

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 SAMHSA 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): North Dakota Department of Human Services Behavioral Health Division

In FY 2017 and FY 2018, the North Dakota Department of Human Services Behavioral Health Division received a total of \$4 million in STR funding. From FY 2018 through FY 2020, the state received a total of \$14 million in SOR funding.

Overview of North Dakota’s efforts to address opioid misuse and use disorders

North Dakota’s implementation of the STR grant includes both statewide and community-level implementation of evidence-based strategies aimed to increase access to MAT, increase the availability of recovery supports, increase implementation of overdose prevention, and decrease access to prescription opioids. North Dakota’s implementation of the SOR grant continues and expands upon many initiatives from the STR grant. The state’s goals for the SOR grant include prevention of opioid overdose–related deaths by increasing implementation of evidence-based prevention strategies, and the use of comprehensive evidence-based treatment and recovery support services (specifically recovery housing capacity).

Innovative service delivery models

- Project ECHO (Extensions for Community Healthcare Outcomes)
- Champion Prescriber
- Expansion of recovery housing

Building workforce capacity

- Training on evidence-based overdose prevention: Local public health units and Tribes trained over 8,000 individuals on overdose education and naloxone distribution.
- Training on decreasing access to unneeded prescription opioid medication: Local public health units and tribes trained over 1,800 individuals on prescribing guidelines.

Collaborating with public and private entities

For the opioid STR, North Dakota contracted with the 4 Native American Tribes and 12 local public health units across the state to implement community-driven strategies addressing the opioid crisis. For the SOR grant, the State contracted with several of the tribes and with 24 of the 28 local public health units.

Preventing opioid misuse before it starts

Prevention activities are aimed at the general population as well as those at highest risk for overdose: individuals receiving more than one opioid prescription, persons with a history of addiction, or a person with an OUD who has recently been released from detoxification, incarceration, or treatment. The State has contracted with the 4 Native American Tribes and 24 local public health units to implement community-driven strategies to address the opioid crisis. North Dakota efforts funded through the STR/SOR funds to prevent opioid misuse include:

- Increasing Take Back locations and holding Take Back events: North Dakota is the only state in the nation operating free, year-round, statewide prescription drug disposal programs at local law enforcement agencies and pharmacies. North Dakota offers two free programs for residents to dispose of unwanted medications—the Take Back program at participating law enforcement agencies and the MedSafe program at participating pharmacies.
- Purchase and distribution of Detera drug deactivation bags. The North Dakota Behavioral Health Division has purchased over 25,000 bags and distributed over 24,000.

Education and public awareness

- Stop Overdose campaign: Stop Overdose is an evidence-based overdose prevention effort focused on saving lives by raising awareness of the risk and signs of overdose, safe ways to respond, and best practices in prescribing, treatment, and recovery practices to those most impacted by this public health concern, such as family members and friends, prescribers, pharmacists, behavioral health professionals, and other professionals.
- Lock. Monitor. Take Back. awareness campaign: Lock. Monitor. Take Back. is an evidence-based prevention effort with the primary goal of reducing access to prescription drugs, especially opioids, by encouraging North Dakotans to be safe with their medications, including promoting North Dakota Take Back locations and promoting ways communities can support this effort at the local level.

- ONE Rx program implementation through a partnership with the North Dakota State University School of Pharmacy: ONE Rx (Opioid and Naloxone Education) is an innovative approach to screen and educate patients who receive prescribed opioid medications at participating community pharmacies.

Overdose reversal efforts: saving lives

Through the STR/SOR funds, the North Dakota Department of Human Services has purchased and distributed over 9,000 naloxone kits and funded an additional 4,000 kits distributed by community partners. To date, there have been at least 300 administrations of naloxone in communities across the state, reported by community-level partners.

- Number of naloxone kits distributed during STR year 1 = 807 kits
- Number of naloxone kits distributed during STR year 2 = 2,659 kits
- Number of naloxone kits distributed during SOR year 1 = 2,890 kits
- Number of naloxone kits distributed during SOR year 2 (through December 2019) = 2,774
- Total number of naloxone kits distributed for STR years 1 and 2 and SOR years 1 and 2 (through December 2019; not including community distribution) = 9,130 kits

the North Dakota Department of Human Services engaged in a partnership with the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) to increase access to naloxone for individuals released from incarceration.

Increasing access to treatment

North Dakota's STR/SOR-funded efforts to increase access to treatment include:

- Waiver training: STR was used to provide a stipend for prescribers to complete the Drug Addiction Treatment Act (DATA) 2000 waiver training.
- Project ECHO: This project was aimed at supporting providers in rural areas of the state to develop a broad and flexible care delivery system specific to the treatment of OUD by offering both MAT and psychosocial treatments.
- Champion Prescriber: STR funding was used for a contracted provider who traveled statewide and met with hospital and clinic administrators, prescribers, correctional administrators, and behavioral health treatment providers to enhance policies regarding the prescribing and utilization of medications used to treat OUD.

Supporting long-term recovery

North Dakota used STR/SOR funds for the following recovery support services:

- Communities and Tribes are supporting recovery efforts by increasing capacity for and implementing peer support, increasing availability of care coordination services, increasing capacity for recovery housing options supportive of MAT, and increasing engagement services at syringe services programs.

Serving special populations

North Dakota efforts generally target individuals with OUD within the prison population, rural communities, and communities that do not have MAT treatment options or recovery options available.

- The North Dakota Department of Human Services partnered with the North Dakota DOCR to establish a DOCR-initiated buprenorphine-based monthly injection Medication-Assisted Therapy Program for Opioid Use Disorder to transition residents into the community to help them succeed in life.
- Communities and Tribes are addressing local barriers to include (but not limited to) addressing barriers to treatment (including transportation), enhancing the use of telehealth, policy change, and prescriber training and engagement.

Demonstrating outcomes for a healthier future

- 80 trainings have been held with over 1,800 individuals trained on prescribing guidelines and decreasing access to unneeded prescription opioid medication.
- North Dakota communities have provided over 900 trainings on effective overdose prevention to over 8,000 nurses, first responders, the general public, corrections, behavioral health providers, educators, and administrators.
- Almost 60,000 Lock. Monitor. Take Back. materials have been disseminated to communities from May 1, 2017 through December 31, 2019.
- Over 41,000 Stop Overdose materials have been disseminated to communities from May 1, 2017, through December 31, 2019.
- Through the ONE Rx program, over 4,300 patient screenings have been conducted at pharmacies across North Dakota.
 - 24.9% of patients counseled were identified as at high risk for accidental opioid overdose.
 - 4.3% of patients were identified as at elevated risk of an OUD.
 - 52.3% of patients received one or more of the six critical interventions for safe opioid use.
 - 88.4% of patients were counseled on medication Take Back through MedSafe.
 - 9.9% of patients received naloxone.
- The number of providers waived to prescribe buprenorphine has increased from 18 (April 2017) to 84 (January 2020).
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that overdose deaths in the state decreased in 2017 after reaching a record of 77 deaths in 2016. According to the CDC, drug overdose deaths in North Dakota fell by 11.7% to 68 deaths in 2017.
- Over 1,000 individuals (number may be duplicated) received MAT in STR year 1, and 400 (unduplicated) received MAT in STR year 2. Over 130 new individuals have been provided MAT through SOR years 1 and 2 (through December 2019).
- 121 individuals received OUD recovery support services (includes duplicate individuals) in STR year 1, and 1,400 received recovery support services in STR year 2. Over 260 individuals received OUD recovery support services through SOR years 1 and 2 (through December 2019).

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