

Addressing Opioid and Stimulant Misuse and 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 (RSS) 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): New Mexico Human Services Department

In FY 2017 and FY 2018, the New Mexico Human Services Department received a total of \$9.4 million in STR funding. From FY 2018 through FY 2020, the state received a total of \$20.8 million in SOR funding.

Overview of New Mexico’s efforts to address opioid and stimulant misuse and disorders

The overall goals for STR and SOR are to address the OUD and stimulant use disorder crisis by reducing morbidity and mortality associated with OUD and stimulant use disorder. Specifically, the goals are to:

- Increase the number of people who receive treatment services for OUD and stimulant use disorder
- Increase the number of people who receive recovery services for OUD and stimulant use disorder
- Increase the number of providers offering MAT for OUD
- Increase the number of people trained to prevent, treat, provide recovery support, and offer harm reduction services to those with OUD and stimulant use disorder
- Decrease the rates of opioid overdose-related deaths and opioid use in New Mexico

Innovative service delivery models

- Collaborative Hubs Model
- Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program
- Low-threshold MAT clinics
- Telehealth MAT clinic
- PAX Good Behavior Game (GBG) and Indigenous PAX (Tribal communities and schools)
- Fire department overdose survivor outreach

Building workforce capacity

Expansion of MAT for OUD: MAT trainings are being implemented, focusing on prescribing, treatment, and recovery.

- **DATA 2000 Waiver Training:** The New Mexico Human Services Department offered statewide Drug Addiction Treatment Act (DATA) 2000 waiver trainings to provide the first 4 hours of required in-person education. This training is provided monthly and includes in-person and Zoom-based formats. Additional technical assistance is offered in person and via the MAT TeleECHO Program to provide detailed and ongoing support to providers expanding MAT for OUD services.
- **Safer Opioid Prescribing Trainings:** This 5-hour in-person training helps health care providers learn about best practices in the use of opioids to treat pain, including dangerous prescribing combinations, and expands provider awareness and skills in pain management using non-opioid pharmacological and nonpharmacological approaches. Additional technical assistance is offered to providers to support their skills in safer opioid prescribing and treatment of chronic pain.
- **MAT ECHO:** New Mexico Opioid Hub is a co-sponsor of the MAT TeleECHO Program, which provides weekly education, guidance, support, and consultation to all New Mexico providers and staff in MAT for OUD, including prescribing, psychosocial supports, community resources, and recovery. <https://echo.unm.edu/teleecho-programs/mat>
- **Psychosocial Supports:** Under STR, the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) provided statewide trainings on Motivational Interviewing, patient placement criteria, and the Community Reinforcement Approach (a psychosocial intervention). Under SOR, CYFD is providing comprehensive training to its staff in the Nurtured Heart Approach to positively impact CYFD's work with New Mexico's children and families. Additionally, SOR continues to provide trainings to support MAT expansion, including Seeking Safety, Historical Trauma, American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) criteria, and Certified Peer Support.
- **Integrated Quality Service Review (iQSR):** SOR partners with Dr. Kate Gibbons to host half-day training opportunities for iQSR training. This training helps agencies to differentiate quality service review and auditing processes, explains how iQSR measures practice expectations, and distinguishes components of the review process. The 2-day version also trains on how to apply iQSR measures and demonstrate scoring of iQSR measures.
- **Contingency Management:** This training is an overview of the behavioral theories within Contingency Management for a deeper understanding of what it is, how and why it works. It includes information on recommended screening and data collection procedures necessary to

accurately enroll and track clients. It refers to a type of therapy in which individuals are reinforced/rewarded for positive behavioral change to get clients to come back.

- **Basic ASAM Criteria:** SOR partners with the New Mexico Consortium for Behavioral Health Training and Research to host monthly Basic ASAM Criteria trainings. This training covers the comprehensive set of guidelines for placement, continued stay, transfer, or discharge of patients with addiction and co-occurring conditions. It is a strength-based multidimensional assessment that considers a patient’s needs, obstacles, and liabilities, as well as their strengths, assets, resources, and support structure.
- **Promotores de Bienestar:** SOR partners with the National Latino Behavioral Health Association (NLBHA) to host these trainings that contain highly illustrative culturally relevant content that emphasizes wellness pertaining to mental health, substance use, and physical health. It also includes Narcan training and is conducted in both English and Spanish.
- **Culturally Informed Practices:** SOR partners with NLBHA to host this training that helps participants gain knowledge of cultural and linguistic considerations, demographics, and disparities in New Mexico. It also delivers effective practices and approaches in serving the diverse populations of New Mexico.
- **Peer-Focused Trainings:** STR/SOR partners with the New Mexico Office of Peer Recovery and Engagement (OPRE) to offer multiple peer-focused trainings that include Ethics, Overdose Prevention and Narcan Distribution, Cultural Competency, and Motivational Interviewing.

Expansion of Narcan Training for Professional First Responders

- Law Enforcement Training International (LETI): LETI employs active law enforcement officers to provide training to their peers in overdose prevention and Narcan training to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies across the state.
- The Lieving Group: The statewide Overdose Prevention Education Coordinator, Bernie Lieving, trains firefighters and federal, state, and local law enforcement officers on overdose response, harm reduction, opioids and their impact in New Mexico, and on New Mexico statutes related to overdose prevention.

Collaborating with public and private entities

STR/SOR collaborations include the following:

- Hold monthly STR/SOR Governance Board Meetings on Prescription Drug Overdose (PDO) with representatives from state agencies (e.g., Behavioral Health Services Division [BHSD] and Department of Health), county organizations (e.g., Bernalillo County Community Health Council, City of Albuquerque Opioid Prevention, Doña Ana County Health and Human Services Department, Santa Fe Public Schools Office of Student Wellness, Rio Arriba Department of Health and Human Services), provider organizations (e.g., Centro Family Health, Southwest Care Center, The Lieving Group), state organizations (e.g., New Mexico Association of Counties, New Mexico Crisis and Access Line, New Mexico Hispanic Medical Association, Drug Policy Alliance), federal entities (e.g., U.S. Attorney’s Office, U.S. National Guard, U.S. Probation Office District of New Mexico), private companies and nonprofit organizations (e.g., Coop Consulting, Inc., Invisible City Designs, Pacific Institute of Research and Evaluation (PIRE-Southwest), PK Public Relations), and the University of New Mexico (UNM).

- Facilitate weekly Central Hub team meeting with UNM and BHSD key leadership.
- Facilitate bimonthly Opioid Public Relations Meetings, with stakeholders involved in New Mexico’s multi-agency opioid public relations campaign, including Bernalillo County, BHSD, the Department of Health, the Department of Transportation, UNM, PK Public Relations, Network of Care, OPRE, Recovery Communities of New Mexico, and the New Mexico Crisis and Access Line.
- Attend monthly Governor’s Opioid Task Force meetings, led by the New Mexico Department of Health to coordinate statewide efforts.
- Host guest speakers from various STR/SOR hubs at PDO advisory meetings.
- Collaborate with the New Mexico Department of Health, the New Mexico Crisis and Access Line, the University of New Mexico Hospital’s Poison Control Center, and independent providers to expand virtual peer warmline services.
- Collaborate with the New Mexico Department of Health, the UNM Hospital Poison Control Center, the UNM Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, the Addictions and Substance Abuse Programs at UNM Health, and, and other independent providers to develop 24/7 support for hospitals starting buprenorphine treatment for persons with OUD.

Preventing opioid and stimulant misuse before it starts

PAX Good Behavior Game: The PAX GBG is an evidence-based program with positive long-term outcomes, including reduced need for special education services and reductions in substance misuse. PAX GBG has been implemented widely in New Mexico and is expanding under SOR funding. PAX GBG is being implemented in 1,688 classrooms in 15 community public school districts, reaching 36,166 students. A version adapted for Tribal schools and communities, Indigenous PAX, is being implemented in 499 classrooms in 14 tribal school districts, reaching 9,824 students.

Education and public awareness

A Dose of Reality: A Dose of Reality (ADOR) media campaign builds on existing media efforts that began under BHSD’s Partnerships for Success II grant. ADOR, under SOR, expanded the social media focus and user-friendly website that provides information to the public about overdose prevention, naloxone use, MAT, and combating stigma toward treatment of persons with OUD. The website is available in both English and Spanish. SOR funds have supported media specifically developed to reach New Mexico’s Native American and Spanish-speaking populations.

Overdose reversal efforts: saving lives

The Office of Substance Abuse Prevention within BHSD contracts with training partners to offer opioid education and naloxone distribution to reduce opioid overdose deaths. In addition, community providers who have received training and passed a fidelity check train in their communities and distribute Narcan. As of March 2021, 29,283 people have been trained and 26,989 naloxone kits have been distributed through STR and SOR. As of March 2021, there have been 312 reported reversals. Agencies trained have included peer support groups providing outreach to people using drugs, school staff and students, Native American communities and agencies, and state employees working in aging and child protective services.

County Opioid Overdose Program: The Santa Fe County Fire Department uses a social worker paired with an emergency medical technician (EMT) to perform follow-up calls and site visits to overdose

survivors identified through 911 calls and through the emergency departments. They offer overdose prevention education, naloxone training and kits, health check-ups, and referrals to services (e.g., treatment, Medicaid, housing). This project was initiated using SOR funds and is now fully funded by Santa Fe County. The program continues to distribute SOR-procured Narcan. Staff have trained 155 people in overdose prevention and distributed 253 Narcan kits through March 2021.

Law Enforcement Training International provides 100–165 overdose prevention education and naloxone trainings to New Mexico law enforcement agencies per year. Under SOR, LETI has trained 2,509 law enforcement officers with SOR funds and distributed 3,658 kits through March 2021.

The Tribal outreach coordinator performs opioid outreach to New Mexico’s 23 tribes, pueblos, and nations. The coordinator provides naloxone resources and trainings incorporating information relevant to primary prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and recovery. The Tribal outreach coordinator has trained 190 people with SOR funds and distributed 190 kits as of March 2021.

Increasing access to treatment

Collaborative Hubs Model

STR and SOR use the evidence-based hub-and-spoke model, which facilitates a strong, coordinated, and sustainable approach to the expansion of OUD-related services. This model ensures that providers receive the same information and develop consistent language and processes as they expand their skills in treatment, prevention, and RSS for OUD. STR adapted this model to fit the landscape and resources of New Mexico, where it is referred to as the Collaborative Hubs model. The Extensions for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) model and the New Mexico Opioid Hub website (<https://newmexico.networkofcare.org/mh/content.aspx?cid=4229>) help to link providers statewide in the Collaborative Hubs model. Regional hubs include collaborating health and addictions professionals who provide MAT, psychosocial interventions, and recovery services.

The New Mexico Bridge Project supports emergency departments statewide in establishing MAT programs and provides technical assistance, trainings, support with peer workers and community referrals, and ongoing resources through online materials. A small, northern New Mexico hospital was the first hospital to partner with New Mexico Bridge, and it went live in February. Initial meetings are underway with a potential second hospital site in western New Mexico that works with Tribal communities. A New Mexico Bridge website is currently being developed for ongoing support to partnering and potential new facilities.

MAT in Criminal Justice Settings

The Jail-Based MAT program is currently partnering with a county detention center in the eastern part of New Mexico. This program provides technical assistance, trainings to staff, medical providers, and community stakeholders, and tools/resources to county detention centers seeking to start a MAT program within their facilities. Facility training is occurring on the topic of stigma.

Sage Neuroscience, a partnering agency located in Albuquerque, is working to increase MAT through telehealth visits for patients with OUD who may not have a provider, live where there is no provider, or do not have access to walk-in community resources.

Supporting long-term recovery

The Certified Peer Support Worker (CPSW) training has included enhancement to address OUD and MAT. This training has been offered statewide through OPRE. STR funding allowed for over 100 CPSWs to be trained.

SOR grant funding allowed for Inside Out Recovery to provide RSS in the hardest-hit region of New Mexico, Rio Arriba County and surrounding areas. To date, they have reported over 6,000 peer-based RSS encounters.

All STR- and SOR-funded regional hubs providing MAT services also provided direct RSS or a referral to a local RSS agency. These hubs have reported over 2,100 RSS encounters to date.

With SOR funding, core MAT hubs and emergency departments are offered a full-time peer. The role of the peer is to stay engaged with clients monthly, support the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) data collection tool, and refer clients to community services. In lieu of a full-time peer funding, the MAT hub may access a peer warmline to help client/patient link to community treatment and RSS.

Serving special populations

New Mexico is expanding their LEAD program to at least one new southern site. Efforts are currently underway to expand LEAD for two new Tribal sites. New Mexico also looks to expand awareness of MAT across New Mexico's detention facilities and provide technical assistance to counties on how to successfully implement MAT within these settings.

Tribal summits and learning collaboratives were held in partnership with the UNM Honoring Native Life program, Indian Health Service Albuquerque Area Office, and Native communities. These events focused on awareness of, community readiness, and strategic planning to address opioid treatment in culturally and community congruent ways. SOR will continue to work with Tribal communities individually to assess for community readiness to tackle issues related to chronic pain and opioid use. SOR staff are currently participating in a regional Tribal opioid workgroup convened by the Albuquerque Area Southwest Tribal Epidemiology Center.

The New Mexico Human Services Department implements an adaptation of the PAX GBG called Indigenous PAX to provide primary prevention in Tribal schools. The adaptation is oriented much more intentionally toward engagement beyond the school district staff and students to the community as a whole.

In 2019, New Mexico Human Services Department developed an opioid awareness media campaign through the ADOR website and media channels to inform Native Americans; the campaign featured the work of renowned cartoonist Ricardo Caté of Santo Domingo/Kewa Pueblo. The same campaign was adapted for public health messaging regarding COVID-19.

In 2021, the New Mexico Human Services Department is developed a Spanish-language multimedia campaign to provide information on primary prevention of overdoses as well as information on responding to an overdose with Narcan; the campaign uses the format of a telenovela.

Since 2017, the New Mexico Human Services Department has collaborated with the New Mexico Association of Counties to provide Narcan to those exiting detention centers who are at greater risk of overdose after incarceration. As of March 2021, over 8,998 people have been trained and 1,424 kits have been distributed to people leaving detention through this effort.

Demonstrating outcomes for a healthier future

Data as of December 31, 2020:

- 1,118 practitioners are DATA-waivered statewide and of those, 378 are nurse practitioners and physician assistants.
- 8,154 patients were prescribed buprenorphine statewide for treatment of OUD.
- 5,973 patients were prescribed methadone statewide.
- 1,978 patients from STR/SOR hubs were prescribed MAT (buprenorphine, methadone, or naltrexone).
- 10 patients from SOR hubs received treatment for stimulant use disorder.

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