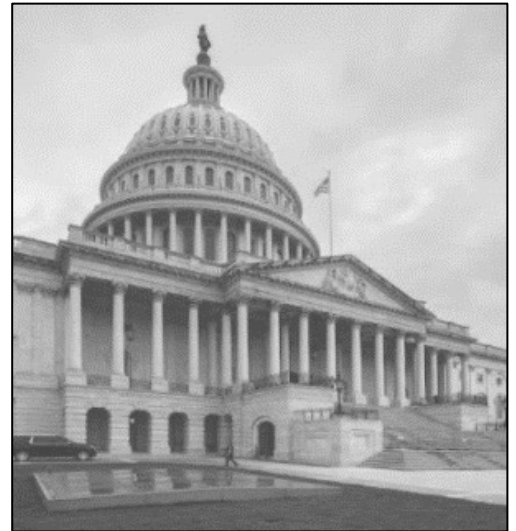


North Dakota SOR Initiatives

Addressing Opioid and Stimulant Misuse & Use Disorders: The Impact of State Opioid Response (SOR) Grants

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) administers the SOR grant program. SOR addresses the opioid overdose crisis by providing resources to states and territories to increase access to Federal Drug Administration-approved medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) and to reduce unmet treatment needs and opioid-related overdose deaths with prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery supports. In 2020, SOR expanded to support evidence-based services for stimulant misuse and use disorders (StUD), including cocaine and methamphetamine.

This brief was developed by the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) in collaboration with the Opioid Response Network (ORN) as part of a series of state reports intended to showcase initiatives across the continuum of care that states have implemented with SOR funds. The ORN is a SAMHSA-funded technical assistance and training center that works with states, health professionals, community organizations, the justice system, and individuals in all 50 states and nine territories to support efforts to address the opioid and stimulant crisis.



Single State Agency (SSA): North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services Behavioral Health Division (NDBHD)



NDBHD has received \$20,041,632 in SOR funding from FY18 through FY23. For FY23–24, it received \$4,000,000. North Dakota employs a hub-and-spoke model for a majority of the SOR funding. NDBHD contracts with local public health units (LPHUs) and allocates SOR funding for use at the local level. LPHUs implement strategies and activities to address at least one of the four grant goals. During the FY22–FY23 grant period, all LPHUs conducted a Naloxone Distribution Assessment to identify current distribution efforts and recognize gaps in their communities. Subsequently, they developed plans on how to address these gaps. The following goals are the current initiatives of focus by the SSA:

1. Prevent substance (mis)use (specifically focused on opioids and stimulants)
2. Reduce harm related to opioids and stimulants
3. Improve access to evidence-based treatment
4. Increase access to recovery support services

Preventing Opioid and Stimulant Misuse Before It Starts

North Dakota has used SOR to support community-based educational training events, media campaigns, and other evidence-based prevention programming.

Opioids: Fill With Care

“Opioids: Fill With Care” is a media campaign that provides education and increases awareness surrounding the safe use of medications, proper disposal methods, risks and signs of overdose, and employing an effective response to an overdose. The media campaign also aims to reduce stigma surrounding opioid use disorder (OUD) and naloxone through the state opioid media campaign.

Parents Lead

Parents Lead is an evidence-based prevention program developed in and for North Dakota. It provides parents and caregivers with a wide variety of tools and resources to support them in creating a safe environment for their children, promoting mental health treatment while preventing substance use.

North Dakota State University Opioid and Naloxone Education (ONE) Program

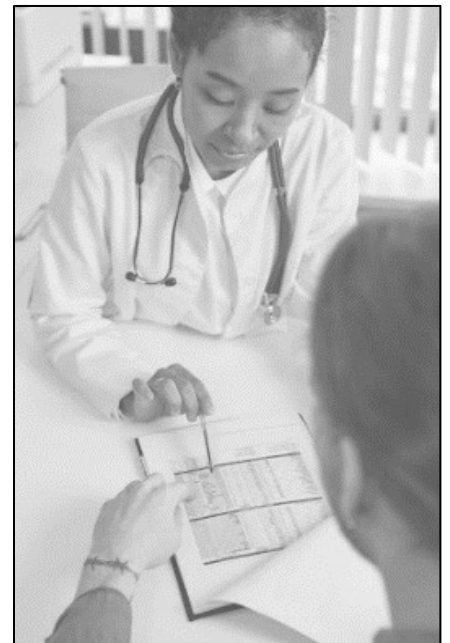
The ONE program centers on enhancing population health through community pharmacy-based patient screening and interventions. In this program, pharmacists assess patients who are prescribed opioids to identify the risk of opioid misuse and accidental overdose. The overarching mission of ONE is to proactively support patients and communities by disseminating resources to pharmacists and patients, educating them on the dangers of opioid misuse and accidental overdose. The program aims to ensure that patients receiving opioid prescriptions also receive personalized education based on their specific needs. Program pharmacists are equipped with tools to screen for the OUD risk, enabling them to offer counseling and resources for safe use of prescribed opioids based on individual patient requirements. Additionally, ONE facilitates pharmacy-based referrals to community-based pain self-management programs.

Take Back Events and Take Back Locations

Local public health units (LPHUs) host “Take Back” events and work with law enforcement to establish take-back locations if there is nothing already existing in the community. These events give residents easy and convenient ways to dispose of unused and unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medicines, thereby helping to protect the environment and keep these drugs off the streets. Local law enforcement agencies and the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation coordinate community Take Back events to ensure compliance with federal law in securing, logging, and destroying the collected drugs.

Safe Medication Disposal Products

NDBHD purchases Detera bags and Dispose RX packets with SOR funding. Detera bags and DisposeRX packets are both used for the safe disposal of unused or expired medications. They provide a convenient and environmentally friendly way for individuals to get rid of prescription and over-the-counter drugs at home. LPHUs distribute these products locally, as well as provide education.



Overdose Reversal Efforts: Saving Lives

North Dakota uses various mechanisms to distribute overdose reversal agents and provide education. The state's efforts, funded through SOR and other sources, have led to expansion of the Opioid Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND) Program.

Opioid Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution Program

OEND is an initiative designed to educate individuals on how to recognize and respond to opioid overdoses and distribute naloxone. It is completed at the state level by NDBHD and at the local level by LPHUs. The initiative strives to provide education, training, and necessary tools to emergency medical service personnel and other first responders. The focus is on increasing awareness of the growing hazards of opioids with education on identifying opioid overdoses and instruction on using NARCAN® (Naloxone HCl) nasal spray to reverse overdoses.



Implementing Harm Reduction Strategies

North Dakota has also used SOR to support allowable harm reduction strategies.

Syringe Service Programs (SSP)

There are five SSPs in North Dakota, all associated with an LPHU. All SSPs receive SOR funding and use it to purchase fentanyl and xylazine test strips, as well as provide linkages to testing and treatment. There is one harm reduction vending machine in North Dakota.

Increasing Access to Treatment

North Dakota has used SOR to enhance treatment efforts by implementing contingency management across various treatment providers.

Contingency Management

NDBHD is collaborating with treatment providers to enhance treatment retention through contingency management. Contingency management is a positive reinforcement intervention that involves rewards or incentives to promote positive behaviors and discourage negative behaviors. Incentives are contingent, immediate, tangible, desirable, and escalate with continuous improvement.

Supporting Long-Term Recovery

North Dakota has used SOR to assist individuals in recovery by expanding peer support services.



Peer Support

NDBDH offers peer support specialist training and peer support specialist certification. SOR funds are used at the local level to integrate peer support into existing services and infrastructure.

Reaching & Serving Populations of Focus

North Dakota funds special services for Tribal/Urban Indians and people in criminal justice settings with OUD.

North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR)

DOCR provides treatment transition and coverage for individuals re-entering communities from criminal justice settings or other rehabilitative settings.

Tribal Partnership

NDBHD collaborates with tribal communities, offering SOR funding to assist communities throughout the state in addressing local needs and gaps across the continuum of care, specifically focusing on the opioid crisis and addressing stimulant misuse and StUD.



About the Opioid Response Network (ORN): ORN is a group of diverse individuals and organizations working collaboratively to address the opioid and stimulant crisis. Funded by SAMHSA's SOR/Tribal Opioid Response (TOR) Technical Assistance (TA) grant, ORN works with states, health professionals, community organizations, the justice system, and individuals in all 50 states and nine territories to provide education and training. **Visit the ORN website [here](#) or request training or TA [here](#).**

Disclaimer: Funding for this initiative was made possible (in part) by grant no. 1H79T1o85588-01 from SAMHSA. The information contained in this brief was provided and verified by the state/jurisdiction. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of SAMHSA or the Department of Health and Human Services.