

PENNSYLVANIA

USE OF STR/SOR GRANT FUNDS TO ADDRESS THE OPIOID CRISIS

Background on opioid-specific grants to States

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. These grants aim 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 activities for opioid use disorder (OUD) in the States. States received a total of \$500 million for each of FY 2017 and FY 2018 through STR. Additionally, in FY 2018, States received an additional \$1 billion in new funding through the SOR grants. In FY 2019, States received \$1.5 billion through SOR. Eligible applicants for both STR and SOR are the State alcohol and drug agencies.

Allocations for Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania received \$26.5 million through STR for each of FY 2017 and 2018, and \$55.9 million through SOR in FY 2018. In FY 2019, Pennsylvania received a total of \$85.1 million through SOR.

Overview of Pennsylvania's efforts to address the opioid crisis

Pennsylvania continues to develop comprehensive initiatives to battle the opioid crisis, with a continued focus on **increasing access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) and initiatives centered around evidence-based practices**. The initiatives are holistic and sustainable and help the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) tie programs to community needs, ensuring the State is helping the most vulnerable people who are battling OUD.

STR/SOR funds are being utilized to focus on best practices and implementation for guidelines of care for all individuals, with particular focus on special populations such as pregnant women, veterans, adolescents, and seniors. Pennsylvania now also provides a 24/7/365 helpline which boasts a warm-handoff transfer for all individuals in need of treatment. STR/SOR funds are also being utilized for an anti-stigma campaign that highlights diverse and multicultural individuals.

Prevention: stopping opioid misuse before it starts

Pennsylvania has utilized a substantial amount of STR/SOR funding for prevention efforts, including:

- **Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP)** – Funding was used to expand and facilitate widespread use of the PDMP system as a clinical decision tool. Through the PDMP, data is now integrated at the point-of-care, which significantly improves access to patient data and increasing facilitating referrals into treatment. Approximately 97,000 prescribers and delegates have registered with the PDMP, with the program's database averaging more than 1.1 million monthly searches.
- **School-Based Student Assistance** – Funding is being used to provide training to school personnel to improve the identification and referral of students for assessment and treatment. This program includes the development of several new drug and alcohol-specific web-based training courses on the integration of evidence-based prevention programs and school-wide positive behavior supports into the classroom. The DDAP works very closely with each Single County Authority (SCA) to ensure the money is spent on programs that will directly impact their communities.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns** – The Commonwealth has done substantial work in advertising the State's "Get Help Now" helpline. Since its inception, the helpline has received more than 47,000 calls with 45 percent of those individuals being directly connected to treatment through a warm-line transfer.
- **Opioid Stewardship** – Funding is being used toward improving the quality of prescribing practices through prescriber education. Education has focused on opioid prescribing guidelines, use of the PDMP system in clinical workflows, effective tapering of opioids, referral to treatment, and how to sustain the culture of change. More than 10,000 physicians have been educated since STR year 1 (FY 2017).
- **Veterans in Crisis Outreach** – Pennsylvania has launched a media campaign focusing on education, prevention and identification of OUD for Pennsylvania veterans, their families and/or caregivers. Additionally, the campaign promotes awareness of the resources available for referrals to treatment. The design and development of the campaign by way of a 30-second television commercial, 15 or 30 second radio advertisement, public transportation and digital media outlets were released in early July and will continue through September 2019.
- **Prescriber Education** – Through the Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract for the Elderly (PACE) Academic Detailing program, prescriber education outreach was expanded to 630 PACE enrolled prescribers in high- and moderate-risk counties in Pennsylvania. These additional prescribers allowed for a wider range of older adults to gain benefits from interactive education of their physicians in those counties.

Increasing access to treatment

- **Serving the uninsured and underinsured:** The largest amount of money spent through STR/SOR funding has been through formulated allocations for the Commonwealth's 47 SCAs to assist in securing treatment and support services for individuals who are uninsured and underinsured. SCAs are responsible for the oversight of substance use disorder (SUD) services delivered at the local level.
 - Pennsylvania has established priority populations in addressing homelessness, pregnant women, veterans, and individuals exiting correctional facilities.
 - Through SOR funding, the State has funded a health home for pregnant women with OUD to provide comprehensive physical and behavioral health care to pregnant women with OUD.
- **Care coordination:** In addition to enhancing MAT and full continuum of care services, funding has been utilized to increase care coordination provided by the SCAs or their contracted case management and recovery support providers.
- **MAT for individuals involved in criminal justice settings:** Pennsylvania has significantly expanded access to MAT to those which are incarcerated. As of April 2018, injectable naltrexone is available at all State Correctional Institutions (SCIs) for medically appropriate inmates prior to their institutional release. The State has also hired an Addiction Medicine Specialist to serve individuals in correctional facilities suffering from SUD. Pennsylvania has also begun a Buprenorphine Pilot Program at an SCI for women.
- **Drug Courts:** In collaboration with the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, funds were provided to 11 counties in Pennsylvania to bolster local drug court programs. This included a variety of services including, but not limited to: individual/group counseling provided through a Juvenile Treatment Court; Children Youth Services provided through Family Treatment Court; and the establishment of a drug court in a county that did not have one.

Supporting recovery

Through SOR funding, DDAP has launched a **pilot housing project** funding 18 urban and rural counties throughout the Commonwealth. The goal of the initiative is to help OUD individuals to remain engaged in treatment while providing the necessary support services to promote recovery and personal independence. The project includes the following services:

- Comprehensive, evidence-based case management to support individuals on their road to recovery;
- Housing support services and education to assist individuals live full and independent lives; and
- Short-term rental assistance, as needed, to ensure housing is not a barrier to recovery.

This intensive case management and support services initiative has assisted over 440 individuals from April to June of 2019. The types of services and number of individuals are as follows:

Service Category	Number of Individuals Receiving Service
Case Management	447
Housing Support Services	281
Housing Education Services	246
Short-Term Rental Assistance (provided in a single month)	44
Emergency Financial Assistance / One-Time Costs (provided in a single month)	22
Employment / Job Services (provided and/or referrals)	81
Transportation Services	47

Additionally, referrals for other services were made as follows:

Referral Type	Number of Referrals Made
Counseling	51
Medication-Assisted Treatment	7
Co-Occurring Treatment / Recovery Services	39
Other (food, medical, legal, ancillary needs, etc.)	66

Evidence-Based Practices

Pennsylvania has developed comprehensive educational programming in the evidence based areas of Motivational Interviewing (MI), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Trauma Informed Care (TIC), as well as deployed Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) through the Center for Motivation and Change. Pennsylvania has applied evidence-based learning mechanisms to the disciplines of MI, CBT, and TIC by going beyond traditional training to ensure knowledge transfer and fidelity to each model. Designed for personalized learning, each curriculum employs direct and informal instruction, to include experiential and cooperative learning up to eight months after initial training. Through long term case review and quality improvement planning, these allow clinicians to test and hone skills with the benefit of expert coaching and feedback.

Funds have also been made available to the SCAs to **strengthen the existing continuum of care through enhancement to case management (CM) and certified recovery specialist (CRS) services** through a professional and peer-based services for any individual with an OUD.

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