

**2015 National Exemplary Awards for  
Innovative Substance Abuse Prevention Programs, Practices and Policies  
APPLICATION COVER SHEET**

**1. Has this intervention been submitted for an Exemplary Award in previous years? [Circle one]**

Yes      No

**2. What is the primary target for this program, practice or policy? [Circle one]**

Individual      School-Based      Family/Parent      Peer/Group  
Workplace      Environmental/Community-Based      Other

If Other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM INFORMATION**

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I have reviewed the information contained in this application and certify that it is accurate, to the best of my knowledge.

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Shana Malone      \_\_\_\_\_      09/02/2015  
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## ABSTRACT

MATFORCE, the Yavapai County Substance Abuse Coalition, has been addressing its community's prescription drug epidemic since 2010. The coalition serves the county which is located in central Arizona. The initial, cross-sector strategies were expanded through the Arizona Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative in 2012. For the past five years, coalition and community members continue to implement comprehensive action plans, engaging hundreds of citizens in the work needed to sustain a multi-systemic approach for addressing prescription drug misuse and abuse.

Using the Strategic Prevention Framework model, 2011 action plans integrated information and outlined tasks for the coalition's approach. Beginning strategies centered on: the collection and verification of all data showing prescription drug abuse trends in Yavapai County; insuring access for all pharmacists and physicians to the state's prescription drug monitoring system; developing systems for identifying local doctors who prescribe highest amounts of pain medications; identifying necessary policy changes regarding prescription drug abuse; creating and implementing a community education campaign; and increasing enforcement regarding prescription drug abuse.

Because of the coalition's growing success, in 2012 the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership selected Yavapai County to be the first test location for the statewide Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative. MATFORCE was chosen because of the many prevention approaches already had in place. The initiative focused on five strategies with specific goals under each strategy; the strategy list included:

- Reduce access to prescription drugs;
- Educate prescribers and pharmacists about "Rx drug best practices";
- Enhance Rx drug practice and policies in law enforcement;
- Increase public awareness about the risks of Rx drug misuse;
- Build resilience in children and adults.

Through the sustained efforts of this multi-strategy campaign, Yavapai County has witnessed substantial decreases prescription drug problems with highlights including:

- Over 17,000 pounds of un-used or expired Rx medications have been collected and properly disposed of through Dump the Drugs events and drop box locations;
- 10% decrease between 2012 and 2013 in the number of controlled substances prescribed;
- 36.8% decrease in youth RX substance abuse from 2012 to 2014;
- 28.29% decrease in opiate/opioid related deaths (pilot counties) compared to a 4% increase in State.

Because this program uses a grassroots approach, all sectors of the community are engaged. The coalition has developed tools that are show cased within Arizona's Rx Toolkit, a key component for replicating the work needed to be done to address the prescription drug epidemic.

## PROGRAM NARRATIVE

### A. Philosophy

MATFORCE has been in existence for nine years and was formed in 2006 through the grassroots' efforts of a group of citizens concerned about the methamphetamine problem in Yavapai County. Originally MATFORCE stood for the Methamphetamine Advisory Task Force. In 2007 the coalition mission changed to address all substance abuse issues and problematic drinking hence the name MATFORCE, the Yavapai County Substance Abuse Coalition. The mission statement reads: **With determination and integrity, we, the citizens of Yavapai County, commit to working in partnership to build healthier communities by striving to eliminate substance abuse and its effects.** Because of the commitment to eliminating substance abuse, a strong campaign was launched in early 2011 to address the overwhelming issues associated with prescription drug abuse.

The coalition framework was established in 2007, when the original strategic plan, logic model and mission statement of the coalition were created. This was done in conjunction when funding for the coalition was awarded through the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) - State Incentive Grant. From the start, the SPF model was foundational in forming the coalition, building a clear understanding of the area's needs, and engaging community members. The SPF model was applied to the Strategies to Address Prescription Drug Abuse in Yavapai County program.

MATFORCE's philosophy and work focuses on community based approaches that engage all sectors in developing and implementing substance abuse prevention and intervention strategies. The mission statement was created by a large number of community members who have stated and committed to "working in partnership to build healthier communities by striving to eliminate substance abuse and its effects". Throughout the coalition's history, implementation steps have been developed looking at the seven strategies for environmental change. The coalition has moved along the continuum of providing information to changing policies. Through community connections and anecdotal information, in 2010 the disturbing increases in prescription drug abuse was noted and MATFORCE began designing cross-sector strategies to address prescription issues in Yavapai communities.

### B. Needs Assessment

In the past, MATFORCE conducted numerous community forums, collecting and synthesizing hundreds of ideas from its twelve community sectors. People from across the county have been engaged in the coalition's work and it is vitally important to hear their perspectives. The sectors include: Youth, Youth Serving Agencies, Faith Based Community, Business Community, Law Enforcement, Government, Treatment and Recovery Communities, Civic Groups and Volunteers, Health Care Community, Education, Media and Parents.

The four goal statements of the coalition were also developed during the 2007 process and are: 1. Support prevention programs for youth and families. 2. Increase the capacity to intervene and treat. 3. Address the problem of underage drinking. 4. Influence public opinion and policy. Local data was obtained through input and post surveys completed by the forum participants. County-wide data was accessed through means including the Arizona Youth Survey, Arizona Department of Health Services, Yavapai County Juvenile Crime Report, town

halls, and key informant interviews. Logic models and action plans were finalized with the strategic plan being updated on a regular basis to ensure outcomes are being achieved.

This foundational work created four separate workgroups, each with the task of achieving its related goal statement. In addition, two steering committees were formed, the Prescott Area Steering Committee and the Verde Valley Steering Committee. These committees consists of key community stakeholders such as school superintendents, business leaders, law enforcement officials, city council members, county government officials, and treatment facility representatives who initiate work plans and assist with workgroup activities. Lastly, an Evaluation Committee monitors data and coalition work to track successes and ensure that needed changes are made to address community substance abuse issues.

Because coalition members are from all sectors of the community, data on the patterns and effects of substance abuse is readily brought to the executive director and board's attention. Some of the key data that prompted the 2011 action planning process for addressing prescription drug abuse included:

- In 2011, over 13,000,000 pills (controlled substances) were prescribed with a population of 211,000. This equates to over 60 pills per man, woman and child in the County. (source: Arizona State Board of Pharmacy, 2011);
- The 2010 Arizona Youth Survey (AYS) shows that one out of every four 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in our county has abused prescription medication to get high.
  - One risk factor, parental attitude favorable to drug use, was 40.3% for Yavapai compared to 32.4% for the state. (source: Arizona Youth Survey, 2010);
- The number of deaths related to prescription drug abuse in our county is growing each year, most notably among 20-30 year olds. In 2011, 8 young people died in Yavapai County from Prescription Drug overdoses. (source: Local Law Enforcement reports, 2011);
- In 2011, there were 633 emergency room department visits in Yavapai County with an association to opioid abuse. (source: ADHS Vital Statistics Mortality Data, 2011)

In 2012, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission conducted a feasibility study and chose Yavapai County as one of three test sites in Arizona to implement the Arizona Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative. The initiative would focus on community-driven outcomes, which was a factor in choosing the sites. Additional considerations were that the coalitions that demonstrated efficacy in substance use prevention and intervention were considered to have high capacity, and those coalitions who had participating members or committed networks from the three specific domains were considered to have the highest capacity. Statistics that led to the establishing the program included:

#### Rates of Misuse

- Arizona ranks 6<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation for individuals 12+ years misusing and abusing prescription drugs. (source: National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2012)
- 13% of Arizona adults report misusing prescription drugs in the past 30 days – almost half (47.5%) of the misuse involved prescription pain relievers. (source: St. Luke's Initiative Survey, 2010)

## Consequences

- Nearly 6,000 people in Arizona have died of drug overdoses since 2008 and more than 40 percent (2,511) involved prescription drugs. (source: Arizona Department of Health Services, Vital Statistics)
- Hospitalizations and emergency department visits for poisonings (Rx drugs are a leading cause of poisonings) cost Arizona more than \$177 million in 2012. (source: Arizona Department of Health Services, Vital Statistics)

In 2010, MATFORCE had identified the severity of the prescription drug abuse problem in Yavapai County and began an extensive prevention program. Based on data, the coalition created a localized action plan to address prescription abuse. One hundred and five coalition members and key stakeholders worked on the plan. Objectives, activities, timelines and people that were responsible were mapped out. The strategies to address prescription drug abuse in Yavapai County were expanded when MATFORCE became a pilot site for the Arizona Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative in 2012. Assessment meetings were used to identify county-specific resource needs and historical methods to date. From there, the concerted efforts resulted in the development of implementation timelines, task assignments, and reporting and feedback structures between MATFORCE, the evaluators, and the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership.

Numerous meetings were scheduled for the initial planning process for working on the Drug Reduction Initiative. Sub-committees, or task force groups, held follow-up meetings to discuss and implement various goals outlined in the plan. Community members including those that experienced loss from a death of a loved one, addiction specialists, and those addicted to prescription medications were involved in all phases of activity development.

A sample from the plan is included below. It displays how individuals and partners were integrated into the process. Under the third column titled Task Force Assigned, initials represent MATFORCE sub-committees with LE being Law Enforcement. Officers formed the Rx Prescription Drug Task Force to assist with the implementation of the Initiative. Their involvement has been critical in addressing the availability of prescription medications in homes. To date over 17,000 pounds of un-used or expired Rx medications have been collected and properly disposed of through Dump the Drugs events and drop box locations.

STRATEGY #1: Reduce access to prescription drugs						
GOAL #1: Increase the use of proper disposal methods for prescription drugs						
NO.	OBJECTIVES	Task Force Assigned	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	EXISTING RESOURCES	RESOURCE NEEDS	Completion Date
1.	Place permanent Rx drop boxes in every police department in Arizona.	LE	ASAP; AACOP; AZCOPS; Communities Preventing Substance Abuse Work Group; Work Group; Community Coalitions		Funds to purchase drop boxes	
ACTION STEPS	1. Obtain commitment of law enforcement agencies to house Rx drug drop boxes.	LE				
	2. Obtain resources to buy Rx drug drop boxes.	LE				
	3. Develop policies that describe law enforcement agencies' roles and responsibilities for Rx drugs placed in drop boxes.	LE				
	4. Install permanent Rx drug drop boxes.	LE			Funds for additional boxes	

The MATFORCE task force codes included: B for Business Outreach Task Force; COW for Community Awareness Work Group; ED for Education Task Force; LE for Law Enforcement Task Force; MF for MATFORCE and PHY for Physicians Task Force. By creating the task force groups

for each strategy, the intended target population was included in the planning and implementation steps, ensuring that the action steps were appropriate and attainable.

### **C. Population(s) Served**

Because the prescription drug abuse problem had many dimensions, MATFORCE developed strategies that reach all populations served by the county-wide coalition. Data revealed that youth and young people believed the use of prescription drugs was safe or harmless. The older population did not realize that many of the medications being abused were taken from their homes. And health care providers did not know the extent of the number of pills that were being prescribed in our area. This information was combined with other community factors. Yavapai County is a rural county with much of the population residing in 'outlying rural' areas. The county has nine incorporated communities and over thirty unincorporated communities. The largest community is Prescott with a population of 40,000 and it is the only community that is specified as a Metropolitan Statistical Area. Of the remaining communities, six have a population base of over 10,000 people and the remaining thirty-two communities range from 100 to 7,000 people.

Other geographic characteristics of the county that were important considerations in Rx strategy development:

- Yavapai County is a large county that has an area of 8,125 square miles, the size of the state of New Jersey.
- Yavapai County is divided by Mingus Mountain. On the west side of the Mountain are the incorporated communities of Prescott which is the county seat, Prescott Valley, Chino Valley, Dewey- Humboldt, and several unincorporated communities. On the east side of Mingus Mountain is the Verde Valley comprised of the incorporated communities of Sedona, Cottonwood, Camp Verde, Clarkdale, Jerome and various unincorporated communities.

Demographics are varied and impact the tools that are used in addressing substance abuse, including implementing strategies for addressing prescription drug abuse:

- The county also has two Indian Reservations, the Yavapai-Apache Nation in the Verde Valley and the Yavapai Prescott Indian Tribe in the Prescott area. The Native American population accounts for 2.1% of the total population.
- 84 % of the population is Caucasian and 13.9 % of the population is Hispanic or Latino.
- In Yavapai County, nearly 9 of every 10 residents speak English at home. Most of the rest (8%) speak Spanish at home. About 2 percent of the households are considered linguistically isolated; no adult member speaks English "very well".
- The age distribution of the population in Yavapai County is also relevant. The population under 20 years of age is 23.6% of the total and the population age 60 plus is 28.3% of the total. This leaves a smaller "working" age population of 49.1%.
- Recent data show that median household incomes have fallen in the county, and a higher percentage of children and families are living in poverty; 18% of all ages live in poverty and 28% of children ages 0-17 live in poverty.
- On the 2012 Arizona Youth Survey (AYS) survey, approximately 3% of youth indicated that they currently had an incarcerated parent, and 20% indicated that they had a parent who had previously been incarcerated.

- For the 2013-2014 school year, over 50% of the county's children were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch; in some outlying rural schools, up to 90% qualified.

The coalition's work considers many variables and MATFORCE continually recruits for new members through a variety of methods. Participation opportunities are announced regularly by using the bi-monthly newsletter, email announcements, and during every meeting and training. If a specific sector's feedback is important to a project, coalition members actively seek to engage those community members and recruit them as a coalition member when appropriate. Coalition leadership regularly gathers feedback from coalition members, ensuring that all perspectives are heard. Leadership uses this information to improve the work of the coalition, which also reflects back to the community, the importance of culturally diverse viewpoints.

When Yavapai County was selected to be the first test bed site to implement a multi-systemic approach for reducing prescription drug abuse, the practice of broad community member engagement continued. The Drug Reduction Initiative plan involved the medical community, businesses, youth groups, parents, schools and law enforcement. Each of these sectors was represented at an initial planning meeting in which specific task force groups were developed to target the prescription drug abuse epidemic. The groups assessed the goals and action steps they would be implementing to ensure that the intended target audiences were considered and reached through their efforts.

The MATFORCE staff and coalition members have attended cultural diversity trainings hosted by funding agencies and the Arizona Department of Health Services. This ensures that a diverse community representation is an important consideration in the coalition's planning processes. The trainings provide background materials as well as the cultural patterns the funding and objectives are intended to address. Tools such as the First Things First Needs and Assets charts, dashboards within the Read On literacy program, numerous data pieces in the Arizona Community Data Project, and the wealth of knowledge provided through the partnership with the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission provides staff members with the needed cultural background and information about our target populations.

As a grassroots organization, MATFORCE achieves a wide variety of tasks that address substance abuse. A significant factor in accomplishing this is to engage numerous community members. This in turn allows us to interact with people of different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. To ensure diversity, MATFORCE extends invitations for coalition membership to all cultures in the community. The steering committees and coalition workgroups structure as well as the multi-faceted approaches allow diverse participation.

Initially, MATFORCE held community forums for specific audiences including the Hispanic population, recovery community, and youth to discuss issues and strategies unique to their cultures. The coalition has partnered with both the Yavapai-Apache Nation and the Prescott Yavapai Tribe on multiple projects. The coalition has offered services such as parenting classes and substance abuse information in Spanish. Continued use of these processes helps to guarantee that cultural competence is built into the programs, including the work we have accomplished in the strategies to address prescription drug abuse in Yavapai County.

#### **D. Building Capacity**

As previously discussed, MATFORCE is the substance abuse coalition for our county. The initial, trusted strategic planning process established a solid foundation for community member



involvement. When data began to reveal the epidemic prescription drug abuse problems, coalition and community members were enlisted to determine the actions steps needed for our communities. Initially the Verde Valley Steering Committee, members from various coalition workgroups, the evaluation committee, and community stakeholders joined in the Rx planning process. Member engagement grew as strategies expanded.

The varied backgrounds of coalition members allows for succinct planning, expanding resources, and identifying new opportunities for collaboration while eliminating the duplication of services. Many of our members regularly engage in prescription drug education or activities that allowed for the coalition's prescription drug campaign to link to numerous organizations.

At a national level, MATFORCE has assisted with policy change and coalition education. Through letter writing and meetings, three major pharmacies changed their policies for allowing pharmacists' access to the Prescription Drug Monitoring System. The Arizona Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative has been presented to numerous federal agencies and has contained Yavapai County data and successes. During the 2015 CADCA conference, MATFORCE co-presented its work in utilizing the OTC Literacy curriculum to educate about the dangers of over the counter medicines and prescription drugs. The curriculum was developed by Scholastic and the American Association of Poison Control Centers in partnership with McNeil Consumer Healthcare; organization representatives also presented.

Examples of state level engagement have included: working with the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission in piloting five strategies for the Arizona Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative; the Arizona Board of Pharmacy, partnering with the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, sent out Prescribing Report Cards to all county physicians in Yavapai County to alert them to their prescribing practices; the completion of a Patient Pain Management Brochure and accompanying video to be used in prescribers offices; and numerous conference presentations such as "Opioids- the Epidemic you can Cure" for physicians and prescribers.

Since the beginning of the coalition's prescription drug campaign, many activities and partnerships have been utilized and are described in various sections of this application. One specific example of local work involving the business community was designed in an objective of the Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative which was to increase the awareness of safe storage of prescription medications. To reach this objective, coalition members approached over 20 hardware stores, pharmacies, and retailers that sold lock boxes. A poster was developed talking about proper storage and the possibility of locking up medications. Multiple retail locations agreed to make end caps with lock boxes/safes and displayed the poster.

Other local activities that describe partnerships in the prescription drug campaign are listed below including the sector involvement:

Media and outreach partnerships:

- A radio commercial was recorded by board member Dr. Cattolico about safety, proper storage and disposal of Rx and was aired through six stations affiliated with Yavapai Broadcasting;
- The pain management video, featuring Dr. Cattolico, was aired on a local television networks;
- Several newspapers ran various articles including educating physicians about opioid addition and using the PDM and safe storage and disposal of Rx medications;

- Post card size information sheets about safety, storage and disposal sites were distributed to veterinarians, funeral homes and hospice sites across the county by coalition members;
- Yavapai County Supervisor Craig Brown re-posted Rx safety and disposal information from the MATFORCE MVP electronic newsletter, reaching adults across the county.

Law enforcement engagement:

- Semi-annual take back events are hosted by MATFORCE and staffed by law enforcement and community volunteers; hundreds of pounds of medications are collected;
- Officers provide Drug Recognition Education trainings that are provided to teachers, professionals and community members at sites across the county.

Health Care Cooperative Work:

- MATFORCE launched its “Sign Up to Save Lives” Campaign, requesting that each practitioner in Yavapai County register to use the Arizona Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). To date 44.4% of county prescribers have enrolled;
- The Verde Valley Medical Center and Yavapai Regional Medical Center administrators reviewed and approved MATFORCE resources at their physicians’ practices- this includes pain management and Rx information, and reaches approximately 200 prescribers;
- The Yavapai County Community Health Services staff members host two Community Health Improvement Plan committees, which engages over 25 community partners across the county. A new strategy to help address Rx misuse and abuse has been included in the 2015 plan: “Coordinate Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention activities”.

MATFORCE regularly uses a wide variety of outreach strategies designed to reach all age groups across the many square miles of our county. This chart describes the type of outreach, activity descriptions, the target audience, and scope of reach:

Outreach Name	Description
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>TV and Radio Commercial</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Summer 2006 - ongoing</i></li> <li>○ <i>A myriad of radio and TV commercials have been developed targeting specific and broad audiences. Many coalition members have helped to create the media pieces bringing coalition sector involvement and engagement. These commercials have run hundreds of times a month on various radio and TV stations. Topics covered include 1. Deadly Mix of alcohol and Rx; 2. Radio commercials on safeguarding medicine with the voice of a local doctor. 3. Partnership for a Drug Free America’s researched radio and TV commercials on talking to your children about substance abuse and Rx abuse. Since 2006 over \$4,000,000 of media time has been donated by media partners.</i></li> <li>○ <i>General population- Reaching a low estimate of 150,000 community members x 25+ commercials</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Pamphlets /School Display Racks</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Fall 2010 - ongoing</i></li> <li>○ <i>Over 85 information racks have been blanketed across the County. Rack cards include information on Rx abuse/disposal. Approval for the display changed school and retailer practices for allowing counter displays. Doctor offices display them in their waiting rooms.</i></li> <li>○ <i>Targeted- Rack cards are targeted to high school age youth and their parents across the county; possible reach is 50,000 people a year</i></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Electronic Billboards</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Segments of Spring 2010 – Summer 2015</i></li> <li>○ <i>On Hwys 69 and 89 substance abuse messages flash on an electronic billboard. Messages include: “Safely Store and Dispose of your Rx medications”</i></li> <li>○ <i>General Population- The information displayed every 3 minutes, 24 hours a day, for 18 various months; over 400,000 travelers could view display</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>MATFORCE Valuable Parent</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Fall 2009 - ongoing</i></li> <li>○ <i>Monthly “matfacts” (newsletters that are electronic and can be printed out for sharing) are sent to hundreds of parents each month on current substance abuse topics such as campaigns for Deadly Mix, Don’t Get Me Started, talking to your kids, Sign Up To Save Lives and more.</i></li> <li>○ <i>Targeted- Over 675 parents have joined MVP by completing a contract to be engaged with their child. Many more have received MVP information by the forwarding of the electronic newsletters.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Social Media: Websites; Facebook; U-tube; Twitter; Constant Contact</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>2008- ongoing</i></li> <li>○ <i>Posts are made on a regular basis to the MATFORCE Facebook page. MATFORCE shares information to over 2000 people who have signed up to participate through Constant Contact notices and have utilized You Tube for youth videos. Topics shared through the various venues include information for parents, talking to your children, Rx abuse, helplines; Campaign topics have included- ‘Deadly Mix’; ‘Who’s Counting’; and ‘Don’t Get Me Started’.</i></li> <li>○ <i>General Population- The various venues reach at least 3000 people a month; more with forwarded information</i></li> </ul>

The coalition’s membership is also diverse in age. Active committee members range from 15 to 80 years of age. The large geographic size of the area MATFORCE serves adds the demographic description of ‘outlying rural’ representation for the coalition. Transportation issues arise for these community members as many live over 60 miles from the coalition’s central meeting areas. To ensure that their perspective is heard, community forums are conducted in their towns; coalition meetings are scheduled at various times of the day; workgroups meet in different locations of the county; trainings and meetings are conducted with the use of tele-conferencing equipment; and announcements are made through newspaper, radio and constant contact list serves to ensure people are aware of coalition activities. The success of this diverse representation is reflected in the fact that MATFORCE has 300 active coalition members across the county!

### **E. Strategic Planning**

MATFORCE has a vast amount of experience and success in designing, updating and completing strategic and action plans. When the preliminary Rx planning process began in 2010, the main prescription drug objectives included:

- To collect and verify all data showing prescription drug abuse trends in Yavapai County;
- Insure access to all pharmacists and physicians for the state prescription drug monitoring system;
- Develop systems for identifying doctors in the area who prescribe highest amounts of pain medications;
- Identify necessary policy changes regarding prescription drug abuse;
- To develop and implement a Community Education Campaign;

- To increase enforcement regarding prescription drug abuse.

As earlier noted, in 2012 the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership selected Yavapai County to be the first test location for the statewide Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative. MATFORCE was chosen because of the many prevention approaches already had in place. The initiative focused on five strategies with specific goals under each strategy; the strategy list included:

- Reduce access to prescription drugs;
- Educate prescribers and pharmacists about “Rx drug best practices”;
- Enhance Rx drug practice and policies in law enforcement;
- Increase public awareness about the risks of Rx drug misuse;
- Build resilience in children and adults.

The Arizona Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative was based on key data findings. The 2012 implementation plan included the following information in the cover sheet. “According to data from Arizona’s Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, between 2009 and 2011, there were approximately 10 million Class II-IV prescriptions written each year in Arizona, with Rx pain relievers accounting for over half of the drugs dispensed (controlled substances are classified into five possible schedules, or classifications, based on the drug’s identified potential for abuse and other medical and safety standards – the higher the likelihood of abuse, the lower the schedule class). As the access and availability of these habit-forming Rx narcotics grows, so too does the likelihood of misuse, and moreover, the costly outcomes related to misuse. In 2010, 13 percent of Arizona adults reported some type of Rx drug misuse in the past 30 days, with half of the misuse related to Rx pain relievers. Likewise, in 2010, 10.4 percent of Arizona youth reported some type of Rx drug misuse in the past 30 days, with an alarming 76.7 percent of the misuse involving Rx pain relievers. Arizona has also seen a corresponding, and dramatic, increase in opioid-related cases in Emergency Departments and drug poisoning deaths involving Rx drugs (Arizona Department of Health Services, <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/index.htm>).”

The cover page explained that in order, “...to address the growing concern over Rx drug misuse in Arizona and related consequences, the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership has endorsed a Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative.... As a first-step toward the development of this initiative, the Governor’s Office for Children, Youth and Families and the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission hosted a Prescription Drug Expert Panel in February 2012 that involved local experts from law enforcement, the prevention field, and the medical community. Using the strategies proposed by the National Office of Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/prescription-drug-abuse>) as a starting point, the experts and attendees formulated a set of data-and-research-driven strategies to be used in a multi-systemic, multi-agency collaborative approach to reduce prescription drug misuse in Arizona.” (2012 Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative-Implementation Plan)

During the initial 2012-2013 pilot phase, the goal was to provide universal information across the county reaching at least 100,000 community members; train 300 professionals including medical and law enforcement staff members; and provide education to 5,000 youth and 250 adults. In 2015-2016, through the coalition’s work and the Strategic Prevention

Framework – Partnership for Success these strategies continue to be expanded and implemented. Universal information will reach at least 80,000 community members; education will be provided to 2,000 youth; 500 adults, including senior citizens, college age students and Tribal members, will receive education on medication safety, storage and disposal; and 200 health professionals will receive education on topics including utilizing the prescription drug monitoring system; prescriber updates (new laws and policies, resource sites, etc.); Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome; and best practice guidelines. Additionally, Dump the Drug events and take back locations will continue to collect medications with a goal of 2,000 pounds being collected this next year.

By engaging Yavapai community and coalition members, we continue to address prescription misuse and abuse across our large county. Collaboration and varied interventions are key to continuing the reduction in prescription drug abuse and increasing prevention measures. Partnerships in this ongoing effort include: Yavapai County’s Attorney’s Office, Probation Department, Health Department and Sheriff ’s Office; other city or town law enforcement agencies; our regional medical centers; doctors and pharmacists; all area schools; treatment and recovery providers; youth serving organizations; faith-based and civic organizations; businesses; and numerous community volunteers, as well as the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership and the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC). Currently there is funding support through the Arizona Department of Health Services Strategic Prevention Framework – Partnership for Success and the Arizona Parent’s Commission grant.

## **F. Implementation**

The MATFORCE program approach to addressing prescription drug abuse is innovative in that the coalition implemented several broad strategies across a large geographic region with diverse demographics. And, has documented positive results! It remains advanced in that coalition members continue to work on new strategies that will decrease prescription abuse and its devastating consequences, including educational information about heroin.

MATFORCE is unique in its approach in that the perspective of the whole community, covering over 8,000 square miles, is considered when addressing substance abuse issues. The coalition uses structured forums and informant interviews to gather community input. In January 2013 MATFORCE held two “Community Solution Forums” where community members, currently not involved in MATFORCE, gathered to discuss local conditions and possible action steps. Over 70 people from multiple communities in the county participated in the discussions.

In addition, MATFORCE works extensively with “at risk” populations and uses several settings to gather feedback from populations affected by substance abuse. The recovery community is a significant partner; multiple events celebrating recovery are held on an annual basis. MATFORCE also supports the county Drug Court and Drug Court Alumni groups. The coalition works closely with Juvenile Probation and Adult Probation and offers trained recovery coaches through the “Peer 2 Peer Recovery Coaching” program. MATFORCE established and implemented the Yavapai Reentry Project in 2010, which offers trained Community Coaches to former inmates returning to Yavapai County from the Department of Corrections. This project was the result of a conference held by MATFORCE on collaboration.

The coalition uses several processes to prioritize its work. Various committees meet monthly and include the Board of Directors, Verde Valley Steering Committee, Prescott Area

Steering Committee, Intervention Workgroup, and Greater Sedona Substance Abuse Committee. Other committees meet as needed including the Pharmacist Team Workgroup, Community Outreach Workgroup, Speakers Bureau and Evaluation Workgroup. These committees have diverse membership. On a regular basis the committees discuss process objectives, action steps and interventions for the projects they are implementing. The action plans have prioritized action steps and informed this application as the myriad of environmental change strategies are completed by numerous coalition members and community partners.

The coalition is comprised of over 300 diverse volunteers. MATFORCE is a true coalition with members, not staff, doing a majority of the work. This is evidenced by the fact that the program’s staff consists of four part time positions yet there is regularly a vast array of projects being conducted across the county. In addition, the board of directors believes in recognizing and celebrating success. Many of the coalition members have received local and state awards for their accomplishments. Volunteers are also recognized, which helps to ensure the continued sustainability of the coalition’s work.

The support system for this program is the MATFORCE coalition structure including the board, work groups, volunteers, and staff members. As mentioned earlier, steps are taken to insure that the coalition membership is diverse and action steps address all cultures in the community. Being culturally competent is the basis of the coalition’s structure. When people have different beliefs, norms, values, attitudes and behaviors a culture of respect allows for these opinions to be communicated and talked through striving for middle ground. The values of the coalition include “with determination and integrity”, this value statement is a part of our mission statement. The values of “transparency and respect” were also approved by the Board of Directors, are specified in our strategic plan, and utilized within this program.

The scale and level of the outreach conducted with this program is listed within the chart under Building Capacity section of the application. The changes in data show a change in community norms such as: county youth 30-day use of prescription pain relievers during weekends and some weekday use (10-19x past 30 days) decreased by 50%. (source: 2014 Arizona Youth Survey). A corporate policy changes, SB 1124, and SB 1370 clearly demonstrates that community norms have changed because of dedicated work that included our coalition members’ efforts.

Yavapai County is a community of approximately 210,000 people. Because of the extensive outreach and multi-faceted approach, over 90% of the county’s population has been impacted by the one or more strategies being used to address prescription drug abuse. Some cumulative program totals reported to the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission as of June 30, 2015 include:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Number reached</b>
Rx360 Curriculum for youth (middle and high school)	206	13,739
Community Events	490	32,488
Media/Material Dissemination	183	1,070,330
Door to Door Contact with Prescribers	115	682
Total pounds of Medications Collected	64	17,060.84

Because the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission designed an Rx Toolkit for the Arizona Rx Drug Misuse and Abuse Initiative, based on the successes of the pilot sites, the majority of the updated program strategies can be replicated by other sites and states. The key to being successful is to have an engaged community and a trusted, lead organization or coalition. Using the Initiatives strategies and goals, and the SPF planning model, programs will be successful.

## G. Evaluation

Major impacts centered on reducing the number of prescription pills available in our county that could then get into the wrong hands; increased awareness by prescribers along with increased use of the prescription drug monitor program (PDMP); and decreased youth abuse of prescription drugs. Statistics include:

### Short-Term Outcomes

- Opiate/Opioid related deaths in Arizona decreased by 28.29% in the three pilot counties implementing the Arizona Drug Reduction Initiative compared to a 4.09% increase in deaths in non-pilot counties. (source: 2014 Arizona Criminal Justice Commission report)
- There has been a 64.7% increase in knowledge of proper storage methods in the Arizona Drug Reduction Initiative pilot counties. (source: 2014 Arizona Criminal Justice Commission report)

### Intermediate Outcomes

- Between June 2012 and August 2015 the Yavapai Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) sign-up increased 137.4% for prescribers; 264.7% for pharmacists; and 133.3% in law enforcement. (source: 2015 AZ Substance Abuse Partnership) (figure 1)
- An increase of 8.7% was shown for the reason “it can cause physical harm” by non-Rx youth users in Yavapai County. (source: 2014 Arizona Criminal Justice Commission report) (figure 2)

### Long-term Outcomes

- Youth prescription drug misuse in Yavapai County has decreased 42.3%, 54.6% and 67.6% for 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders, respectively. (source: 2014 Arizona Youth Survey) (figure 3)
- Data from the Arizona State Board of Pharmacy shows a reduction in the number of pills dispensed, which is a measure of decrease in abuse and illegal pill resale. Between 2009 and 2013 Hydrocodone decreased by 8.8% and Oxycodone by 5.5%. (source: 2014 Arizona Criminal Justice Commission report)
- The Arizona Governor signed SB 1124 allowing prescribers to assign an office designee. (April 2014)

<b>Yavapai County: Arizona Rx Drug Misuse and Abuse Initiative Evaluator’s Report</b>				
<b>August 2015 PDMP Sign-ups</b>	<b>Law Enforcement</b>	<b>Prescribers</b>	<b>Pharmacists</b>	<b>Delegates</b>
6/1/2012	18	163	34	16
8/1/2015	42	387	124	32
% Increase	133.33	137.42	264.71	100.00
# of Total Prescribers in Area	-	871	-	-
% Prescribers Signed Up	-	44.43	-	-

Figure 1

The Arizona Rx Drug Misuse and Abuse Initiative  
Arizona Criminal Justice Commission 2014 Report

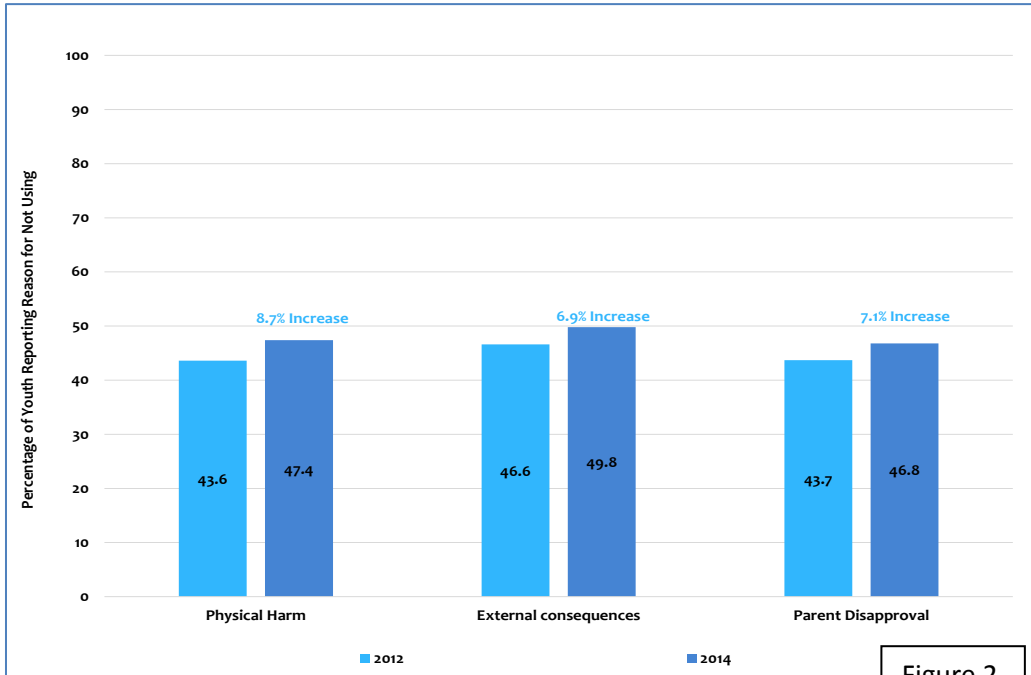


Figure 2

2014 Arizona Youth Survey: Total n= 2010  
(8<sup>th</sup> Graders n=877 10<sup>th</sup> Graders n=698 12<sup>th</sup> Graders n=435)

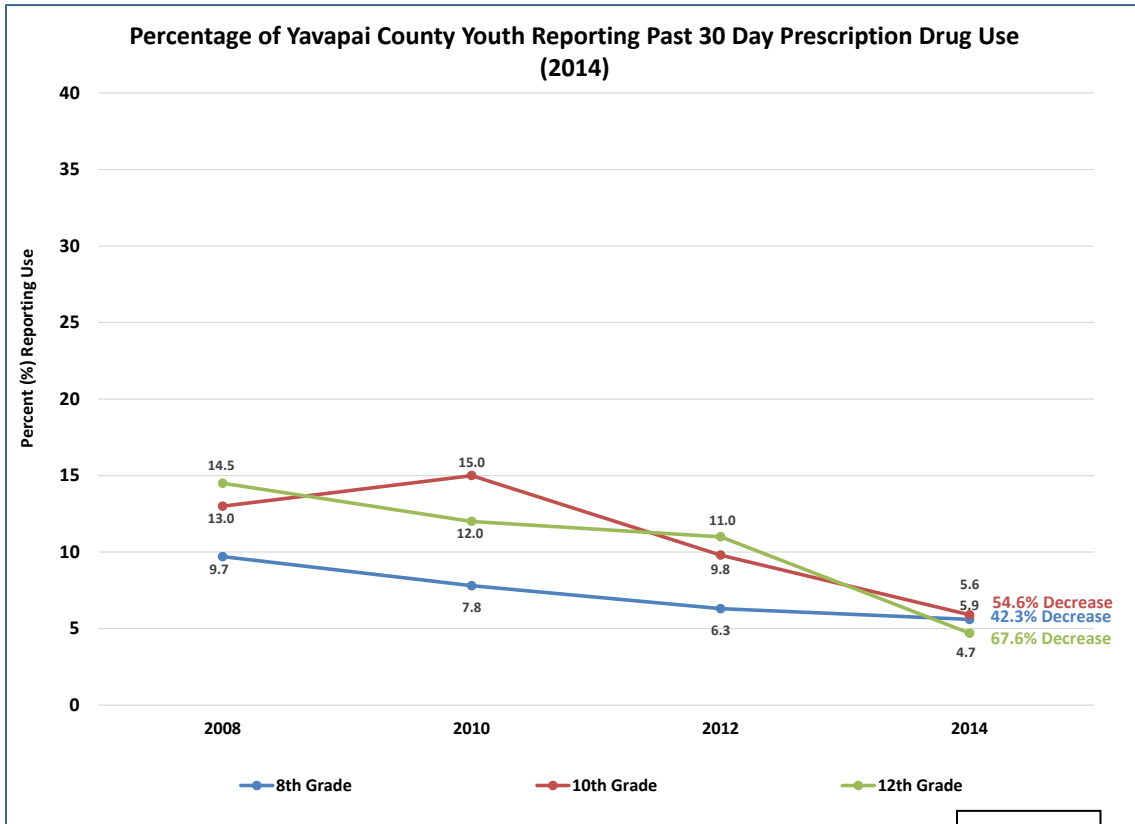


Figure 3



MATFORCE utilizes several methods for assessing quantitative and qualitative data as evidence of the progress being made in achieving goals and objectives. Also, we document changes in policies and practices that have occurred because of the work of the coalition members. The following data sources were used to track statistics for the strategies described in this application:

Quantitative student survey data source:

- Arizona Youth Survey (AYS)- The AYS is administered biannually since 2004 by the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission to 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders to identify the pervasiveness of youth delinquency in Arizona.

Other quantitative survey data sources:

- Arizona Department of Health Services- The mortality data is housed by the ADHS and captures the primary and contributing cause of death listed on death certificates in Arizona each year.
- AZ Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP)- The PDMP is a central repository maintained by the State Board of Pharmacy that houses every Class II-IV controlled substance dispensed in the state of Arizona; data here-in are based on a calendar year. The Board also provides the number and percent of providers currently signed up to use the PDMP.

Along with the data points listed above, by the end of 2013, coalition and community members documented these major accomplishments:

Reducing the number of prescription pills available in our county that could then get into the wrong hands:

- An extensive public education campaign on the risks of prescription drug misuse and abuse and the importance of proper disposal reached over 100,000 people;
- Community events where prescription drug misuse and abuse is talked about reached 9,708 people;
- 10 permanent prescription drug drop boxes were installed at law enforcement offices;
- A record 2,900+ pounds of medication collected at Dump the Drugs events in one year.

Increased awareness by prescribers along with increased use of the prescription drug monitor program (PDMP):

- 229 people from the medical communities were involved in meetings to address the issue;
- Verde Valley and Yavapai Regional Medical Centers implemented new, stricter policies for emergency department dispensing of opioid prescriptions;
- PDMP sign up increased from 14% in 2011 to 44.5% in 2015; over a 218% increase!

Decreased youth abuse of prescription drugs:

- Research-based educational presentations made to 5,859 youth and 263 adults;
- Prescription drug abuse among youth fell from 24% to 18%.

The goal for creating this program was to reduce the use and misuse of prescription drugs in Yavapai County. After reviewing the data, community involvement and changes in policies, MATFORCE, believes we have met expectations to reduce prescription drug misuse and abuse in Yavapai County. However, the work goes on as new Rx related issues continue to emerge.

## **H. Program Management**

MATFORCE is 501(c) 3, not for profit agency, with a governing board of directors as well as the county's substance abuse coalition. A key resource is coalition members and the work they do in our communities. Board members, committee members, volunteers and staff utilize numerous resources ensuring program success. The Co-Chairs of MATFORCE are Yavapai County Attorney Sheila Polk and Cottonwood City Manager Doug Bartosh. Sheila serves as the Chair of the Prescott Area Steering Committee of MATFORCE and Doug serves as the Chair of the Verde Valley Steering Committee of MATFORCE. Both Sheila and Doug have been instrumental in many coalition outcomes. They attended meetings with the area hospital administration, asking them to change their policies for prescribing opioids from the Emergency Departments. Currently all four hospital campuses in Yavapai County have implemented the recommended policies. Doug and Sheila have attended meetings with corporate pharmacies and state legislators to further the implementation steps of the Prescription Drug Reduction Initiative that MATFORCE implements.

MATFORCE board member, Dr. Leon Cattolico, has been an essential partner working towards the reduction of prescription drug abuse in Yavapai County. As a physician and former pharmacist, Dr. Cattolico brings a unique perspective to the problem. He uses a one-on-one approach, tirelessly talking with physicians, corporate pharmacies, local pharmacists, the business community, the Veterans Administration, administrators at area hospitals, media and state leaders seeking methods to limit diversion of prescription pills or abuse. He assisted in developing new protocols that are being implemented both locally and statewide. Dr. Cattolico formed a MATFORCE Pharmacist Team that provides local support to pharmacists and messaging statewide on using the Prescription Drug Monitoring System. In addition, other board members engage in planning, implementing, and evaluating various prescription reduction strategies.

There are over 300 active committee members in the coalition in addition to hundreds of volunteers who assist with coalition projects. MATFORCE has membership in all 12 community sectors who actively contribute to the coalition's success. Law enforcement implements prescription drug take back events. Following the success of the first Dump the Drugs event in 2008, law enforcement agencies in the county met and decided to accept medications during regular business hours. We believe we were the first in the United States to implement these RX take back policies. Currently, nine different law enforcement agencies accept prescription medications with 10 permanent drop box locations. To assist with the implementation of the Rx Initiative, officers formed the Rx Prescription Drug Task Force. The task force worked on changing policies for tracking offenses where Rx drugs were present. Law enforcement has been active in education through the speaker's bureau, community events, radio and TV shows, and by providing Drug Recognition trainings to school staff, professionals and parents

The medical community is an active partner of MATFORCE. The two area hospitals have agreed to implement new protocol for prescribing opioids medicines to reduce prescription drug abuse and doctor shopping. Area physicians and pharmacists are members of MATFORCE and have assisted with multiple strategies to reduce prescription drug abuse. The medical community also assisted with implementing the "Who's Counting" campaign; supported training on the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program; partnered in the "Sign-up to Save Lives" campaign; and displayed MATFORCE Alerts and take back locations in their waiting rooms.

Three major pharmacies: Walgreens, CVS and Wal-Mart, changed their policies for allowing pharmacists to access the PDMP through the efforts of the medical community's coalition members. The medical community also has assisted with radio and TV programs, educating the public on the risks of Rx medications. The Arizona Board of Pharmacy, partnering with the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, sent out Prescribing Report Cards to all physicians in Yavapai County to alert them about their prescribing practices.

Media is an active partner of MATFORCE and provides much appreciated in-kind media. Cable One, Yavapai Broadcasting and multiple area newspapers all participate with the coalition. In the past 9 years over \$2,200,000 of free media has been contributed in the form of TV and radio advertisements, newspaper articles, and other media promotions. Cable One has produced 11 different TV commercials promoting prescription take back events, safe Rx disposal, and various educational Lunch 'n Learns all at no charge. All 11 public school districts in Yavapai County and multiple charter and private schools are partners of MATFORCE. The curriculum Rx360 has been provided to over 9,000 students. Other school based activities include the Youth Video Contest; Youth Poster Contest; MATFORCE Valuable Parent Program; Red Ribbon Week activities; parenting education; school assemblies on substance abuse issues; Peer Assisted Leadership; parent guides; and MATFORCE rack card displays containing a variety of substance abuse education materials.

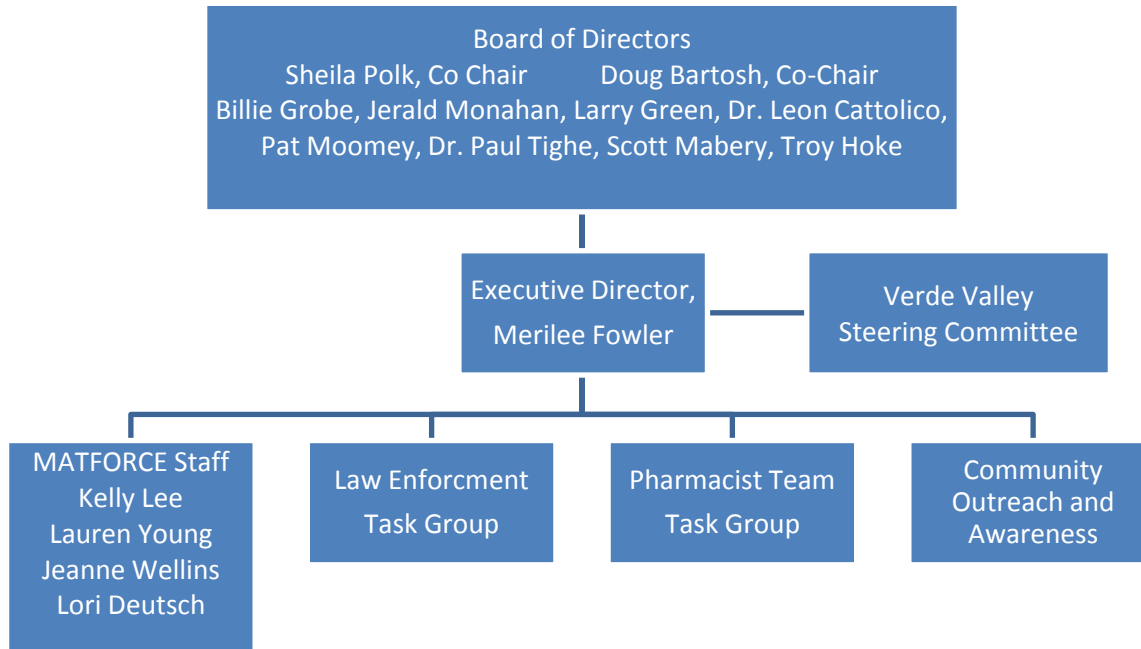
MATFORCE staff members implement strategies such as providing information on securing and disposing of prescription drugs, drop box locations and take back programs; building skills and enhancing knowledge through school based curricula such as Keep a Clear Mind and Rx360; educating healthcare professionals on topics including: utilizing the prescription drug monitoring system, patient education to improve prescription literacy, Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome, and best practice guidelines; as well as providing tools to senior citizens, parents and community members on medication safety, storage and disposal, and about talking to youth about the dangers of medicine misuse and abuse.

The coalition uses several venues for sharing data and successes. An annual report is produced and shared with the community members. Quantitative data is tracked, plotted and shared to show trend line data. Press releases are produced on a regular basis which presents the progress of the coalition; over 100 newspaper articles were published throughout the county in a one year's time. Constant contact notices, FaceBook and Twitter are also used to highlight successes. At monthly Lunch 'n Learns announcements are made on the progresses of the coalition. Speakers Bureau members discuss the achievements of the coalition at speaking engagements. Outcomes are provided at parenting education classes, school events, and community events. Results are shared through TV and radio talk shows and public service announcements. The committees of the coalition meet on a regular basis; announcements are made at each meeting, updating the members on coalition progress and outcomes, and include quantitative and qualitative data.

The overall structure for implementing prescription strategies has been refined and is outlined in the program's organizational chart. Much of the school-based education is delivered by MATFORCE staff members while many of the other activities are completed by coalition volunteers. Funding is strategically directed to meet the costs of implementing the robust plan to reduce the misuse and use of prescription drugs in Yavapai County.

*Thank you for considering our application!*

**The MATFORCE - 2015-2016 Organizational Chart:  
Strategies to Address Prescription Drug Abuse in Yavapai County**



**The MATFORCE - 2015-2016 Budget and Narrative supporting:  
Strategies to Address Prescription Drug Abuse in Yavapai County**

Source of Funding / Resources	Percentage of total budget	Dollar Amount	Amount of Funding Stream used to implement Prescription Drug Activities	Budget Narrative
SPF PFS Grant	24.20%	\$111,000	\$45,000	Funds are used for general outreach and awareness costs; trainings; school based education; materials for prescribers and patients; personal costs; and evaluation
Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant	15.20%	\$70,000	\$0	
State Funds-Parent Commission grant	41.00%	\$188,537	\$25,000	Education in schools by health educators. Parenting education, supplies and printing costs
In-Kind Contributions-Media	19.60%	\$90,000	\$35,000	Newspaper articles, radio and TV commercials about safety and disposal of prescription drugs
<b>Total</b>	100%	\$459,537	\$105,000	