

National Prescription Opiate Litigation (NPOL)
Project: END OVERDOSE MKE
Taking an Equity Focus to the Opioid Crisis in Milwaukee

National Prescription Opiate Litigation (NPOL):

Nationwide settlements have been reached and \$26 billion dollars is set to be disbursed countrywide for National Prescription Opioid Litigation. The state of Wisconsin is expecting approximately \$400 million, of which Wisconsin will keep 30% of it, and distribute the remaining 70% to local and tribal municipalities. The City of Milwaukee is expecting 28 million over the course of 18 years and the first \$609,000 is expected in early Fall 2022.

Introduction:

The City of Milwaukee has been battling the opioid crisis for decades and the pandemic has exacerbated this tragedy. Despite efforts in increased harm reduction throughout the city, numbers are continuing to rise, creating a call to action. Numbers for fatal and non-fatal overdoses show that overdoses are not random or sporadic, but rather located in specific hot zones, indicated in the overdose maps tracked by MHD data team. The top incident zip codes that have higher counts of both fatal and nonfatal overdose include: 53204, 53206, 53208, 53209, 53212, 53214 and 53215. These areas are impacted significantly compared to other Milwaukee zip codes. An equity-based lens is required to allow us to target communities that are most heavily impacted. Data has shown new trends of higher counts and rates of fatal overdoses in Black communities, and White counts continue to account for about half of all deaths. Our goal of this project is to achieve health equity in Milwaukee. Thus, in order to ensure cultural competency and respect, a key role will be creating trusted partnerships to work with the community. We must partner with community advocates to increase knowledge of substance trends, and learning how the City of Milwaukee Health Department can serve to empower these zip codes.

Data Background:

The City of Milwaukee Health Department has partnered with community organizations to conduct community conversations on the opioid epidemic to gauge understanding of this crisis. Some of the feedback included lack of knowledge or understanding on fentanyl and other substance use trends, stigma around substance use disorder and harm reduction efforts, misconceptions on how or why people are suffering from fatal and nonfatal overdoses (ex: that could never happen to me mentality).

Furthermore, current Milwaukee fatal overdose data is showing that all races are dying in their segregated “areas” like Latinx on the south side, whites in the suburbs, while African Americans (AA) are not dying only on the north side of Milwaukee, but are dying everywhere. Thus, how do we target AA communities for harm reduction education and training, what does the AA community need to stay alive? What are we missing?

Project Proposal:

The fatal and nonfatal overdose data has allowed for monitoring of the situation; however, greater insight is needed and should be done through the voices of the communities impacted.

Partnerships with community leaders in Milwaukee have further highlighted this need to bridge the gap between the community and community stakeholders. It is essential to create the position of a strategic partner to bridge this gap. The strategic partner needs to have knowledge on cultural competency in order to create a trusted relationship between individuals in the community which would allow for individuality to openly share their knowledge, experience and needs/limitations. Through the partnership with a consultant agency, the facilitator of these conversations will increase openness in communication. Incorporation of an individual, will enable City of Milwaukee Health Department to bridge itself with the community, enhancing trust, allow individuals to be heard, and creating an environment where the Health Department can listen to the community directly.

Through identification of neighborhoods most highly impacted by fatal and nonfatal OD data, specific communities with high prevalence can be targeted as areas for community events such as community listening sessions, block parties, or by going door to door/block to block providing resources and education. The idea of targeting specific neighborhoods embodies the equity-based approach to make these sessions not only available, but accessible. Community listening sessions will create a safe place for these conversations to occur as they are located in the environments where the public feels most comfortable. Information gathered will enable MHD to identify where further efforts are needed in the most heavily impacted areas. With a professional and well vetted consultant agency leading this initiative, a true equity lens can be established and the City of Milwaukee's response can be rooted in cultural competency to collaborate with the community.

Solutions and Approach:

As the substance use trends continue to develop, it is imperative that the city focuses multiple efforts to tackle the epidemic.

1) Consultant: City of Milwaukee requests a contracted consulting agency to act as the strategic partner to facilitate these community conversations and the outcomes of the project. The contracted consultant must carry profound knowledge and passion towards this public health crisis and the Milwaukee communities. This consultant agency would also need to pursue this project by means of a collaborative approach which will enable the team to lead more informed and targeted education and prevention efforts. The consultant agency would need to have a dedicated commitment towards Milwaukee's goal of reducing overdoses and addressing the inequities and serve as a representative of the communities. The consulting agency must exemplify the ability to facilitate conversations, and highlight the trust established in the community, which would move the project forward.

2) Community Events: Identification of communities and community leaders, along with a focus on cultural sensitivity. We must begin with the identification of pivotal trusted leaders such as pastors, school teachers, and others during the planning process, where all voices are shared for the good of the community. Partners can host listening sessions where the community discusses different aspects of SUD, educate and disseminate harm reduction resources. Education on fentanyl will also play an imperative role within this process. During the events, the Milwaukee Health Department will be able to spread awareness on a harm reduction website which will be created simultaneously.

3) Substance Use and Social Determinates of Health Website: Many resources are available in Milwaukee County, but most are not known to the common person or talked about. A resource website that can be easily navigated for community members and would provide a range of items from harm reduction resources and treatment centers, to housing and food pantry information. Individuals will further be able to request harm reduction items to be mailed to them. On the website, we would be able to create and share a video on how to use fentanyl testing strips and Narcan. QR codes can be shared posted in the community as well as on Naloxone dispensary boxes for individuals to be guided towards this resource. The website mobilizes the ability to have access to the knowledge of resources and make it available to the community. The interactive website would be easily navigated to allow individuals in Milwaukee to find information on items from harm reduction resources and treatment centers to housing and food pantry information. The website will involve content writing as well as videos that are both engaging and authentic. Throughout the website design process, it will be both designed and tested through individuals in the community to ensure that they are easily able to navigate it.

4) Annual Substance Use and Overdose Prevention Summit: MHD proposes the design and implementation of an annual Substance Use and Overdose Prevention summit that is not only held in Milwaukee, but it will also be driven by Milwaukee related data and Milwaukee demographics and substance use trends. It has been many years since Milwaukee has hosted any conference type of an event with the topic of overdose. The city of Milwaukee has the highest rate of overdoses compared to any other city in Wisconsin

Proposed Budget:

The City of Milwaukee Health Department proposes a budget of \$430,000 to lead this project. This would go to a contracted consulting agency and will result in a multitude of deliverables including, but not limited to:

- Assist City of Milwaukee Health Department with developing strategies and tactical solutions to effectively reach the target demographic and disseminate information - includes drafting a marketing communications plan that leverages key messaging for effective communications
- Drafting, pitching, and coordinating media releases, and media pitches as well as handling all media relations including developing strategic media partnerships
- Building and enhancing strategic media partnerships with significant ideation in order to generate greater awareness and garner greater media exposure
- Assist City of Milwaukee Health Department with ideation, planning, developing, and activating community wide events in order to effectively reach key target demographics and disseminate information - includes sponsorship development as well as providing expertise in general marketing as well as culture consultancy and multicultural marketing
- Design and coordination of key marketing collaterals and/or social media assets in order to generate awareness and a call to action. May also include digital advertising design and placement along with other advertising mediums
- Advertising campaign ideation, development, planning and activation – includes production of ads and media buying/placement across multiple mediums

Subcontracts:

This proposal includes the expectation that the consultant subcontracts with other agencies to lead the following activities:

- 1) Community events, budget of \$5,000 per event, 10 events per year: total \$50,000
- 2) Website development: \$80,000
- 3) Annual Milwaukee Summit: \$50,000

Subcontract total: \$180,000

Consultant: \$250,000

Total budget: \$430,000

Outcomes:

1. Reduction in fatal and nonfatal OD in the targeted Milwaukee communities.
2. Increased awareness of and access to harm reduction resources within the community including (such as FTS and Narcan).
3. Increased distribution of FTS and Narcan (especially on the northwest side).
4. Increased knowledge on substance use disorder (SUD).
5. Reduced stigma on SUD.
6. Increased presence and partnership in the community.

Each part and stage of the process encapsulates the equity-based approach to save lives of highly impacted areas. The components will allow the City of Milwaukee Health Department to move away from a one-size-fits all approach in harm reduction and enable us to support the communities that are being most heavily impacted following the data. Marginalized communities will be recognized and supported, and trusted relationships will be built through sustainable development. Through the equitable and sustainable approach in the given proposal, the goal will be reducing opioid overdose rates in Milwaukee, with a focus in marginalized communities. By increasing efforts through a targeted approach, the zip codes 53204, 53206, 53208, 53209, 53212, 53214 and 53215 in Milwaukee will have increased knowledge of fentanyl and harm reduction strategies. This knowledge will be measured both through the data, but also within the mailing system of harm reduction proposed in the website as well. The website will also allow for monitoring and evaluation of engagement through views on the video, etc. Through the multidisciplinary approach, the community will be further united in combating the public health crisis.

Results Measurement/Progress Report:

Each individual event will be evaluated and feedback will be utilized in the planning of each subsequent event. These events will also allow MHD to continue to build community partnerships based on these events.

Project Period:

See appendix A

Draft Project Timeline: National Prescription Opiate Litigation

