drugs can be safely disposed. These permanent boxes prevent prescription and over-the-counter medications from getting into the hands of children and into the waterways, ensuring they are disposed of in a safe, environmentally friendly manner. A total of 10 drop boxes have been installed throughout the state, and a total of 1,910 pounds of drugs have been destroyed.
- A total of 1,561 Lock your Meds products have been disseminated to nurses, social workers, addiction counselors, peer recovery support staff prevention staff, physicians, government agencies and/or civic leaders, assisted living facility staff, college students, halfway house staff, home health care staff, long term and hospice care staff, and high school seniors.
- A total of 11,538 safe disposal bags have been disseminated to nurses, social workers, addiction counselors, peer recovery support staff, assisted living facility staff, college students, community consumers, direct care staff, elderly populations, parents and students, and police officers.

Provision of Generation Rx curricula in higher education:

- OBH collaborated with universities, technical schools, and community colleges statewide to implement Generation Rx Collegiate and Adult modules through a partnership with the Louisiana Board of Regents (BOR). The Louisiana BOR is a government agency that is responsible for coordination of all public higher education in the State of Louisiana. The BOR, through the Louisiana Center Addressing Substance Use in Collegiate Communities (LaCASU), hosted regional trainings around the state and reached over 160 higher education staff members and community stakeholders across five regional trainings.
- OBH supported the BOR by providing ongoing safe storage and proper disposal products to institutions of higher education to support implementation of Generation Rx. Additionally, the BOR staff submitted a policy to the BOR Board of Directors recommending a statewide policy for providing naloxone on college campuses. OBH supported the BOR by ensuring that funding was in place to access naloxone through LaSOR. With the approval of the policy, institutions of higher education are now responsible for providing naloxone to campuses.

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